

SAN CLEMENTE MISCELLANY IRISH DOMINICANS 1677-1977



Tempesta, *Urbis Romae*
prospectus, (ca. 1600)

Photo Guidobaldi



Porta S. Iohannis.

Porta Latina.

S. Crux in Laterano.

S. Crux in Laterano.

S. Iohannis La-
teranensis

Via Gregoriana

S. Clementis

S. S. P. Crucis

Colosseum

S. Stephanus

S. Agnes

T. Pallas
Campo

Vachino

Arco
Septi.

Circus

S. M.

S. Maria

Liam G. Walsh, O.P.

Santa Sabina 1977

LEONARD E. BOYLE O.P.

SAN CLEMENTE MISCELLANY I

THE COMMUNITY OF SS. SISTO E CLEMENTE
IN ROME, 1677 - 1977

WITH A CHAPTER BY HUGH FENNING O.P.

For Liam, a Tercentennial bonus!
Luke

Romae, apud S. Clementem, 1977

TO
HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL SHEHAN
FORMER ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE
CARDINAL TITULAR OF SAN CLEMENTE
THIS WORK
IS GRATEFULLY AND RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED

FOREWORD

For the visitor seeking to experience some of the many complex factors which make Rome the Eternal City, the Basilica of San Clemente has a special importance. Not only does it bear remarkable testimony to different styles of architecture and the arts; it also recounts the history of that spiritual movement which gave to Rome its real value. The ancient Temple of Mithra stands as a mute witness to an era when people were searching for answers to the fundamental questions of human existence. The very name of San Clemente conjures up those early days when Christianity began to bring its answers to those seeking the truth. It recalls the time when Rome became the cathedra Petri, from which the gospel was preached throughout the whole world. Both basilicas and their artistic embellishments express how the Christians of those days found their own ways of making the faith incarnate in architecture and its allied arts. Without the Basilica of San Clemente one would not be able to appreciate, as one does now, that spiritual and Christian heritage which Rome has passed on to our age. This present volume and its sequel are meant to explain these cultural treasures in a special way.

We Dominicans, in fact, can come to understand part of our own history as an Order through this church and priory of San Clemente. It was Fr. Antonius de Monroy, of the Mexican Province, Master of the Order from 1677 to 1686, who gave the church to the Irish Dominicans in 1677. The fact that so many Irish Dominicans have lived there since then gives us an insight into the history of their province. Difficult times for the Catholic Church in Ireland forced these friars to live outside their country and to prepare abroad any new candidates for the Order. It is

a testimony to their vigorous faith that they left their own homeland, just as Abraham of old, believing that God could bring life out of death.

With the ending of hard times in Ireland, the Priory of San Clemente in Rome became for the Irish Province a house expressive of their vocation as part of the broader calling of the Order and the Church itself. The priory has always been a house of great hospitality and good cheer for brethren of other provinces, as well as for countless pilgrims. To many, Rome provides the opportunity of further studies or theological investigations, an occasion to become aware of other aspects of theological and ecclesiastical thought. For many, Rome was the first step towards foreign missions all over the world. For all, it was a link with the Church, which, through the See of Peter, is, in a sense, worldwide, open to each country and every culture.

Thus, this tercentenary is a time for giving thanks. Thanks to all the Irish Dominicans who have lived in San Clemente over these three centuries. As guardians of an historical and spiritual treasure they have shown many visitors how the Christian faith can only exist by taking root in the culture of its day, however different this may be. Through the history of the Irish Dominicans in this city, they have given and continue to give us testimony of a life which is for those who are on the way... God's power to save. (I Cor. 1:18) Today, as ever, they understand that the call of the Lord urges us to put no limits on our response in love: no intellectual limits, as we continue trying to penetrate His being and activity; no geographical limits, as we continue to proclaim His word throughout the world.

For all these things I give thanks to the Lord, Who himself will bring to perfection what He has begun, even as He now opens up new pages of history.

S. Sabina - Rome 1977

fr. VINCENT DE COUESNONGLE, O.P.
Master of the Order

P R E F A C E

Nostalgia, preferably the two-way kind favoured by Cardinal Newman, is a legitimate feeling at the time of a Tercentenary. For the organiser of the Event however, the dangers of any kind of serious self-indulgence are minimal, if only because his resources are already too fully employed. On the other hand he may suffer from gnawing doubts: is it really necessary to affirm once again that the Past is Prologue? Everyone of course thinks his own case is unique, and I am no exception. To me it would appear that San Clemente is a spectacular instance of dragging the past into the present in order to make the future. Where else, even in Rome, do you find an archaeological site with so many easily accessible excavated levels that ordinary people (and not just politicians) are tempted to ask for a recount?

It made sense therefore to the community here over three years ago to mark the three-hundreth anniversary of our coming here and to San Sisto by publishing some kind of lasting memorial in the shape of a San Clemente Miscellany, which began as one volume but ended as two. The present one sets out to chronicle the doings of the community over the years, the story so to speak of the living stones, to borrow a New Testament phrase.

The companion volume, subtitled Art and Archaeology, is meant to find sermons in the other kind of stones, an ambition made possible by the vision and driving force of Father Joseph Mullooly over one hundred years ago.

My personal contribution as Prior — si parva licet componere magnis — was to initiate the project in June 1974 and preside over its implementation. Scholarship, as it happened, was not in short supply, and the unstinted cooperation of writers and

printers made the task less burdensome. Still, there is always an expense of spirit — to say nothing of the other kind — in an undertaking like this, and I occasionally identified rather easily with the wall-builders of Jerusalem as described in the Book of Nehemiah. In any case the first volume, authored by two of the community, is the result of many years of diligent research on their part, though I must add that any material flaws it may contain are in no way traceable to them. In this connection the English-speaking reader would do well to note that some conventions of Italian typography (as in e.g., quotations and word-divisions), were of necessity accepted — a small price indeed for the magnificent cooperation of the *Tipografia Olimpica* and the *Scuola Tipografica* of San Sisto. No praise is too much for that wonderful team, our Sisters on the distaff side, the Director Signor Claudio Sterpi with his fortunate passion for archaeology, and the young linotype operator Signor Claudio Iamónico, a word-smith in several senses, with a volume of poetry already to his credit. To these add Signor Enzo Giordani, who has earned a hearty Bravo! for his genial and effective cooperation as Supervisor.

The grateful dedication to our Titular, Laurence Cardinal Shehan ex-Archbishop of Baltimore, is not an empty formula, (no more than was an identical one to Cardinal O'Connell of Boston by Fr. Louis Nolan over fifty years ago, with reference to the astonishing engineering feat of the Tunnel reaching from San Clemente to the Colosseum). Without the generous help of His Eminence and of his friends this present publishing event would have been simply impossible. May their confidence in us be amply rewarded.

In a different line, no expression of gratitude from me could be adequate for Fr. Leonard Boyle's massive contribution to San Clemente. Nor am I referring to scholarship only, though *Miscellany I* and *II* speak for themselves in this regard: if he had never written a word in celebration of it, Fr. Leonard would still go down in history as one who loved the charm of this numinous place where, as St. Jerome could say around 390, the memory of St. Clement is preserved to this day. Fr. Boyle was already emerging as an authority on San Clemente when Fr. Hugh Fenning entered the Order, a circumstance which can hardly be said

to reflect on his younger but no less industrious and prolific confrère. To both our heartfelt thanks are due.

It should be noted at this point perhaps, that both by training and inclination the authors of this volume (like their distinguished co-contributors in Miscellany II, Drs Eileen Kane of University College Dublin and Federico Guidobaldi of the National Council of Restoration Research, Rome), have no particular taste for a literary form, however apt in a more exalted context, known as *Edifying History*. Here, as in the companion volume, the portrait tends to be a warts-and-all affair, whether it be Connolly the second bishop of New York feeling himself, as he said, becoming a prey to melancholy during a bleak period, or the students bedevilled by sickness in the head as recorded so drolly in Chapter II. We are not dealing with an idyll: after all, the love-hate thing, nowadays touted so much under the grandiose name of ambivalence, if not quite invented in these parts at least found its classic formulation in a local poet. There is a lot of it around still.

San Clemente Archives (the oft-recurring SCAR of the footnotes: the other abbreviations are conventional), have not yielded up more than a fraction of their riches in these two volumes intended to mark the Tercentenary. Should anyone else undertake to continue the series, or improve on the present offerings, let him, as the great Thomas De Burgo, historian of the Province would have said, go right ahead! One can sense in the famous preface to *Hibernia Dominicana* His Lordship's contempt for nit-pickers and snivellers generally—a breed of critics for which he had as little time as Brendan Behan, but a more elegant put-down which deserves to be remembered. I foresee, wrote the then Bishop of Ossory, from among our own countrymen, and these not even the brightest, certain quibblers and cavillers emerging, who might be better engaged in trying to do better themselves, rather than passing judgement on the work of others. (*Praevideo plane, ex Hibernis nostris, & quidem haud perspicacioribus, non defuturos Criticos & Cavillatores, verum de suo meliora proferant, antequam judicent de alieno*). There is no reason to believe that the breed is extinct.

It only remains for me to include the present Provincial of the Irish Province, Fr. Damian Byrne, along with his Provincial Council, in my thanksgiving list. Their interest in the proceed-

ings here was of a sensible kind, which translated easily into a generous subvention. By a nice coincidence the Master General who ruled the Order in 1677 was Anthony de Monroy of Mexico. Fr. Byrne, before his election as Irish Provincial, held the same post in Mexico. The present Master of the Order, who so kindly contributed the Foreword, will surely not fail to see the historical justice in that.

Finally, a special word of thanks and appreciation to my friend Mr. Laurence Lewis, who put his fine legal and linguistic talents so freely at my disposal in seeing this work through the press, and in providing an index, principally of persons. May his tribe increase! Exactly the same wish for the obliging designer of both covers, Imogen Stuart, foremost artist of international acclaim. Artistic value judgements do not belong here, but I feel she has enhanced her already great reputation in this work. Both covers, on scraperboard, frame their subject in the allegedly unique protiron or gate-canopy overlooking the Piazza di San Clemente. The present volume depicts, with overtones of the great mosaic over the High Altar and the artist's own highly successful Pangur Bán, the concrete universal clerk-scholar not indifferent to the home scene behind the arras. A multi-suggestive effect, if so ugly a verbal liberty be allowed.

In a cooperative act of homage like this there is of course no onlie begetter. Accordingly I would like also to thank individual members of the community and various friends of San Clemente who encouraged, advised and helped at every stage of the work. All of them, in different ways, invoke the Virgilian benison:

Stet fortuna domus, et avi numerentur avorum.

LUKE DEMPSEY, O.P.

San Clemente, Rome, 1977.

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I

SAN SISTO AND SAN CLEMENTE

Of the two Dominican houses in Rome with which this tercentenary volume is concerned, San Sisto and San Clemente, only the former had a long-standing connection with the Dominican Order before the Irish Dominicans came into possession of the two convents in 1677.

San Sisto (or San Sisto Vecchio, as it is known today) is situated under the Coelian Hill in the Porta Capena region of Rome, a short distance from the beginning of the Via Appia, the most famous of all Roman consular roads, and opposite the Baths of Caracalla, which were begun by Septimus Severus in 206 A.D. and completed by his son Caracalla eleven years later. Here, perhaps a century after the Peace of Constantine (312), a basilica was built in memory of Sistus II, who was pope from 257-258, and was martyred under the emperor Valerian. In the sixth century it was in this church that catechumens were examined before being admitted to baptism on Holy Saturday at the Lateran basilica a half a mile away.

Over the centuries the church underwent many changes, notably in the pontificates of Innocent III (1198-1216) and Benedict XIII (1724-1730). Under Innocent III the two aisles of the original church were totally demolished, a new floor was laid down in the nave well above the old one to bring the church into line with the then level of the valley, and the walls of the nave that remained were raised accordingly. In the time of the Dominican Benedict XIII, the architect Filippo Ragazzini remodelled the façade, the campanile, and the presbiterium, at a cost of 4726 scudi (roughly £ 1200 sterling). It was not until 1930-1935 that

some of the original structure of the church was uncovered, when Professors Josi and Prandi of the Pontifical Commission on Archeology, working at the request and expense of Cardinal Liénart of Lille, the then titular cardinal of San Sisto, demonstrated that the present one-nave church was originally a paleochristian church with a central nave and two aisles. Thirty years later their work was continued by Herman Geertman of the Dutch School of Archeology, who definitively established the plan, extent and design of the early Christian church¹.

Innocent III's drastic changes at San Sisto were part of a plan of monastic reform which he had begun soon after he became pope in 1198, and about 1207 he began to build at great expense a large monastery beside the church to house all the nuns of Rome. This may sound a little preposterous, but in fact the number of nuns in Rome at that time was about eighty. These inhabited some seven monasteries, none of which had an enclosure of any kind. The idea of a strict enclosure was itself a novel one at this period in Europe, but it was gaining ground through the influence of the Cistercians, and, indeed, St Dominic had adopted it for his nuns at Prouille in 1207.

This grand design of Innocent, which was entrusted to the Canons Regular of Sempringham, whose founder, Gilbert, canonized by Innocent in 1202, had made the spiritual assistance of nuns one of the ends of his order, was unfinished by the time of Innocent's death in 1216, and it fell to his successor, Honorius III (1216-1227) to complete it.

The Dominican connection with San Sisto dates from that pontificate of Honorius III. St Dominic, it seems, had his eye on San Sisto since the Lateran Council of late 1215, when he was present in Rome and a participant in the Council with his bishop and friend Foulques of Toulouse. To him San Sisto must have seemed a perfect place in which to establish a foothold in Rome and to house some of the sisters from his foundation at Prouille. As at Prouille, the monastery of nuns would be served by a few of his confrères as chaplains. He first began to negot-

¹ H. GEERTMAN, "Ricerche sopra la prima fase di S. Sisto Vecchio in Roma", *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia di Archeologia* 41 (1968-1969) 219-228. See also *San Sisto Vecchio a Porta Capena* (Rome 1975), with brief articles by C. Sterpi, V. Koudelka, E. Crociani.

iate for San Sisto at the beginning of 1218, but it was not until the following year that he was in a position to present a concrete proposal to the pope. In the Autumn of 1219 he travelled with three companions from Bologna to the papal court at Viterbo, where Honorius encouraged the Sempringham canons to withdraw from San Sisto, and entrusted St Dominic with Innocent's plans for the reform of the nuns of Rome.

Sometime between 11 November 1219 and 17 February 1220, Dominic set up his first male Dominican community in Rome, probably in the old residence of the priests of the church which still existed as late as 1910 behind the apse, along the Via S. Sebastiano. While his three confrères settled down at San Sisto and supervised the last stages of the new monastery, Dominic attempted to recruit his community of nuns from the seven monasteries of Rome. He had no great success except at S. Bibiana, most of whose five or six nuns accepted his invitation to San Sisto, and at S. Maria in Tempulo, about two hundred yards away from San Sisto on the present Via delle Camene. Six nuns inhabited this old but now down-and-out monastery which had been founded towards the end of the eighth century by a group of Greek nuns from Byzantium during the Iconoclastic persecution².

After some procrastination, all but one of the nuns of S. Maria responded to the call of St Dominic, and on Sunday 28 February 1220 these five, including the young Cecilia, to whom we owe the "Miracula beati Dominici" and our only account of the beginnings of San Sisto as a Dominican centre, were solemnly installed at San Sisto. The night before, their precious seventh century icon of the Blessed Virgin (now in the monastery of the successors of those sisters on Monte Mario) was carried in a procession to San Sisto from its old home of S. Maria in Tempulo, which was now abandoned for ever³.

This first community of Dominican nuns in Rome, initially about twelve in all between those from S. Bibiana and those from S. Maria in Tempulo, was completed by the arrival of eight

² V. KOUDELKA, "Le 'Monasterium Tempuli' et la fondation dominicaine de San Sisto", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 31 (1961) 5-31.

³ C. BERTELLI, "L'immagine del 'Monasterium Tempuli' dopo il restauro", *ibid.*, 82-111.

sisters from Prouille in the following April. A maximum of sixty was set by Alexander IV in 1259, and after additions had been made to the chapter and the dormitory by the Dominican cardinal Giovanni Boccamazzi (1283-1309), Clement V increased the maximum to eighty in 1306.

The two Dominican communities, a tiny one of men acting as chaplains to a substantial one of women, remained together at San Sisto for over three and a half centuries. The malarial location of San Sisto, however, did not improve over the years, but it was not until the pontificate of the Dominican Pius V (1566-1572) that the sisters took the long overdue step of asking to be transferred to a healthier part of Rome. Pius not only granted them a small monastery belonging to Dominican Tertiaries on the south edge of the Quirinal Hill (Magnanapoli) high above the Roman Forum, but also provided them with money to enlarge it. In 1575 the seventy two nuns of San Sisto moved to this new monastery of SS. Domenico e Sisto, where in 1911 the community, now reduced to nine aged and infirm sisters, was given new life when some forty nuns who had been expelled from the nearby Dominican monastery of St Catherine joined up with it. In 1931 the whole community of SS. Domenico e Sisto migrated from Magnanapoli to Monte Mario, the convent of SS. Domenico e Sisto, with the fine chapel which the sisters themselves had built, becoming the Angelicum University (now the University of St Thomas)⁴.

After the nuns moved from San Sisto in 1575, the usual two or three male Dominicans continued to serve the church for some time. The monastery itself continued to be the property of the sisters, but since they took little or no care of it, the whole of San Sisto was handed over by Clement VIII to the Dominican Order as such in 1602. Between 1602 and 1677 various Dominican Generals, Niccolò Ridolfi in particular, restored the monastery and provided a new dormitory and choir for a community of thirty. Italian Dominicans, of course, formed the basis of this community, but since the convent was under the jurisdiction of the General, it tended to be international in character, and when Alexander VII ordered in 1655 that each Dominican pro-

⁴ A. ZUCCHI, *Roma domenicana* I (Rome 1938), pp. 253-277.

vince in Italy should designate certain houses of regular observance as novitiate houses, it was understandable that the pope should have singled out San Sisto, St Dominic's first home in Rome, as a novitiate "for the Order as a whole"⁵

By then, however, the community of San Sisto had spread its wings a little, and now had some of its members installed in the church of San Clemente, some fifteen minutes' walk away over the Coelian Hill, a church which had been confided to the care of the community in 1645.

Unlike San Sisto, San Clemente on the Via Maior or Stradone (Via S. Giovanni) from the Colosseum to the Lateran, had never had any connection with the Dominican Order, apart from a Dominican cardinal titular or two, before 1645. In fact it had never had any connection with a religious order of any kind until the early 15th century, when it came into the possession of Ambrosian monks from Milan. It was, of course, one of the original titular or parish churches of Rome, and all through the early and high Middle Ages it had been served by secular priests. But we know very little about these until the middle of the 13th century, when regulations for the clergy of San Clemente which the Cistercian cardinal Rainerio Capocci had drawn up at the request of the pope were confirmed by pope Innocent IV⁶.

From this bull of 18 October 1250 it is clear that San Clemente had been a collegiate church for some time, and that the number of prebends was set at twelve. In 1295, when Boniface VIII had the church consecrated, possibly because there was no record extant of consecration, it was still a parish church, and presumably continued to be one for at least another century. The twelve prebends of the 1250 constitution, however, probably had been reduced to six by the end of the 13th century, for a Turin catalogue of the churches of Rome in 1320 notes only six clerics at San Clemente, and a notarial instrument of 1363 from San Clemente records only six canons of San Clemente as witnesses: Alessio Vallati, Nicola de Nero ("prior dei canonici"),

⁵ *Bullarium ordinis praedicatorum*, ed. A. Bremond, VI (Rome 1735), 178.

⁶ L. OLIGER, "Il clero della basilica romana di S. Clemente", *Antoniano* 15 (1940) 309-322, who found the document in an antiquarian shop in Rome.

Giacomo Muti, Andre de Musicanis, Paolo Cole Palosci, and Paolo de Scanniglia⁷.

By the end of the 14th century it seems, though the evidence may be a little tainted, that like so many other churches of Rome after the Avignon period of the papacy (1305-1378), San Clemente was in a sorry condition. In a petition in early 1398 to pope Boniface IX, the confraternity of San Salvatore at the Lateran Basilica, which had charge of the "Via maior" from the Colosseum to the Lateran, stated that the "collegiate church" of San Clemente was in such a ruinous state because of bad administration that it was in danger of falling down and blocking the street. The confraternity told the pope that it was prepared to repair the church and maintain a priest there for divine services, provided that the pope diverted the part of the revenues that belonged to the chapter of San Clemente to the hospital for the poor which was run by the confraternity on the same Via maior.

Boniface IX was amenable to the petition. On 16 March 1398 he instructed his vicar for the city of Rome to proceed along the lines suggested by the confraternity and unite the revenue of the chapter of San Clemente (200 gold ducats) to the confraternity's hospital. No more canons, he said, were to be provided to San Clemente. On the death of each of the present holders of canonries, the income from the relevant prebend was to be applied to the uses of the hospital. On the death of the last remaining canon, San Clemente would cease to be a collegiate church⁸.

But nothing seems to have come of this arrangement. Five years later, indeed, one finds Boniface granting a canonry and prebend, valued at twenty five golden florins, to a canon of S. Maria Rotonda on 12 January 1403, "the cardinal, chapter and customs of San Clemente notwithstanding"⁹. In the meantime Boniface may have had second thoughts about the wisdom of handing San Clemente over to the confraternity, and may have

⁷ C. HUELSEN, *Le chiese di Roma nel medioevo. Cataloghi ed appunti* (Florence 1927), p. 33, n. 81, for the 1320 list. The canons of 1363 are found in a notarial ledger in the Vatican Library, MS. Vat. lat. 4930, fo. 56v.

⁸ ASV (= Archivio Segreto Vaticano), Reg. lat., 36, fos. 258r-259r; also in Vatican Library, MS. Archivio di S. Pietro C 116, fos. XLVIIr-XLVIIIr.

⁹ ASV, Reg. lat. 106, fos. 136v-7v. Earlier in his pontificate Boniface made another provision of a canonry at San Clemente: Reg. lat. 32, fos. 127r-128r.

been impressed instead by the claims of another interested party, the newly-founded Ambrosian Order from Milan. At all events, these Ambrosians were living at San Clemente by the time of the death of Boniface on 1 October 1404.

When exactly the Ambrosians were given San Clemente is not yet ascertainable. They had been founded as a community of hermits in woods outside Milan about 1370, and on 29 August 1375 were allowed by pope Gregory XI to adopt the rule of St Augustine and to call themselves "Fratres S. Ambrosii ad Nemus"¹⁰. By the 1390s they had moved south from Milan to the neighbourhood of Rome. On 2 February 1398 Boniface IX granted them the parish church of S. Giorgio at Riofreddo in the diocese of Tivoli. Landolfo Colonna, the patron of the church, was instructed to see that provision was made for six or at least four of the hermits, and that the *cura animarum* attached to S. Giorgio was transferred to another church of Riofreddo, that of S. Nicola¹¹.

This may have been Boniface's first contact with the Ambrosians, but by the time of his death in 1404 he had granted them the church of San Clemente in Rome and, as well, the monastery of S. Cosmo at Vicovaro, again in the diocese of Tivoli. Unfortunately there is no record of these gifts in the registers of the letters of Boniface, a considerable portion of which is no longer extant. The above information comes not from Boniface himself but from a petition of the Ambrosians to Eugene IV in 1435¹². Possibly the Ambrosians were incorrect in 1435 in stating that Boniface had given them S. Cosmo. For in an earlier petition in 1412 to John XXII, they had noted that it was Gregory XII on 6 August 1407 who had given them the Vicovaro church and garden as a retreat, "because at certain times of the year it is necessary to get away from San Clemente" for fresh air and recreation¹³.

¹⁰ *Bullarium Romanum* IV (Turin 1859), 578-579; and in ASV, Arm. 53, 13, fo. 79.

¹¹ ASV, Indice 320, fo. 288v.

¹² ASV, Reg. Supplicationum 307, fo. 44r; Reg. lat. 334, fo. 80: 14 June 1435.

¹³ ASV, Reg. lat. 166, fo. 184. Earlier he had exempted San Clemente, in the person of Michael, the Prior, from certain taxes payable to the Apostolic Camera for S. Cosimo: Reg. lat. 166, fos. 59v-60r.

Whether or not it was Boniface IX or Gregory XII who gave S. Cosmo at Vicovaro to the Ambrosians, it is quite certain from the evidence that San Clemente came into the possession of the Ambrosians sometime in 1403-1404, towards the end of Boniface's pontificate, and that S. Cosmo at Vicovaro was united to San Clemente as a *villeggiatura* or Summer retreat shortly afterwards¹⁴.

There remained, of course, the problem of the canons of San Clemente. As we know from a bull of Martin V on 11 November 1419, the Ambrosians were not given the church of San Clemente as such in 1403-1404 but only the buildings or convent going with the church. Although the Ambrosians used it for their liturgy, the church was still collegiate in 1419, with forty prebends, a considerable increase on the twelve specified in the constitution of 1250. But because the prebendal revenues were slight, no canons resided at San Clemente, nor was there any likelihood that any would reside there in the future. Accordingly, and at the request of the Ambrosians, who claimed that their own annual income amounted to no more than seventy gold florins and that they were in dire cumstances because of their service to the poor of the locality, Martin V suppressed San Clemente as a collegiate church and allocated all the prebendal revenues to the Ambrosians, specifying, however, that the existing canons were to receive their due prebendal stipends until they died out¹⁵.

San Clemente and the Ambrosians prospered hugely under Martin's successor, Eugene IV (1431-1447), who, as Gabriel Condulmer, had been cardinal of San Clemente from 1408-1426, and whose own nephew, Francesco Condulmer, held the same position from 1431-1445. The years 1434 and 1435 were particularly fruitful ones. On 16 July 1434 Eugene united the nearby church of S. Pastore to S. Clemente¹⁶. On 14 June 1435 he confirmed the thirty-year old union of S. Cosmo at Vicovaro with San Clemente, and, as well, transferred all the indulgences attached to S. Pastore to the small chapel in front of the entrance to San Clemente on the street side ('ad parvam capellam ante porticum

¹⁴ In a confirmation of the indulgences to the church at Vicovaro three months later, Gregory states that the church "lately has been united with San Clemente in Rome": see L. Oliger in *Antonianum* 15 (1940) 381.

¹⁵ ASV, Reg. lat. 206, fos. 162r-163r.

¹⁶ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. lat. 11887, fo. 25r, n. 35.

ipsius ecclesiae prope viam publicam") until such time as the roof of S. Pastore had been replaced ¹⁷.

But this was not all. Besides the grants mentioned above and faculties to hear confessions at San Clemente, the Ambrosians petitioned the pope successfully on four other counts on that same day. Although a request to take over the church and revenues of SS. Quattro Coronati, "which abutts on the garden of the said monastery of San Clemente and has been ordered by the pope to be united to the hospital of S. Salvatore", was referred to the Vicar of Rome for further information, a house and some outhouses on the Via Maior which had formerly belonged to San Clemente and had been taken over by the confraternity of S. Salvatore were now restored to the Ambrosians. Eugene IV also confirmed the purchase in 1434 of half a vineyard from the abbess and convent of S. Lorenzo in Fontana, and granted exemptions from certain taxes due to the Apostolic Camera or papal exchequer and to the city of Rome. More importantly, and this in fact is the first and longest of the petitions, Eugene granted the Ambrosians of San Clemente the faculty to elect a prior annually to rule San Clemente and S. Cosimo at Vicovaro. Up to this the prior of San Clemente had been appointed by the motherhouse of the Ambrosians in Milan, a procedure which, according to the petition, had become "very difficult and bothersome" ¹⁸.

But in spite of these papal favours, and of some generous gifts from private persons between 1427 and 1435, the Ambrosians of San Clemente were not, in their own estimation, financially

¹⁷ ASV, Reg. lat. 334, fo. 80 (Vicovaro), fos. 79v-80r (S. Pastore). The phrase "parvam capellam... viam publicam" is also in Reg. suppl. 307, fo. 44r (the supplication that gave rise to the outgoing letter in Reg. lat. 334, fos. 79v-80r). Probably the chapel in question was that dedicated to St Servulus (of whom Gregory the Great spoke so warmly). The description in Eugene's letter seems exactly to fit that of the chapel of Servulus given in 1517-1518 by the Franciscan Mariano da Firenze in his *Itinerarium urbis Romae*, ed. E. Balletti (Rome 1931), p. 169. The chapel with its "campanile decorated with marble" probably was destroyed when the Ambrosians switched the bell-tower of San Clemente from the convent side of the courtyard to the Via S. Giovanni side about 1600.

¹⁸ ASV, Reg. suppl. 307, fos. 42v-44r. Possibly the vineyard in question was the vineyard outside the Porta S. Giovanni, purchased in 1424: Bibliothèque nationale, MS. lat. 11887, fo. 26v, n. 58. The outgoing letter in answer to the supplication is in Arm. 53, 13, fo. 80r.

secure¹⁹. Later in that same year they obtained a licence from pope Eugene on 17 November 1435 to alienate all unproductive properties to the value of 200 ducats, claiming that they were in dire poverty and that there were no revenues, "not even from the house in Trastevere". To help them out, Eugene issued a *Motu proprio* by which the church of S. Prisca on the Aventine, with an annual revenue of forty gold florins, was, as soon as it fell vacant, to be united with San Clemente, the annual revenue of which was given as eighty gold florins (as against seventy in 1419)²⁰. Two years later he really pushed the Ambrosians of San Clemente well over the barrier of poverty when he granted them the church and convent of the Cistercian nuns of S. Pancrazio on the Janiculum. To the 100 gold ducats which they asserted as their annual revenue in 1439, the Ambrosians could now add another 200.

The Cistercian nuns of S. Pancrazio had been in trouble for at least a year before this annexation. On 30 July 1438 Eugene IV, "acting on untrustworthy information" (from the Ambrosians?), had commissioned the Vicar of Rome and the abbot of the Cistercian monastery of S. Sebastiano to visitate the nuns, who, reputedly, "had thrown off the fear of God" and were in a sorry state spiritually²¹. Whether or not the visitators found the reports to be true, S. Pancrazio, with its fine revenues, was given formally to the Ambrosians of San Clemente some nine months later (18 March 1439). Clearly the Ambrosians had been prospecting S. Pancrazio for some time, since their petition to the pope for the church and convent was accompanied by a notarial instrument of 23 December 1438 expressing the willingness of the nuns, on certain conditions, to move out²². In this petition, which is rehearsed in the papal bull of the union of S. Clemente and S. Pancrazio, the Ambrosians admitted that when they first came to San Clemente the revenues had been sufficient to maintain them, but now, what with "wars and various other calamities which have afflicted Rome and the district of San Clemente", this

¹⁹ See the will of 16.8.1427 of dean of church of St Florinus, Trier diocese, the donation of one Anastasia in 1430, and that of Sophia de Magliotiis on 11.1.1435, in BN lat. 11887, fos. 24r, nn. 21, 24, 27v, n. 70.

²⁰ ASV, Reg. suppl. 215, fo. 263.

²¹ ASV, Reg. Vat. 367, fo. 116r.

²² BN lat. 11887, fo. 24r.

was no longer the case. Were S. Pancrazio to be united with San Clemente, their position would be easier. As for the nuns of S. Pancrazio, their numbers had sharply decreased. What was more, it was not really safe or becoming for nuns to live unprotected in such a rural area (as the Janiculum): "in quo moniales ipsae propter loci campestris solitudinem nec tute morari nec salva etiam honestate secure pudorem earum custodire possunt".

Granting the petition, Eugene also accepted the conditions which the nuns had laid down, making the Ambrosians responsible for the provision of doweries for the abbess and the six nuns of S. Pancrazio when they moved to other monasteries in the city (as they did a week later), and for any debts still outstanding at the time of the agreement with the nuns in the previous December. But there was a bonus to offset these liabilities. Totally of his own accord, and without, as he expressly states, any hint from the Ambrosians, Eugene also handed over *in perpetuum* to the Ambrosians of San Clemente the revenue of the monastery of S. Andrea de Biberatica (in the Via della Pilotta, behind the monastery of the XII Apostoli) which had devolved to the church of the XII Apostoli when Martin V had transferred the abbess and nuns of S. Andrea to S. Pancrazio²³.

The Ambrosian abbey of SS. Clemente e Prancrazio endured, wealthy and fairly vigorous, for just over two hundred years. Apart from an account book of 1611-1614, now in the archives of San Clemente as SCAR 354, little or nothing survives of the records of the abbey. This is largely due to the fact that the Ambrosians housed their archives not at San Clemente but at S. Pancrazio, where they were seen and copied by scholars such as Lubin and the Maurists in the 17th and 18th centuries. They were still there in 1848 when, unfortunately, they were destroyed

²³ ASV, Reg. Vat. 367, fos. 69v-70v. A. LUBIN, *Abbatiarum Italiae Brevis Notitia* (Rome 1693), p. 333, who claims that he saw the original bull of union in the archives of San Pancrazio years after the suppression of the Ambrosians, is incorrect when he gives the date as 1434 not 1439. On 24.1.1441 Eugene ordered the Vicar of Rome and the Abbot of St Paul's to visitate and reform San Clemente (Reg. Vat. 367, fo. 146v). Later in the year (4.12.1441) he united all the Ambrosians into one Congregation, with Milan as centre: *Bullarium Romanum* V (Turin 1860), 54-58; ASV, Arm. 53, 13, fos. 80v-81v.

during an attack on the Porta S. Pancrazio in the revolution of 1848. One is therefore dependent on outside sources, such as papal and municipal records, for the history of the Ambrosians of San Clemente in any period, although for part of the 15th century there are the excellent notes and transcripts (now in the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, as BN lat. 11887) which the Maurists made during an *Iter italicum* at the beginning of the 18th century, and which I have drawn on above for the first fifty years of the Ambrosian occupancy of San Clemente²⁴.

The second centenary of the abbey in 1639 passed, so far as I can ascertain, without any rejoicing. Four years later, and again without any fuss, the abbey was suppressed by Urban VIII on 2 October 1643, together with the whole Ambrosian Order. No concrete reason is given in the bull of suppression, but it is likely that from the very beginning of his pontificate (1623-1644), Urban had had reason to believe that all was not well with the Ambrosians, whose head house by now was San Clemente. In the Order itself there appears to have been widespread dissension, particularly in the Marche province, as a series of very fragmentary documents in the Vatican Archives suggests.

There is, for example, a letter of Fr Gabriel Scaccia of Fabriano on 15 January 1625 in which he submits a list of seventeen complaints and asks the Congregation of the Council to see that he obtains justice in a province "in which we are oppressed beyond measure". On 18 March cardinal Bandini, the Prefect of the Congregation, sent Scaccia's letter on to bishop Comefrillo of Camerino, instructing him to inquire into the matter and to return the letter with his reply. The bishop duly replied on 22 April with information which he had collected at Camerino and Fabriano with respect to Pietro Sassi, the provincial of the Marche. At Camerino there were two Ambrosians in the convent, and two again at Fabriano, one of whom said that he had lived at Macerata under Sassi for eighteen months and testified (extrajudicially, as the bishop carefully notes) that Sassi had been cited at one time for apostacy, that he had been tried at

²⁴ A 15th-century MS. breviary from San Clemente is in Turin, Bibl. naz., E VI 46, from which some hymns to St Clement have been edited in *Analecta Hymnica* 22 (1895) 77-78.

Recanati because he had beaten a poor man to death, and that, as well, he had hoarded at Macerata "a great quantity of salami and ham".

A letter of 4 April 1625 to bishop Antonio Seneca of Anagni, who had been appointed to preside over the forthcoming chapter of the Ambrosian Order at San Clemente on 22 April, is more substantial, perhaps. The writer, Girolamo Attali, an Ambrosian of Milan, states without any preliminaries, that "the congregation of S. Ambrogio al Nemo in this diocese of Milan is on the brink of ruin". Of the fifty religious of the Order in the diocese, about five are worthy of the name. Of the others, two are in prison, two are apostates and assassins, the rest are dishonest and a scandal. The cardinal of Milan, Attali went on, "is very disturbed, since our Order is so old and dates back to the time of St Ambrose". Now that the chapter was about to take place in Rome, the General has expressed a desire for reform to the Cardinal, as has Fr Strigella, the master of novices in Milan. The writer himself was of the opinion that all the three novitiates (Milan, Rome, Recanati) should be combined into one, that no novice should be accepted without the approval of the local bishop, and that all those who were unwilling to toe the line of discipline should be expelled.

The general chapter met at San Clemente on 22 April 1625, with some fifty members present: the General, ex-General, Procurator general, 4 provincials, 4 visitators, 29 priors, 3 novice masters, and 7 "discreti" from Milan, Sasso, San Clemente, Genoa, Recanati, Macerata, and Rieti. Some attempt at reform was made at the chapter, and the egregious provincial of the Marche was removed. But to judge from Urban's bull of suppression some eighteen years later, the reform cannot have been a great success²⁵.

Urban's decision in 1643 to suppress the Order probably came as a surprise to the generality of Ambrosians. Dispensations from the age for the priesthood, and from the legal term for profession, were granted by the pope right up to the middle of 1643, as though all were well with the Order; a protector was

²⁵ ASV, AA. Arm. I-XVIII, 6491, fos. 303-324, 386-387. A large volume of accounts for 1625, etc. is in Arm. 7, 76. See also Arm. 13, 140.

appointed as usual in 1642²⁶. Yet the higher reaches of the Order must have been aware of what was in the wind. For when Urban suppressed the Ambrosians on 2 December 1643 he noted that the Order, "after repeated admonitions", had not mended its ways.

The terms of suppression were very general: all the goods of the Order were to be placed at the disposal of the ordinaries of dioceses in which the Ambrosians had houses. The members of the Order could join other orders or become secular priests. They should be granted some compensation by the various bishops²⁷.

Urban died some six months after he had decreed the suppression, and seems not to have had time to issue any more specific instructions about the future of the ex-members of the Order. Some Ambrosians obeyed the papal decree at once — in 1644 at least ten were given dispensations to become secular priests²⁸. But others, probably the majority, remained on, confused and uncertain, in the twenty nine houses of the Order. Urban's successor, Innocent X, was a little more realistic. On 1 April 1645 he confirmed the suppression, but at least gave some practical directions to the dispossessed, assigning various Ambrosian houses in Piedmont where former Ambrosians could gather until final arrangements were made. The exodus, all the same, was slow, and it was not until 1653 at the earliest that the last ex-Ambrosian was settled. For what it is worth, all of the Ambrosians of whom I have found a record between 1644 and 1653, some thirty four, chose to become secular priests²⁹.

In his confirmation of the suppression on 1 April 1645, Innocent X grouped the various possessions of the Ambrosian Order into *Commendae* or secular benefices. In particular, he

²⁶ ASV, Brevia secreta 865, fo. 609; 887, fo. 588; 888A, fo. 80; 890, fos. 719, 745; 892, fo. 80; 894, fo. 591; 899, fo. 333; 900, fo. 538; 909, fo. 27; 913A, fo. 781; 921, fo. 92; 922, fo. 976; 923, fo. 626.

²⁷ Ibid., 928, fo. 25; *Bullarium romanum* XV (Turin 1868) 292-294.

²⁸ ASV, Brevia secreta 932, fo. 327; 933, fos. 451, 455, 496; 922, fos. 65, 130, 158.

²⁹ For Innocent's bull see Brevia secreta 1126, fos. 146-151, repeated in 1125, fos. 398-403; *Bullarium romanum* XV (Turin 1865) 372-377. For the various Ambrosians, Brevia secreta 998, fos. 96, 327; 1002, fo. 101; 1008, fo. 63; 1019, fo. 66; 1031, fo. 99; fo. 1039, fo. 280; 1040, fos. 29, 146; 1045, fos. 157, 513; 1047, fo. 191; 1048, fo. 252; 1053, fo. 539; 1069, fo. 468; 1096, fo. 460.

set up San Clemente and San Pancrazio in Rome, three houses in the diocese of Tivoli, and all the houses in the Mark of Ancona, as one benefice or *Commenda* to be known as "The Abbey of San Clemente and San Pancrazio".

What the total value of this *Commenda* or sinecure benefice was I do not know, but its annual return was reckoned at 2000 gold ducats (about £540 sterling) by the Apostolic Camera, a considerable sum, by any standard. On 27 April 1645 this plum went to a nephew of Innocent's, Camillo Pamphili, who had been a cardinal since the previous November, just two months after Innocent's election³⁰. But much remained to be done before this huge benefice became a proper sinecure. The ex-Ambrosians had to be looked after. The empty churches and houses had to be restocked.

Pamphili went to work at once. On 14 July 1645 he sought for and obtained within a short two days a papal brief giving him permission to come to any agreement he wished with the ex-Ambrosians who were still inhabiting the various properties of his *Commenda*³¹. He then began to prepare the way for the introduction of fresh religious into the vacant churches and monasteries, San Clemente, for example. On 23 October he prompted Innocent to issue a *Motu proprio* which separated the revenues of San Clemente from the church and monastery there, declared them to belong to the Abbey of SS. Clemente e Pancrazio as such, and stated that if the pope or Pamphili should decide at any time to entrust San Clemente to a religious order, that order would not have any right to any part of the revenue of the church³².

It is at this point that the Dominicans enter the picture. Eight days after the *Motu proprio* of 23 October 1645, Pamphili reached an agreement with Niccolò Ridolfi, the General of the Dominicans, and the community of San Sisto, whereby the Dominicans of San Sisto committed themselves solemnly to the service of the church of San Clemente. The terms were those of the *Motu proprio*, with one or two small additions. The Dominicans would receive the "bare church and buildings",

³⁰ Ibid., 1125, fo. 35.

³¹ Ibid., 1116, fo. 471: 14.7.1645.

³² SCAR (= San Clemente Archives, Rome), n. 1.

nothing else. They had no right to any of the revenue. They could not give the church and convent to any one else without a licence from the Holy See. If at any point they wished to leave the church, they had to hand the church and convent back to the Commendatory Abbot exactly as they had received them. In token of his superiority and dominion, they should present the Commendatory Abbot with a ten-pound white Venetian candle annually on the feast of St Clement. Their lease of the church and property was to be for fifteen years. At the end of that term they could, if they wished, ask for another similar term from the Abbot, but whether or not he granted it would depend on how well they had observed the conditions of the present lease³³.

The surprising thing is that Ridolfi and the San Sisto Dominicans seem to have entered very readily into this stark, onerous contract. Without a penny in recompense from the revenues of the church and house, they agreed to serve and maintain the church and, as well, to fulfil an annual obligation of some 260 Mass-obligations. Possibly, as De Burgo suggests in his *Hibernia Dominicana*, they saw in San Clemente a refuge of sorts for the whole community from the sticky, malarial Summers of San Sisto, and a nice saving on the annual *villeggiatura* or country holiday which the community had been accustomed to take in the convent of S. Giacomo at Anagni, some thirty miles away³⁴.

Camillo Pamphili did not enjoy his sinecure for very long. Five months after he had imposed these conditions on the San Sisto Dominicans, Pamphili, who was only in minor orders, decided to marry, so on 18 March 1646 Pope Innocent X bestowed the Abbey of SS. Clemente e Pancrazio on yet another relative and cardinal, Francesco Maidalchini, a nephew of Innocent's famous sister-in-law and mentor, Donna Olimpia Aldobrandini. He reduced the annual income a little, however, by assigning an annual pension of 600 scudi from the Abbey to the "noble infant" Benedetto Giustiniani, on the same day that he conferred the Abbey on Maidalchini³⁵.

³³ SCAR 47, n. 5; AGOP (= Archivum Generale Ordinis Praedicatorum, at Santa Sabina, Rome) IV. 98, fo. 328, but undated; SCAR 20, 82.

³⁴ T. DE BURGO, *Hibernia Dominicana* (Cologne 1762), p. 407.

³⁵ ASV, Brevia secreta 1126, fos. 882r-883v, 260r-262r.

On the lapse of the original fifteen-year Pamphili lease, Mairaldichini renewed San Clemente to the San Sisto Dominicans for another fifteen years on 29 October 1660³⁶. He was, it may be presumed, happy with them. Certainly they had compiled the various inventories which he had requested (see SCAR 60, etc.), and had maintained a steady religious observance. A contemporary antiquarian, G. Bruzio, remarks in passing in his description of San Clemente that "eighteen Dominicans of observance" looked after the church, while another antiquarian, Benedetto Mellini, notes before 1666 that "Dominicans serve here with charity and devotion"³⁷.

But their position was far from satisfactory, for by the terms of the agreement with the Commendatory Abbot the Dominicans were little more than unpaid caretakers of San Clemente. Where they had to maintain church buildings and shoulder without stipend the heavy Mass obligations inherited from the Ambrosians, the Commendatory Abbot pocketed all the revenues — some 4000 scudi a year, according to De Burgo. At the confirmation of 1660 the Dominicans asked for the use of a hayloft which ran along all the Via S. Giovanni side of the church courtyard, and of a granary which took up the whole façade of the church over the portico (with the present Winter choir as centre). Although the request was rejected at first, it was eventually granted by Mairaldichini on 8 July 1662³⁸.

Encouraged by this small success, the community of San Sisto began to press for a more secure tenure of the whole church and convent, and Priors of San Sisto took to designating themselves as "SS. Sisti et Clementis"³⁹. The efforts of the commun-

³⁶ SCAR 47, n. 3.

³⁷ G. Bruzio, writing between 1646-1667: Vatican Library, MS. Vat. lat. 11885, fo. 199r; B. Mellini, between 1657-1667: *ibid.*, Vat. lat. 11905, fo. 32r.

³⁸ SCAR 20, 87; 47 n. 3. A month after he had confirmed the San Sisto Dominicans for another fifteen years, Mairaldichini transferred from one lessee to another a garden "between the Colosseum and St. John Lateran", the rent being 26 scudi a year: *Brevia secreta* 1124, fo. 12r (28.11.1660). Possibly this is the garden immediately behind the apse of the church which belonged to the Abbey and which Fr Mullooly bought for San Clemente in 1876. There are useful documents on the extent of the granary and hayloft in SCAR 20, 102.

³⁹ SCAR 37, fo. 15v. From the very start they treated San Clemente as though they were sure of remaining on there. On 3.1.1652 a large cistern was excavated in the garden near to the kitchen (SCAR 20, 95); a new bell, decorated with figures of the Blessed Virgin, St Dominic, St Clement,

ity were rewarded on 30 May 1667 when Moidalchini, in virtue of powers granted to Commendatory Abbots by Innocent X, gave the church and convent of San Clemente *in perpetuum* to the Dominicans of San Sisto and the Dominican Order, in return for 360 scudi in cash. When compared with the compensation of 11.000 scudi which Moidalchini received on 12 December 1648 when some churches of the *Commenda* were entrusted to the Third Order of St Francis, this was a paltry payment⁴⁰. But it caught the Dominicans of San Sisto a little off balance. They had just obtained permission to sell some shares in order to pay for a vineyard on the Via Prenestina outside the Porta Maggiore which they had bought a year earlier and which was dubbed "La Torrione" from a large Roman mausoleum which stood on it. Now they had to divert this money to "buy" San Clemente, and later on had to sell some other "Luoghi" or shares to honour the purchase of the vineyard⁴¹.

Apart from the cash payment, there were other stipulations too. All the conditions of the original lease of 1645 and of its renewal in 1660 were to stand, but instead of a ten-pound candle the community had to present a six-pound candle with the arms of the current Commendatory Abbot on the feast of St Clement each year. A picture of St Clement and a plan of the church were to be presented to Moidalchini himself, and a room was to be reserved in the convent for Moidalchini and his successors as Commendatory Abbots. Should Moidalchini or his successors find at any time that the community was not looking after the church in a proper fashion, they could expel the community and invite another in instead. On 13 February each year *in perpetuum*, the day of the anniversary of pope Eugene IV, there should also be a memory in the Mass of Innocent X — and of Moidalchini himself on 14 May each year, when the anniversary of Cardinal Roverella was celebrated. Finally, the arms and portrait of Mai-

and St Ignatius Martyr, was installed at the expense of the General (ibid. 20, 86); two rooms of the convent were let out as a hayloft in 1655 (ibid. 21, 1).

⁴⁰ ASV, Brevia secreta 1119, fos. 56r-57v, 58r-64v.

⁴¹ SCAR 37, 29v (13.6.1677); later on (23.1.1669) they pawned some candlesticks to pay for restocking the vineyard (see SCAR 21, 29, etc.). For the Torrione vineyard, which will occur time and again in these pages, see C. PIERTANGELI, "Il Torrione della Via Prenestina", *l'Urbe* 6 (1941) 1-7.

dalchini and of each successive Commendatory Abbot should be displayed over the convent door, and, as well, a reminder in marble of the present concession⁴².

This "memoria", when put up shortly afterwards, took the form of a straightforward and unpretentious inscription in marble over the entrance to the convent from the courtyard of the church:

INNOCENTII X. P. M. AVTHORITATE
EM. D. FRANCISCVS S. R. E. CARD. MAIDALCHINVS
SS. CLEMENTIS ET PANC RATII
ABBAS COMMENDATARIVS
COENOBIVM HOC ET BASILICAM S. CLEMENTIS
FRATRIBVS S. XYSTI ORD. PRAEDICATORVM
EXIMIA BENIGNITATE
PERPETVO CONCESSIT
DIE XXX MAII MDCLXVII

Curiously, many writers, notably Fr Louis Nolan in his *Irish Dominicans in Rome* (1914), have understood "the brothers of San Sisto" in this inscription to mean the Irish Dominicans, and therefore have concluded that San Clemente came into the possession of the Irish Dominicans in 1667, as though San Sisto had belonged to them somehow before that date. The truth is a little different. The Irish Dominicans are not mentioned as possible proprietors of either house before 1670, and it was not until 1677 that they were inducted formally into the twin convent of SS. Sisto e Clemente, as the two houses were now known since 1667⁴³.

⁴² SCAR 47, n. 6. Maidalchini had already given S. Pancrazio to the Carmelites on 7.1.1662; see *Iuris pontificii de Propaganda Fide*, I (Rome 1888), 328-325.

⁴³ The mistake of 1667 for 1677, which was common until recently, possibly stemmed from a hasty reading of De Burgo's *Hibernia Dominicana*, where a paragraph summary at the beginning of the 12th chapter (that dealing with SS. Sisto e Clemente) reads: "I. *Obtinendis ab Hibernia Dominicana geminis SS. Sixti et Clementis de Urbe Caenobiis viam stravit Magister Generalis Joannes Baptista de Marinis Anno 1667*" (p. 366). In fact, De Burgo carefully distinguishes between the 1667 concession to the Dominicans of San Sisto from that in 1677 to the Irish Dominicans (pp. 369-371, 407). And when he says that de Marinis "viam stravit" what he means is that this General opened the way to obtaining the two convents by allowing Fr John O'Connor to accept houses for study wherever he was offered them. There is absolutely no mention whatever of San Clemente in that rescript.

Like their English brethren, the Irish Dominicans were obliged in the wake of the Elizabethan persecution to send aspirants to the Order abroad for studies, and from the first quarter of the 17th century they possessed foundations at Lisbon (1615) and Louvain (1624). The plight of the Irish Dominican province became more acute after the Cromwellian purge of Ireland in 1649-1650. A report to Propaganda Fide in Rome shortly afterwards stated that some thirty Dominicans had died in Ireland since 1641, that others had been exiled to the Barbadoes, and that about 500 were "scattered all over the world". Another account, this time to the general chapter of the Dominican Order in 1656, noted that of the forty three houses which the Dominicans had in Ireland, there was not even one which had not been burned down, and that of the 600 Dominicans there in 1646, "hardly a fourth now survives at home"⁴⁴

The Dominican Order did its best to help the stricken province. In a finely compassionate decree, the general chapter at Rome in 1650 ordered Dominicans at large to do everything possible to aid their exiled Irish brethren, an injunction repeated at later chapters. The high point of the concern of the Order for the Irish province came in 1667, when Giovanni Battista de Marinis, General of the Order from 1650-1669, issued letters patent on 6 July to Fr John O'Connor, procurator general of the Irish Dominicans, which allowed him to set up a house of studies for Dominican missionaries of the Irish, English and Scottish nations at Madrid, and to accept and maintain houses in any other part of Europe for a similar purpose⁴⁵.

It may be presumed that this letter of de Marinis, which received papal confirmation from Clement IX on 16 September following, gave substance to any hope the Irish Dominicans may have had of securing a foundation in Rome itself. The convent of San Sisto, to which San Clemente had been joined just two months earlier, would have occurred to them at once as a possible site, for they had had strong links with it for some time.

⁴⁴ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Misc. Var. 2^o, fos. 64r-65r; *Acta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. B. Reichert (MOPH I, 468-474).

⁴⁵ ASV, Brevia secreta 1388, fos. 310-312 bis; *Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum*, VI. 227-229, from authentic copy printed by the Apostolic Camera in 1667. The papal confirmation rehearses the de Marinis letter.

Fr Nicholas Lynch of the Irish province had been Prior of San Sisto sometime before July 1634, when he died and was buried in the Dominican house of S. Maria sopra Minerva, Arthur Darcy was a student there in 1646 when he and Thomas Bernardine (O'Brien?), then procurator of the Irish province, witnessed the profession of the English Dominican (later cardinal) Thomas Philip Howard. Didacus de Mira lived there in 1647-1648 and was buried at San Clemente on 18 September 1648. Fr Fabyan Ryan was a member of the San Sisto community in 1659. So was John Baptist Hackett, who had taught at Milan and Naples, and had received Howard into the Order in 1645. He was a professor at San Sisto between 1659 and 1662; indeed the first volume of his *Synopsis universae theologiae*, published in Rome in 1663, was finished at San Sisto on 9 February 1662⁴⁶.

But although the Irish Dominicans probably began to negotiate for San Sisto shortly after the letters patent of de Marinis in 1667, they did not meet with any success until 1670. The English Dominicans, on the other hand, had their hopes of a house in Rome pinned to San Clemente, and this even before it had been ceded formally to the Order. But the petition of Philip Howard, now vicar general of the English province, was turned down by de Marinis in May 1665, on the ground that the convent of San Clemente was so much a complement of the novitiate at San Sisto that it was impossible to think of setting it up as a separate entity. In the Summer months, de Marinis said, the novices are accustomed to move to San Clemente to escape the "notorious unhealthiness" of San Sisto. Anyway, given the distance of Rome from England, he felt that the English Dominicans would be better advised in seeking a place for their novitiate in nearby Brittany or Belgium⁴⁷.

There is not, however, any suggestion in this letter of rejection that the General might consider an application for both

⁴⁶ Archivio S. Maria sopra Minerva, "Necrologium ven. conventus S. M. super Minervam ab anno 1575", p. 10, a volume compiled in 1873 by P.T. Masetti from parish registers; AGOP IV. 85, p. 259, *Hibernia Dominicana, Supplementum*, p. 871 (Darcy); SCAR 60, the last five pages contain a list of those buried at San Sisto and San Clemente, 1645-1677; SCAR 37, fo. 1r (Ryan); G. ANSTRUTHER, *A Hundred Homeless Years* (London 1958), pp. 203-205, 215 (Hackett).

⁴⁷ AGOP IV. 15, p. 376.

San Sisto and San Clemente as a unit, if and when they were joined together. So it must have been with some surprise that Howard, when presenting a further petition for San Clemente five years later to de Rocaberti, the successor of de Marinis, learned that there was no point in pursuing the matter further, since, as de Rocaberti put it bluntly, "the twin convent of San Sisto and San Clemente already has been granted to the Dominicans of Ireland".

What had happened, de Rocaberti said in the letter of 6 September 1670, was that Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II of England, had sent a petition on behalf of the Irish Dominicans for a house in Rome to the general chapter at Rome in the previous May, the request being presented by the Portuguese ambassador in person. Afterwards, the General told Howard, he had consulted the pope on the matter, and in view of the very favourable attitude of the pope had now made up his mind to put the Irish Dominicans in possession of SS. Sisto and Clemente as soon as possible⁴⁸.

The intervention of Catherine of Braganza is not all that surprising. She took a keen interest in Dominican affairs, and had been in touch with both de Marinis and de Rocaberti on various matters prior to this, and, indeed, since Tangier was part of her marriage dowery, had been responsible for the transfer by de Marinis in 1668 of the Dominican house there from the Portuguese to the Irish Dominicans. Besides, her confessor was a Portuguese Dominican, and her titular chaplain was an Irish Dominican named Thady Keogh (alias Poer). She seems, too, to have had some devotion to St Clement of Rome, for just about the time she was briefing her father's ambassador in Rome for the coming general chapter in May 1670, she received a relic of St Clement from Pope Clement IX, or rather, if we are to believe her own letter of thanks on 10 March 1670, "the body" of the martyr pope⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ Ibid., IV. 140, p. 7.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, IV. 157, p. 26: 23.10.1667; IV. 133, p. 7: 9.6.1669. For Keogh see J. MAZIERE BRADY, *Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland and Ireland, A. D. 1400-1875* (Rome 1877), III. 107. For Catherine's thanks "du Corps Sacré du Bienheureux Martyr St Clément", see ASV, *Lettere ai Principi* 95, fo. 8.

For one reason or another, de Rocaberti's decision with respect to SS. Sisto and Clemente hung fire for another seven years, much to the dismay of John O'Connor, the procurator general of the Irish province and the vicar general of all Irish Dominicans *in partibus transmarinis*, who had been at the general chapter of 1670, where he had been made a master of theology.

A Galwayman by birth, O'Connor had spent some years in Spain, where he had become confessor to Eleonora Pimentel, a young sister of the Dominican cardinal, Domingo Pimentel, who died in Rome in 1653 at the age of sixty three. When Eleonora married Duke Francesco Gaetani in 1662, Fr O'Connor came to Rome with her as chaplain and confessor⁵⁰. When he became procurator general of the Irish Dominican province is not certain, but on 6 July 1667, in the letter already noted above, he was procurator general when appointed by de Marinis as vicar general of all Irish Dominican houses, whether of men or women, outside Ireland, an office confirmed by the successor of de Marinis, de Rocaberti, on 6 June 1670, and by papal briefs of Clement IX (16 September 1667) and Clement X (7 December 1672 and 6 August 1674). On 20 March 1669, de Marinis gave him special powers over all Irish Dominicans outside Ireland, and Clement X confirmed these by papal brief on 24 December 1672. And when the various provinces of the Order were proving slow to help out the Irish Dominicans by giving them housing and hospitality in the spirit of de Marinis and de Rocaberti, O'Connor appealed to the pope on 6 July 1674 and not only obtained a new confirmation of the Marinis letter of 1667 a month later, but also a censure on all who in any way hindered its implementation⁵¹.

But even this strong papal brief seems not to have melted whatever opposition there was to de Rocaberti's plan for placing the Irish Dominicans at SS. Sisto e Clemente, so sometime in 1675 O'Connor turned his attention to the vacant church and

⁵⁰ SCAR 41, 48.

⁵¹ All these documents are printed in *Hibernia Dominicana*, pp. 121-127. The original of the brief of Clement X of 24.12.1672 is in SCAR 20, 48 (see also SCAR 20, 47, for a document from the *Signatura Iustitiae* of 20.4.1673, incorporating Clement's brief). The petition of O'Connor which gave rise to the brief of 8 August 1674 is in ASV, *Brevia secreta* 1539, fo. 32, dated 6 July 1674.

monastery of SS. Giovanni e Paolo on the far side of the Coelian Hill from San Sisto. It had no connection with the Dominican Order, and there was no community of any kind to be dislodged. In this fresh venture, as Fr Thomas Burke, who was at San Sisto at that time, attested some forty years later in 1718, Fr O'Connor had the powerful backing of the Duchess Gaetani. The Duchess, Burke says, approached the Commendatory Abbot of SS. Giovanni e Paolo on behalf of the Irish Dominicans and actually won him over, but then was persuaded to drop the idea when Philip Howard, now a cardinal, let her know that he was attempting to obtain SS. Giovanni e Paolo for the English Dominicans. After this, Burke goes on, she did everything she could to encourage de Rocaberti and the Dominican Order to cede SS. Sisto e Clemente to the Irish Dominicans⁵².

She was highly successful. And on the day in 1677 when Fr O'Connor and his small band of Irish Dominicans took over San Sisto and San Clemente, Eleonora Pimentel Gaetani underwrote all the expenses of the transaction, and, if I understand Fr Burke correctly, had *all* the Dominicans in Rome to dinner afterwards. To mark the event further, and to give the new community some financial stability, she caused some forty shares, valued at 4000 scudi, to be purchased for SS. Sisto e Clemente in the year following with money from the estate of her dead brother, the cardinal, and when she died in 1685, left sixty shares (6000 scudi) "to the Irish Dominicans of S. Sisto Vecchio and San Clemente", on condition that they celebrated a requiem Mass each week for her soul⁵³.

It was not, however, her fellow-Spaniard de Rocaberti who put the Irish Dominicans into possession of SS. Sisto e Clemente, as he had been hoping to do from 1670 onwards, but his successor, the Mexican Antonio de Monroy. Elected at the general chapter in Rome on 2 June 1677, de Monroy was commissioned by the chapter to give SS. Sisto e Clemente to the Irish Dominicans and to set up the English Dominicans at SS. Giovanni e Paolo⁵⁴.

⁵² SCAR 41, 49b.

⁵³ SCAR 41, 48d; 23, 9; 21, 52.

⁵⁴ *Acta Capitulum Generalium VIII* (MOPH 13), 174-175, 183. See also G. ANSTRUTHER, "The English Dominicans in Rome", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 29 (1959) 169.

De Monroy issued letters patent on both these counts on 4 August 1677, the feast of St Dominic⁵⁵. Sixteen days later, and in the presence of seven Irish Dominican priests and of a goodly number of other Dominicans, Fr John O'Connor solemnly took real, bodily possession of the two convents of San Sisto and San Clemente from the procurator general of the Dominican Order at San Sisto, "kissing the high altar (as the notarial instrument of Antoine Redoutey states), opening and reading the missal, saying some prayers, ringing the bell, opening and shutting windows and doors, holding the keys in his hands as he went through the cloister, the convent garden and the rooms, plucking some blades of grass, taking leaves from the trees and shoots from the plants, placing his hand on movable goods and furniture, and giving many other signs that denote true, real, actual and corporal possession". Then his seven Dominican compatriots — John Colman, Felix MacDowell, Richard O'Heyne, Thomas O'Flynn, Thomas Burke (our source above), George Nangle, and John Baptist Maguire — came forward and acknowledged O'Connor as the vicar and lawful administrator of the twin convent of San Sisto and San Clemente. Later in the day, as de Monroy had specified in his letters patent, the notary Redoutey began to take a detailed inventory of both houses, working through San Sisto from 20-23 August, and San Clemente on the five days following⁵⁶.

By the time the inventory was finished on 28 August, Fr John O'Connor and his Irish community of seven priests and two novices (Thomas and Dominic Timoney)⁵⁷ probably had recovered from the excitement of having their own place in Rome at last, a place in which, to quote words de Monroy repeated from the charge of de Marinis in 1667, "the youth of the Irish nation could be educated suitably under their own superiors and teachers

⁵⁵ SCAR 20, 17: authentic copy of 5.10.1677, and the source of the text in De Burgo, *Hibernia Dominicana*, pp. 369-371.

⁵⁶ SCAR 20, 18: authentic copy of 7.1.1681, with a note of payment by the notary Redoutey. There are notes towards the inventories in SCAR 20, 70, and SCAR 60, and a fair copy from about 1830 in SCAR 47, n. 7.

⁵⁷ Of the eight novices at San Clemente (none of whom, it seems, was at the ceremony in San Sisto), one, Adam Brown, was a Scot of the English province, two, Thomas Timoney and Dominic Timoney (Tommaso Maria Timone and Domenico Maria Timone), were of the Irish province. Thomas Timoney was ordained subdeacon in Rome on 5.4.1681: see B. Egan, C. Giblin, C. McGrath, "Irish students ordained in Rome (1625-1710)", *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 61 (1943) 116-124, at p. 120.

with respect to the regular discipline of the Order and, especially, the defence and propagation of the Catholic faith in their own homeland".

Although most of the ten Irish Dominicans were then residing there because it was Summer, the place in Rome which they had been given was not in their eyes, nor in the eyes of de Monroy and the Dominican Order, San Clemente (the "annex", to de Monroy) but San Sisto. And it was no ordinary place. It was, as de Monroy put it, "this singular and precious sanctuary of St Dominic, a sanctuary rendered illustrious by so many distinguished followers of such a patriarch", which he urged all Irish Dominicans who should live there in the future "to inhabit and cultivate" in as much as it was a place "founded by Dominic, dwelt in by Dominic, adorned with his tremendous miracles".

This was a high charge, and it was all the higher in that the Irish province of Dominicans was poor and harried, and its future unpredictable. But for all the courage, tenacity and sacrifice in the years that followed, circumstances eventually would force the Irish Dominicans out of S. Sisto, never to return again, and would cause more prominence to be given in the second half of the tercentenary of the Irish Dominicans in Rome to the adventitiously Dominican San Clemente than to the original home of the founder of the Dominicans which the Dominican Order entrusted to John O'Connor and the Irish Dominicans on 20 August 1677.

II

SS. SISTO AND CLEMENTE: 1677-1797 *

On taking possession of their two Roman convents on 20 August 1677, the Irish Dominicans had every reason to be proud of their achievement. They now had a third "foreign college" in which to train novices and students at a time when they could not do so at home. Far more distant, granted, than the colleges of Louvain or Lisbon they already possessed, and much less healthy than either, but still a third home-from-home at the very heart of the Christian world where the community might usefully combine business and study. For Fr. John of St. Dominic O'Connor, it crowned a life-time's service to the Irish province of the order. For his ecclesiastical superiors, it solved more than a pressing Irish problem, for neither church was well attended and San Sisto, in which the community spent most of the year, lay on swampy malarial ground and for that reason had lacked any long-settled community since the Dominican nuns abandoned it in 1575 for the heights of Magnanapoli above the Roman Forum.

Whatever the material drawbacks of distance from the mission, an unhealthy site or uncertain revenues, the acquisition of

* Many of the sources of this chapter are cited in various articles by the present writer, e.g., "The Irish Dominican Province under Appointed Superiors (1698-1721)", in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 38 (1968) 259-357, "Ambrose MacDermott O.P. Bishop of Elphin 1707-1717", *ibid.*, 40 (1970) 231-275, "The Irish Dominican Province in the Final Decades of Persecution (1721-1745)", *ibid.*, 42 (1972) 251-368, "The Irish Dominican Province at the Beginning of its Decline (1745-1761)", *ibid.*, 45 (1975) 399-502; and, especially, "The Vestibary Book of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, 1727-1796", in *Collectanea Hibernica* 10 (1967) 60-71, and "The Book of Receptions and Professions of SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome, 1676-1792", *ibid.*, 14 (1971) 13-35.

the twin convents was still a great achievement. Over the preceding thirty years, several masters general of the order had appealed to other provinces on their behalf, hoping that some province at least would cede one convent, however miserable, to an Irish province then tottering from crisis to crisis. But it took a general chapter in 1677 and the personal interest of Antoninus de Monroy of Mexico, the only American master general the order has ever had, to see them safely installed at Rome. Twenty years later, in a similar enterprise, the Irish Augustinians failed to gain a foothold at Santa Prisca on the Aventine, even though all the religious of Ireland had just been exiled and the Augustinians had no foreign college whatsoever.

The Dominicans too would probably have failed but that both convents, being under the immediate jurisdiction of the master general, belonged to no province in particular, not even the Roman province of the order. The two houses constituted one convent from at least as early as 1663 and were used as a kind of international novitiate, largely for the provinces of Italy but with the occasional Belgian, German or Austrian novices mingling with the rest. The novitiate at San Sisto, quite a strict one, came into being in 1655 as part of a reform of conventual life ordered by Alexander VII and was kept up until the Irish came. Seven Italian and one Spanish novice actually witnessed the arrival of the Irish community in 1677.

Whatever about San Clemente, a house and church to which no one attached any great importance and which had been in Dominican hands for only thirty years, it was a high honour to be given San Sisto, the first foundation St. Dominic made in Rome and the scene of his most dramatic miracles. And both churches, needless to say, bore the names and preserved the relics of martyred popes: St. Clement (about 96 A.D.) and St. Sixtus II (257-258) whose names followed each other in the Canon of the Mass as read by every priest of the Latin rite in the whole world for more than a thousand years.

These churches, rather less than a mile apart on opposite sides of the Coelian Hill, had much in common so far as architecture and history were concerned. Originally built in the fourth or fifth century, both were reconstructed about the twelfth, and reconstructed in the same way. Since road levels had risen very much over the centuries, each was then filled in to bring its

pavement up to the new ground level, and then rebuilt on a smaller scale, as was also done (if for different reasons) at the Santi Quattro Coronati, a church which looks down on San Clemente from the other side of the road linking the Colosseum to St. John Lateran's. In short, they were and are much smaller than the palaeochristian basilicas on which they stand. Out of respect for their age and status as two of the earliest parish churches or *tituli* of Rome, each has had its own cardinal titular for centuries past, and each has its own "station-day" during Lent: a day of fast and prayer on which the Pope, having first celebrated Mass elsewhere, would come in procession to the church to preside at the penitential service described from time immemorial as a "station".

Taking possession: 20 August 1677

Considering the long years of hard work, the sufferings and set-backs he had had to endure before finally reaching his goal, John of St. Dominic O'Connor had every reason to make the actual process of moving in as public and as solemn as possible. He also had the wisdom to employ a public notary, not simply to record the event, or the legal documents on which it rested, but to list every piece of furniture, every book, every knife and fork in both convents. It was exclusively a family occasion, and although the number present was quite large, all were members of the Order. The most important among them was Fr. Maria Ruffo, procurator general, who had been fully authorised to speak in the name of the absent general, Antoninus de Monroy. Then there were two provincials, of the Roman and Portuguese provinces, the priors of St. Mary Major's and of La Quercia in Viterbo, several other Dominicans including the Englishman Lewis Thursby, besides the members of the outgoing and incoming communities.

After sung Mass at the high altar in San Sisto, all adjourned to the chapter-room of St. Dominic within the cloister to listen as the legal documents of three masters general and two popes were read aloud, and then formally to install John of St. Dominic O'Connor with his little gathering of Irish followers in their new home. From first to last, all recognised Father O'Connor's status as procurator general and vicar of the Irish provincial "in

foreign parts". Father de Monroy's letter of 4 August 1677 expressly acknowledged this title, while granting O'Connor and his lawful successors full authority over the two houses, even to the extent of appointing superiors (should the election of a prior prove impossible) and of assigning people to and from the community.

Who belonged to the first community? John O'Connor, of course, or O'Conchouair as he wrote the name himself, vicar provincial but not prior, who died at Rome in December of the following year. John Colman, who left for Spain in 1678 and later found his way to the Spanish Main. Felix MacDowell, an older priest who remained at Rome until 1685, went back then to be captured after the battle of the Boyne and eventually (after some years of exile) to die in a Dublin jail in 1707. Richard Ean or O'Heyne, once a fellow-student at Salamanca of his famous namesake John O'Heyne, historian of the province, was also one of the first community but soon transferred to the Italian branch of the Order known as the *Congregatio Sanitatis*. Having taught theology for twenty years at Naples, he retired to London as a chaplain of the Spanish embassy and died there about 1732. Thomas O'Flynn, who studied both at Louvain and Prague before ever coming to Rome, was assigned from San Sisto to Centocelle in 1680. Thomas Burke stayed a full ten years, until 1687, and eventually returned to Rome after the general exile of 1698 to die in 1724 as a penitentiary of St. Mary Major's. George Nangle, who was still a student, went off to Naples within seven months of the great occasion, but returned to San Sisto in 1693. Finally, having come to the end of the list, a word about John Baptist Maguire. Unless there were two of the same name, he received permission in 1679 to go to Ireland once he had settled some business at Toulouse.

The actual composition of this pioneer group offers quite some food for thought. How Father O'Connor managed to assemble the other seven at Rome, or whence and how they came, we do not know. Save for Nangle and Maguire, the community seems to have been composed of friars from Connacht, while half at least had studied and worked in Spain. So both the "Spanish" and Connacht elements of the Irish province were strongly represented. And one may also remark how few of the original eight stayed for more than a few years at San Sisto.

More surprising still, the community lacked a prior, nor did it get one until 22 March 1678 when Thomas Craff, already prior and university lecturer at Urbino, was appointed both prior and regent of studies of SS. Sisto and Clemente. Since the unfortunate man died within two years of the event, the infant community lost both its vicar provincial and prior before really having had time to settle down in new surroundings.

San Sisto: church and convent, 1677

At the actual time of the transfer, during August, the largely Italian community was at San Clemente, as it always was for the hottest months of the years. Over at San Sisto, there were only two holding the fort: a Fra Gironimo and a Padre Felice, most probably the future martyr, Felix MacDowell. Leafing through the detailed description of San Sisto, one notices that the church, notwithstanding several later restorations, presented much the same appearance as it does today. The choir, with its portable organ and five spittoons, occupied the apse, behind the high altar and beneath a large painting of the Assumption firmly attached to the back wall: in all likelihood the very picture now hanging in the sacristy.

There were then, as there are today, four side-altars, two on either side of the single nave. None was described as a chapel, nor was any protected by iron gates. The high-altar was and is dedicated to St. Sixtus. As one stands facing up the church, the altars on the right were dedicated to St. Vincent Ferrer and (closer to the high-altar) to the Holy Name of Jesus. Those on the left, following the same order, were dedicated respectively to St. Dominic and to Our Lady of the Rosary. All five altars were replaced by pope Benedict XIII in 1727, their various dedications being somewhat juggled in the process. The Holy Name disappeared in favour of Our Lady of the Rosary. Vincent Ferrer, displaced by "All Dominican Saints", went straight across the church to dislodge St. Dominic. For Dominic, it was in any event a case of promotion, for he simply moved up the church on the left-hand side to take the altar vacated by Our Lady of the Rosary.

Each altar, whether in 1677 or 1727, was adorned by an appropriate portrait. That of St. Dominic was no ordinary one,

not a portrait of the man but a representation of "St. Dominic in Soriano", illustrating an event which took place in that city of Calabria in 1530. Fra Lorenzo, the lay-brother sacristan, on opening the inner door of the church so that the brethren might enter choir, was amazed to see three noble ladies, and still more surprised when one of the three gave him a portrait of St. Dominic. The three disappeared from the locked church as mysteriously as they had entered it, but in a second apparition identified themselves as Our Lady, donor of the portrait, and two protectresses of the order: SS. Mary Magdalen and Catherine of Alexandria. Since the fame of this miraculous picture spread far and wide, it is not surprising that the Italian friars of San Sisto dedicated one of their altars to this apparition, just as they had done at San Clemente.

As to the sparse furnishings of the church, one may mention that it contained two confessionals, five kneelers and but a single bench. That forlorn seat may equally suggest the Roman preference for standing in church or how little this remote church was frequented by the faithful. Attached to the wall was a wooden pulpit from which St. Dominic had once preached and which Benedict XIII was later to place in the chapter-room. That same Dominican pope replaced the old confessionals, leaving at least one which is still perfectly preserved and proudly bears the date 1727. Neither the sacristy nor the two store-rooms above it were particularly well-stocked. For instance, there were only three chalices, but there was also a cope bearing the arms of Nicolò Ridolfi, a former master general who retired to San Sisto under "house-arrest" when unjustly deposed from office in 1642 and did much to restore what was even then a tottering convent.

Unlike San Clemente, San Sisto had a square cloister-garth with a well in the centre, just as it appears today save that the surrounding walls of the convent were not then so high. On the ground-floor, opening onto the cloister, was the famous chapter-room of St. Dominic in which a precious oil-lamp of majolica hung from the ceiling by an adjustable chain. Beside it, to the north, was the imposing *atrium* of the refectory, a long low hall with small windows and walls of massive thickness which gave access (at right-angles) to the refectory itself. That refectory, a low vaulted room of the same character, runs the entire length

of the cloister on the northern side. The library was well furnished with about 300 books of the sort one would expect to find in a Dominican house of studies, with a fair sprinkling of works in French and many, incunables perhaps, "*in lettera gothica*". One room on the second story was called "Father General's", probably in memory of Serafino Secchi (1612-1628) who had constructed six rooms and an ante-room above the chapter. Apart from these, there were only twelve simply-furnished cells in the dormitory, each of which had a bed of boards covered by a mattress.

The campanile or bell-tower, a typically Roman one even yet, was adorned on the outside by a clock, while the *cortile* or courtyard of the church contained twelve large mulberry-trees, a small house and an *osteria* with a door of its own onto the Via Appia. One hesitates to translate *osteria* as a tavern, but whatever purpose it served, the friars had it rented out to others, together with the small house and the mulberry trees.

However poor and ruinous it may have been, San Sisto owned valuable land. First of all beside the convent where, apart from a garden reserved for the friars, an extensive vineyard stretched along the slope of the Coelian Hill. This also was rented out to two tenants, one of whom worked the "upper" and the other the "lower" part of the terrain. Yet another source of income was provided by two adjoining haylofts attached to the wall of the church, probably close to the apse, and a third in Campo Vaccino opposite the church of St. Anastasia. There were other vineyards outside Rome, at Foglasino and Gallicano, but the largest lay just outside the Porta Maggiore where they owned what was called "*Il Torrione*" because of the tower standing on the property. Though it needed replanting then, it would later prove a substantial source of income for the Irish Dominicans. The community also owned 140 olive trees on three distinct parcels of land at Tivoli, not to mention eight buffaloes at Piperno.

San Clemente: church and convent, 1677

Both the church and convent of San Clemente emerge from the inventory of 1677 as larger and better furnished than those of San Sisto. The church, despite the overpowering baroque em-

bellishments of a later date, escaped almost unscathed from the sort of musical-chairs which changed the dedication of four altars at San Sisto. A large painting of St. Ignatius, representing his death in the Colosseum, hung behind the high altar. On the altar itself stood a painted wooden tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament was probably reserved. The altar was separated from the stone choir in front of it by an iron gate, since removed. Within the choir, apart from yet another portable organ, there were various service-books including five of those great parchment volumes used whenever Mass or the divine office was sung. As at San Sisto, most of the vases were of wood rather than of glass, just as the candlesticks were more often of wood than of metal. Silver vases and candlesticks were kept safely in the sacristy.

Three other altars and two chapels are listed, all protected by iron gates, though the distinction between chapel and altar seems to have been purely nominal. The "altars" were dedicated to St. John Baptist, St. Dominic in Soriano and St. Catherine, all of which not only survive but clearly deserve to be called chapels. The two "chapels", on the other hand, were dedicated to Our Lady: one to the Madonna of the Annunciation and the other to the Madonna of the Rosary. The former, which was probably set into the right-hand side of the church, has quite disappeared. The latter, the Rosary Chapel, is that to the left of the high altar in which the Blessed Sacrament is now reserved. The inventory says little of its furnishings, for they belonged not to the friars but to the Venerable Company of the Most Holy Rosary.

The other appointments of the church were only marginally better than those of San Sisto: a wooden pulpit, four confessionals, four kneelers and a few seats. Although there were a few houses along the Via San Giovanni outside, the church was almost as remote from centres of population as its counterpart on the other side of the Coelian and was probably frequented more by pilgrims than by regular worshippers of its own. Here too there was a clock on the bell-tower. Only on leaving the church to enter either of its two sacristies or the convent itself, could one begin to appreciate how much richer than San Sisto it really was. Not even the two sacristies sufficed to hold all its valuable plate or vestments, for there were two rooms overhead

to take the overflow. Some of the richly embroidered copes bore the arms of cardinals Pamphili and Rospigliosi. There were chalices, pyxes and a monstrance of silver. Note was carefully made of the chalice out on loan to the English Dominicans of SS. John and Paul, half-way between the two Irish convents. But the great treasure of the church, kept in the larger of the two sacristies, was a silver reliquary of St. Clement, fashioned in the form of an arm clutching an anchor in its hand. There is no explicit mention of any relic or picture, much less of any altar dedicated to St. Cyril.

The convent too was both larger and better equipped, partly because its summer residents had brought their own trappings with them from San Sisto. Only three Irishmen —Fathers Thomas Burke, Thomas O'Flynn and John Colman— had already moved in, but there were rooms assigned for the conventual vicar and prior and rooms actually occupied by eight novices and a Fr. Francesco del Pizzo who was probably their master. The one Spanish novice, true to the genius of his race, refused to let the notary list the contents of his room since most of it was his private property and he had yet to be professed! All in all, there were about nineteen cells, of which the prior's room was much more richly furnished than the others, a novitiate oratory, chapter-room, refectory and a common vestiary. Its library of some 400 books was both larger and richer than that of San Sisto, for it contained forty books in manuscript, but the emphasis was the same. Scholastic, patristic and scriptural treatises formed the bulk of the collection. There was, besides, a small novitiate library, mostly of spiritual or devotional works in Italian.

One is struck by the simplicity of the furnishings, especially by the spoons of horn in the refectory and the large number of unframed paintings about the place. There were fifteen such paintings in the novitiate corridor, not representing the Stations of the Cross as was usual in our own times, but the mysteries of the Rosary: a wider and more suitable range of meditation for the youngest sons of St. Dominic. Each friar had his own latten lantern, a bed of wooden boards, a straw mattress, with bed-coverings of rough wool or even canvass. He also had a table, chair and kneeler, but no toilet or washing facilities what-

ever in his own cell, much less any means of keeping warm in winter. The novitiate oratory contained both an hour-glass and a half-hour-glass, but the only other means of reckoning the passage of time (unless the clock on the campanile actually chimed) was either to watch the sun or pay attention to the three distinct bells used within the house to summon the brethren to choir, class or refectory.

Apart from the ancient stone choir in the church, there was a winter choir above the central door where the benches and kneelers were of wood and two spittoons provided for those who needed them. Instead of an altar, as there is at present, there was a wooden pulpit of which the base did duty as a small press for service-books. Not that there were many books, only two breviaries in fact, for the older members of the community knew the psalms by heart and relied heavily on the succentors, positioned closest to whatever oil-lamps or candles were available, to guide them through the more difficult parts of the sung office. Behind that winter choir, above the façade and overlooking the courtyard of the church, there was a small granary which the community were currently using themselves in preference to renting it out. It was an ingenious and practical way of insulating themselves from the cold of winter.

The wealth of San Clemente was limited to the confines of the house, for it owned no land or olive trees, much less buffaloes, outside its own precincts. Two small gardens, orchards in fact, were reserved for the friars themselves. A chicken-run, with a room and basement annexed, was rented out to a third party. Similarly, the courtyard of the church was put to good use. On the northern or right-hand side there was a hay-loft between the main entrance to the convent and the façade of the church. On the opposite side there was a smaller one which, though being "above" the courtyard, had a door of its own onto the Via San Giovanni. Finally, a small house and shop adjoined the courtyard of the church. Taken together, these little properties, from shop to chicken-run, brought in about ten pounds sterling a year, so it is not surprising that the brethren requested twice a week for bread and occasionally, though without much success, for money too. They had not even any investments, but on the contrary were obliged to celebrate *gratis* more than 260 Masses a year.

"Under the Master General's eye":

The new Irish college began to flourish almost as soon as it was founded. By 1684 it was already full, so that a hopeful Irish candidate had to be diverted to Venice to pursue his studies. This initial, and as it proved, ephemeral success put San Sisto on a par with the other foreign colleges of the province at Lisbon and Louvain but equally exposed it to a difficulty with which those older colleges were long familiar: a problem endemic in all Irish colleges abroad, Dominican or not. To put matters bluntly, the members of the community were forever at odds among themselves. The pain of exile, academic and political rivalry for the best jobs, in-born antagonism between the four Irish provinces or *nationes*, to say nothing of the Irish character itself, all fused and found expression in an endless chain of petty disputes which the masters general of the order were not the last to notice.

When John of St. Dominic O'Connor died in December 1678 at the palace of his noble and generous penitent, the Duchess Pimentelli, he was laid to rest in an unmarked grave between the two altars jutting from the left wall of San Sisto. It was not until 1853 that Fr. Joseph Mullooly erected a fitting inscription to his memory. After O'Connor's death, the community seems to have continued to elect its own priors and to submit their names either to the Irish provincial or his "foreign vicar" for confirmation. This procedure strictly adhered to the wishes of Antoninus de Monroy, but when Monroy went to his reward in 1686, a master general arose who knew not Joseph nor his prophecies. Antoninus Cloche, Monroy's immediate successor, grew steadily more dissatisfied with the internal disputes of San Sisto and ever more convinced that the community was letting both convent and basilica go to rack and ruin.

All things considered, the master general judged that the college could be more easily and better managed by himself than by any provincial or vicar. As early as 1692 we find that it was he (and not the Irish vicar) who confirmed William O'Doyer's election as prior of San Sisto. All Cloche needed was a further excuse to intervene, and that excuse was offered him in March 1693 when the Irish provincial Gelasius MacMahon, then present in Rome, deposed O'Doyer from the priorship. Within a week

the provincial was told that he no longer had any authority over San Sisto. There still remained, of course, a vicar-provincial, Ambrose MacDermott the future bishop of Elphin, who had taught at San Sisto from 1679 and seems to have stepped into O'Connor's vicarial shoes. Legally speaking, no vicar can have greater authority than his master, and MacDermott's masters had just been told he had no authority at all. In fact, MacDermott held his ground and attended the general chapter of 1694, struggling with some temporary success to prevent the other colleges at Lisbon and Louvain from coming under the general's immediate jurisdiction. The chapter did not place San Sisto in this legal category, but simply recommended the convent to the general's "solicitude".

Father Cloche had already denied the Irish provincial any authority over the twin-convents at Rome. His next step was to abolish the office of vicar-provincial, or rather to convince the incumbent, Ambrose MacDermott, that the office no longer existed. Curiously enough, the Irish friars hastened to repeat almost exactly the mistake made by their provincial in 1693 and Father Cloche, with perfect logic, seized the occasion exactly as he had done before. Following a dispute at San Sisto in October 1694, George Nangle resigned the priorship and Ambrose MacDermott, as vicar-provincial, accepted his resignation. On the community's request, MacDermott then appointed Thomas Naghten in Nangle's place. Within two weeks, Father Cloche not only restored George Nangle to the priorship but told Father MacDermott in no uncertain terms that he was not vicar-provincial and had no authority whatsoever over the community of San Sisto.

At the time of the general exile in 1698, that catastrophic year in which all the bishops and friars of Ireland were expelled from Ireland, Father Cloche was still master general and his attitude had not changed in the least. What had changed was the *studium* of San Sisto which, after so promising a start, had practically ceased to exist. Patrick Marshall, the exiled provincial, wished to appoint not only a regent of studies but even a special procurator there. Father Cloche, however, insisted that only he might assign subjects to SS. Sisto and Clemente, that there was no *studium* there and hence no need for teachers, and that the college was too heavily in debt for the erection of a studentate

to be contemplated. Only when the full impact of the disaster in Ireland dawned on Father Cloche did he change his mind and consent to the reopening of the *studium* in 1701.

One may well say that the master general wanted more power, more authority over these two convents than the law allowed, and that he took what he wanted. Yet, on the other hand, one must ask what his motives were, and it is both reasonable and charitable to suggest that he was a practical man who liked to set things spiritual and temporal in proper order, even if that meant ignoring an inconvenient decree issued by his immediate predecessor. He blamed the Irish friars for neglecting to repair the church and convent of San Sisto. But he also knew they were heavily in debt and towards the end of his own generalate, about 1716, dipped deeply into his own pocket to do what they were unable to do themselves. He restored the chapter-room, then on the point of complete collapse; he provided new seats both for the refectory and its *atrium*, repaired the cloister outside and completely retiled the roofs of church and convent.

At the general chapter of 1721 and under another master general, Augustine Pipia, the Irish provincial regained direct control over the three foreign colleges: a decision endorsed by the following chapter in 1725. On visiting Rome in that latter year, the provincial Stephen MacEgan lodged with his Irish subjects from June to October and even held a canonical visitation there. Yet this was shadow rather than substance, for Irish provincials hardly ever came to Rome and it was much more convenient for the brethren to do business with a master general to whose convent one might walk in half an hour than with a distant provincial whose reply might take six months to come by post. While the decision of these general chapters were respected in principle, they crumbled away at the first whiff of reality. Even Father Pipia appointed a vicar at San Sisto in November 1722, pending the election of a prior. He confirmed prioral elections, assigned subjects to and from the convent, just as he appointed those who taught in it. On the other hand, he gave some form of authority over the community to an Irish Dominican named John Brown, confessor of James III, at whose request he framed some regulations for their betterment.

Pipia's successor, Thomas Ripoll, was no less careful to respect the provincial's lawful authority, but matters were taken out of his hands (or rather thrust into them) by the Irish friars themselves. For it was at the request of the community that Benedict XIII subjected the two Roman convents to the immediate jurisdiction of the master general on 20 December 1726. A second decree of January 1727 totally removed the convents from the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial *pro tempore*. Benedict XIII was perhaps the greatest benefactor the Irish Dominicans of Rome ever had. He repaired and furnished their two houses and churches, improved their finances, and even lodged with the community for a while, eating their simple fare and attending choir like anyone else. But in changing their juridical status, he overruled the contrary decisions of the general chapters of 1721 and 1725 for which the Irish province had fought for twenty years. When the prior of San Sisto, Patrick O'Dugan, went out of office in 1728, the Pope arranged his reappointment instead of allowing the friars hold an election. Patrick O'Dugan and Stephen Dowdall were both affiliated to the convent *auctoritate apostolica* despite the ruling of an Irish provincial chapter and an ordination only recently made by Thomas Ripoll himself. This papal benevolence was warm, well intentioned, even solicited, but nonetheless suffocating for that.

Later provincials tried in vain for thirty years to recover their lost authority. No general chapter would heed them, nor were the Irish at Rome in favour of any change. The end came in 1756 when Charles O'Kelly spoke as definitor at the general chapter in Rome. He reported later that the petitions of the province were "disagreeable to the general and rejected by him with warmth and indignation as derogating from his immediate jurisdiction over our houses in Lisbon and Rome. I was well prepared to assert the right of our province and the justice of our petitions, but contrary to law and the liberty of a definitor, he silenced me in public chapter... In my humble opinion the province should never more petition a general chapter for immediate jurisdiction over our houses abroad". O'Kelly saw quite clearly where the root of the problem lay: at San Sisto where the brethren, "too remote from Ireland and under the general's eye", were quite content with the *status quo*. They had, after all, arranged it for themselves with the help of Benedict XIII.

Finance: resources and resourcefulness

The Irish Dominicans, having received two churches and two convents for nothing, found munificent benefactors, even popes and cardinals, to keep them in repair. But on the humdrum level of day-to-day expenses, when it came to feeding and clothing an average community of fifteen people, they were left to their own devices and found it hard at times to make ends meet. Neither church represented a source of income. San Clemente was a positive burden, for while the community was obliged to celebrate almost 300 founded Masses *per annum*, the stipends went to the commendatory abbot, usually a cardinal, who might occasionally in some spasm of generosity offer them an alms. That particular problem was not settled until 1768, after which time the abbot was obliged by papal decree to pay them 50 scudi a year. Since frequent references to scudi will sprinkle the following pages, the reader will be glad to know that the Roman scudo was worth five shillings, so that to reckon what any given number of scudi was worth in pounds sterling, one simply divides that sum by four.

In the early years there were also some inherited debts to pay: debts, that is to say, left to them with the property. Some tenants failed to pay their agreed rent on land. Sometimes, though rarely enough, the Irish unwisely loaned money to laymen or priests, only to lose both the interest and most of the capital. They were strangers, living far from home in a land of businessmen, but proved themselves ready pupils in the gentle art of making and keeping money. It was fortunate they did, since the college could not have existed otherwise. In general terms, one might say that they were poor until 1720, comfortable thereafter until the total failure of their vineyards in 1765, recovered their financial composure by about 1778, and were positively rich for the last two decades of the century.

What then were their chief resources? Land, founded Masses, legacies, a few houses and hay-lofts, outright gifts from patrons rich and poor, with whatever smaller sums came through their ministry or the offerings of the faithful. What land they had at the outset came to them with San Sisto, and this they rented out to successive tenants for so long as it was profitable to do so. The vineyard at Gallicano was soon rented to none

other than the master general of the order. When Antoninus Bremond died there, at San Pastore, in 1755, the Irish sold the property to his immediate successor, Juan Tomás de Boxadors. A small parcel of land at Tuscolo was sold off in 1732. The vineyard at Fogalasino and another holding at Toffia were sold as late as 1784, and then only because it would have required expensive law-suits to retain them. The olive-trees at Tivoli, which they had been recommended to sell in 1677, were still being rented out in 1795.

The one large vineyard they kept, apart from those beside San Sisto, was that called *Il Torrione* just outside the city walls, and it is obvious that the community made every sacrifice, not merely to equip and improve the property, but also to enlarge it by the purchase of adjoining ground. They built a house and stable there in 1732, spent 800 scudi to buy more land in 1739, repaired the wine-cellar in 1747, and then paid no less than 1,000 scudi for an adjoining vineyard in 1764 only to face disaster in the following year. "Our vineyards", they wrote to Ireland, "have been blasted to such a degree on the 12th and 13th April as to deprive us of any hopes of making near as much wine as is necessary for our home consumption. A circumstance truly interesting [i.e. important] when we consider that no inconsiderable part of our income arose from the sale of wine". So highly did they prize *Il Torrione* that at one stage they gravely debated whether or not they should build a wall along the Via Praenestina to prevent passing carts and carriages from nibbling away a few feet of their precious estate.

The loss of a year's vintage did not induce them to sell, nor even discourage them from increasing their acreage outside the Porta Maggiore, for they bought yet another nearby vineyard in 1775 to add to what they already had. In much the same neighbourhood, on the Campo Verano, they invested in a second vineyard with two furnished houses on the hill to the left of the Via San Lorenzo. For this, they laid out in 1725 the immense sum of 1,600 scudi. This too they rented out, but at no great profit, since it yielded in 1773 no more than 33 scudi *per annum*.

Their remaining land surrounded their two convents, San Sisto in particular. The small gardens of San Clemente, used for some time as a vineyard, were uprooted in 1714 because entirely unproductive and rented out in 1731 because "almost

never cultivated". Those of San Sisto were far larger and of much greater value: apart from the upper and lower vineyards, at least three small gardens adjoined the main buildings. The ill-famed Marrana, cause of so much sickness in earlier centuries (partly because the Canons of the Lateran used it as a sewer) flowed through the upper vineyard, above and parallel to the church, making its way to join the Tiber. This provided a water-supply, especially for the vineyards, but on the other hand the friars had to pay tax for the water and the Marrana had the annoying habit of drying up from the beginning of June until the end of September, the four most vital months of the year so far as the vineyards were concerned. About 1716, each of the two vineyards brought in more than 100 scudi a year, but they increased even more in value, so that by 1781 the *five* different "gardens" at San Sisto yielded 260 scudi *per annum*.

Such details as one finds about the smaller gardens, houses and haylofts of San Sisto, not to mention the tavern on the Via Appia, throw fragmentary but interesting light on the architecture of both church and convent. What now looks like the fifteenth-century side-door of the church was in fact fronted by a large courtyard stretching well out across the modern motor-way. There was also a cemetery in the grounds. Steps were taken to see that only flowers were planted near the walls of the buildings, lest trees or vines should damage their foundations. The "cloister-garden", when rented out in 1714, was said to adjoin the chapter-room, the library, the prior's room and the conventual prison, though of these various rooms only the chapter was certainly on the ground floor. Their tavern stood beside the "big" hayloft and had a small garden of its own; in 1715 an Irishman named James Farrelly became the tenant of all three, but only for two years, after which the tavern was transformed into a private house.

One can rarely draw a clear distinction between the Masses and legacies which formed the second staple of their income, for the larger legacies almost always entailed the celebration of perpetual or founded Masses. John O'Connor's penitent, the Duchess Pimentelli Caietani bequeathed them an enormous sum for founded Masses, but the family contested the will. The friars held on, but when they wished in 1725 to use the capital of 6,000 scudi deposited in the Banco di Santo Spirito because they were

getting no interest from it, they found that the money could not be withdrawn. This, the largest legacy they ever received, was greatly reduced before they finally received at least half of it in 1729 and loaned 3,000 scudi at interest to the Servites of San Marcello in Corso.

In 1751 the community undertook to sing a perpetual Mass and recite the Office of the Dead twelve times a year for the intentions of General de Brilly. In return, through the good offices of John Lynch O.P., they received 900 scudi, but the brethren showed some reluctance to attend these Masses and probably even more to recite the Office of the Dead to which they were in any case obliged once a week. The prior was forced to allow them a few pence as often as they attended either! Later still, an anonymous Irishman of seventy-four gave no less than 2,400 scudi on far lighter terms: they would pay him 40 scudi a year and later offer thirteen perpetual Masses *per annum* after his death. In the same year, 1775, they received what was called a chaplaincy: the celebration of a daily Mass in the Rosary chapel of either of their churches. The donors were Pietro Marsi and his Irish wife Isabella Gordon, long the faithful servants of James III and Charles III, his son and successor. The capital was not in cash but consisted of 17 *luoghi di Monte*: what we would call bonds or shares yielding an annual interest while guaranteeing the safety of the principal.

An English priest named William Smith gave them 500 scudi on much the same terms as General de Brilly had earlier stipulated. But within a few months of this arrangement, Father Smith died (13 April 1776) and was buried before the Rosary altar in SS. Quirici and Giulitta. A widow of Dublin, Mrs. Elizabeth Andrews, left them £ 109 sterling in 1783 for sixty annual, perpetual Masses: the money was "given out at interest upon state security styled here Luoghi di Monte, being the best that can be found". Yet the generosity of the Widow Andrews could not for a moment compare (unless it was a case of the widow's mite) with that of the former provincial, John Fottrell, also of Dublin, who first sent San Sisto 400 scudi for 24 perpetual Masses on behalf of Lady Mary Butler, and then in 1787 bequeathed them 1,059 scudi from his own savings, with a very light obligation to say Masses for the repose of his soul. What the Dominicans of Dublin thought of this is not recorded!

Turning from founded Masses, one might mention other benefactions, though even these were rarely outright gifts. John Brown O.P., chaplain to James III, gave them *luoghi di Monte* to the value of 1,200 scudi in 1725 on the understanding that he would receive the interest until his death, while the convent would obtain both capital and interest afterwards. So joyfully was the gift received that Brown was granted use of the prior's room at San Clemente, but he revoked his agreement in 1726 on being translocated to his original convent of Fano in the province of Lombardy. All ended well, for he died two years later and the money did in fact revert to San Sisto. Others proved more generous. General Thady O'Brien of the Austrian service gave them 800 scudi in 1739; Charles O'Kelly O.P. of the Casanatensian library in Rome simply paid a large debt of 800 scudi which the community was obliged to incur in 1775. One of their own priors, John Thomas Troy, bishop of Ossory, sent them 626 scudi in 1778; his predecessor Thomas Burke, also a son of San Sisto, had left the money for a second edition of his *Hibernia Dominicana*, but since no one wished to undertake the work the money was available, in accordance with the terms of Burke's will, for San Sisto. Luke Concanen, O'Kelly's successor at the Casanatensian and assistant-general, gave San Sisto 500 scudi in 1797 on the understanding that he would receive 25 scudi a year in return. Had he but known that the French Republican army would occupy Rome a few months later, he would have been more cautious. In matters financial he was a particularly careful man.

Most of this money, because of the obligations it carried, could not be directly used. It had to be invested in some bank or other which issued the famous *luoghi di Monte*, a kind of bond or share which could lose all value if the bank went bankrupt. These *luoghi*, then, apart from those of the *Monte di S. Pietro*, were not much favoured; their bonds were sold as often as they were bought. The only other legal alternative was to lend the capital at a set rate of interest: a much more popular proceeding. But to whom was the money lent? To other Roman convents in preference to any bank. The Dominicans of San Sisto both loaned and received such loans themselves, making no scruple of shifting these sums about from convent to convent according as the rate of interest rose in one convent or fell at

another. To put matters more simply, the convents of Rome served as bankers to each other. Free money, to which no obligation was attached, was invested whenever available in buying more land.

Whatever profit the friars of San Sisto made on their vineyards, or interest on their loans, went to meet their daily expenses, to pay taxes for the repair of nearby streets or for their water-allowance from the Marrana. That profit, luckily for them, far exceeded the meagre returns they gained by giving weekly conferences in a local hospital, by saying Mass for the nuns of SS. Quattro Coronati, or by demanding a pension of 50 scudi from each novice after 1773. In short, it guaranteed the maintenance of a "foreign college" and the training of priests for active service "on the mission". Without all these vineyards, perpetual Masses, loans and gifts, no such studentate could have existed.

Novices, students and books

Throughout this long period from 1677 to 1797, San Sisto was a novitiate and studentate of the Irish province: a *studium generale* of the order, though the term better suits the course of study offered than the small number of those who followed it. The community as a whole ranged from ten to twenty and the *studium* correspondingly less. There was a prior, preferably a "schoolman", and a bursar, with as many as five novices (if there were any at all) and four or five laybrothers who looked after the convents and churches and were probably given the chore of questing every Tuesday and Saturday. The number of professors or lectors varied from three to five, while the student-body could fall as low as three or rise to at least thirteen.

No record of the novices survives, beyond the volume noting their reception of the habit and their solemn profession one year later. About a hundred received the habit, though not all were Irish. The series begins with Patrick O'Flynn to whom the first Irish prior, Thomas Craff, gave the habit in March 1678. Yet only one was received between 1680 and 1699, only one Irish postulant between 1726 and 1737, and again only one Irishman between 1739 and 1747, after which there is yet another gap until 1752. The difficulty was that San Sisto was so much fur-

ther away from Ireland than Lisbon or Louvain, so much more expensive to reach. Few novices could pay for their own support, and it was in any case customary to do one's novitiate in Ireland until Propaganda Fide put an end to the practice in 1751.

Before this date, San Sisto gave the habit to many tertiaries and laybrothers, but hardly ever to an Irish postulant. Much more often they were Belgian, Swiss, French, German or Italian brothers of whom several devoted their lives to this Irish community in Rome. Simple gratitude, if nothing else, obliges one to mention the Frenchman John Baptist Grollier (1714-63), the two German brothers John Mayr (1731-70) and Matthias Vogler (1733-63), and above all the Dutchman Bernard Becker (1748-88) who was for a while bursar of the community.

After 1751, San Sisto made a greater effort to accept Irish postulants for the clerical habit and even agreed to take them without a pension. Again it was a question of only one or two a year until 1769 when they clothed no less than five, an unprecedented number. Four were admitted in 1770, including Henry Creighton for the English province, and four again in 1773. But once the Congregation of Propaganda lifted its ban on Irish novitiates in that year, the house-council insisted that future novices would have to pay fifty scudi a year for their keep. Hence another gap appears in the record, extending from 1778 until five were admitted in 1784 and five again in 1786. The French Revolution, a widespread falling-off in religious vocations, and the legal possibility of doing one's novitiate in Ireland, explain why so very few others took the clerical habit at Rome between 1786 and the establishment of the Roman Republic. Indeed, the last novice of all, Joseph MacKey, had to be hurriedly professed in May 1798 after a novitiate of only four months! The necessary dispensation was issued without question by a pope with far greater problems on his mind.

What strikes one most about the students of San Sisto is their mobility. Even the novices were liable to be here today and gone tomorrow, like the three Englishmen —Dominic Parr, Vincent Sharp and Thomas Nicholls— to whom the prior gave the habit in 1771 but who left at once to make their novitiate at Florence. Irish students might come directly from home or from any Dominican convent in western Europe. They might come without a word of Latin, perhaps without even a solid

religious formation like the student from Ulster who had to be sent back to his native wilds after threatening the prior with a knife! Again, they might already have spent some years in a continental studentate, and after a year at San Sisto push on once more for Naples or Florence to finish their course. Those coming straight from Ireland before 1751, already professed, were quite often priests in their late twenties who had yet to open a book of philosophy. So the number, quality and composition of the student-body could vary dramatically from one year to the next.

As has been mentioned already, the *studium generale* at San Sisto was already full by 1684, but some sort of decline, probably induced by lack of funds, made it possible for the master general to declare in 1698 that the *studium* no longer existed. If it really did collapse, it cannot have been for long, and most certainly it was thriving in 1701. During that first decade of the century there were usually six students, about as many as the convent could then support. When nine fresh students presented themselves to start philosophy in 1715, six had to be diverted to other convents before the end of the course. This difficulty was still evident in 1725, when San Sisto had but one student of theology, and again in 1736 when classes in philosophy had to be discontinued for two years; the provincial had been slow to send students out, while the only two already in the house were too "sick in the head" to study. Matters soon improved, as we learn from some proud statistics specially noted in the records of the studentate in 1741. There were then no less than thirteen students, eight in theology and five in philosophy, of whom six were priests and seven "novices". Novices were then distinguished between the "simple" who had yet to take vows and the "professed" who had begun their studies.

It is not likely that this record of 1741 was later surpassed. Of the nineteen members of the community listed in *Hibernia Dominicana* for 1756, only five were students and of these all but one were priests. Consequently, their average age was high, about twenty-six, and this fairly constant factor of "advanced age" must have made life more difficult both for themselves and for their teachers. There were four on the academic staff: the first regent, the second regent or "bachelor", the master of studies, and the *lector artium* who took care of philosophy.

Theology was the preserve of the two regents, while the master of students (an official first named in 1741) was a sort of secretary who was also expected to organise public debates, conferences in moral theology and so forth. He had not the disciplinary or spiritual role associated with the title today. Sometimes there was yet another teacher for sacred scripture and apologetics. Hence the number on the staff must sometimes have equalled and occasionally exceeded the number of their pupils.

The course comprised two years of philosophy and four of theology. Some evidence suggests that the school year began on 1 July, but there is even stronger evidence that the lecturers took their holidays from the 22nd, the feast of St. Mary Magdalen. Rather a nice idea, to arrange for summer holidays just three weeks after the start of class. This summer-break ended on 14 September, the feast of Holy Cross. There were other holidays at Christmas for two weeks, as also for the week of Carnival preceding Lent, but none apparently at Easter. During term, there were morning and evening classes for all, as well as a daily "circle" endured by the theologians in the morning and by the philosophers in the afternoon. These circles were formal scholastic disputations at which one student held forth in Latin on a given theme and then countered as best he could the objections raised by his companions. This was good practice for the public "conclusions" or debates held once or twice a year by the brighter students.

As one might expect, the course was decidedly Thomistic. One can see as much from the books they used. Our period does not coincide with any of the rare flowerings of pure Thomism, but at least the library contained excellent editions of the works of Aquinas, to say nothing of those of his most famous commentators. But while the lecturers, one hopes, read these, the textbooks used were on a somewhat lower level. The philosophers battled bravely through dialectics, minor and major logic, physics and metaphysics, with the help of Antoine Goudin's *Philosophia iuxta inconcussa tutissimaque divi Thomae dogmata*, (Lyons 1692). The theologians used a similar manual by Jean Baptiste Gonet, the *Clypeus theologiae thomisticae contra novos eius impugnatores*, (Bordeaux 1659-69). Martin Wigandt's *Tribunal Confessariorum*, and the compendium of the same title later issued by Louis Fliegen, served as text-books for moral theology.

This is not to suggest that the students were intellectually starved. Apart from practically individual tuition, they had two excellent libraries at their disposal. After 1770 it would seem that the community began to spend ever more of the year at San Clemente and correspondingly less at San Sisto, and it was the library of San Clemente which received closer attention than the other. So many new books were bought after 1766 that the old library of San Clemente, above the vestibule of the present sacristy, could no longer hold them all. When the community bought the books of James Forrester, an Irish artist who died at Rome on 31 January 1776, a solution was found by transforming the two adjoining classrooms of philosophy and theology into the library we now have. The former library, with the adjacent room "beside the stairs" was to be used for receiving guests, for community recreation, or possibly for holding classes in winter.

Examinations came at the end of every semester. At the end of the theological course students might be completely dispensed from examination for a variety of reasons: if they were to do the lectorate examination within the house, if they were preparing the faculty examination for preaching and hearing confessions, if they had been chosen to go as collegians to the Minerva after ordination, or finally if they had a public "conclusion" to prepare.

In one early instance, in 1717, such a public debate was held in the "large dormitory", now the upper salone of San Clemente, but it was later the invariable practice to hold them in the church, preferably in the presence of a cardinal or master general. Perhaps the best attended was that given by a young Maronite of Aleppo named Thomas Eva in 1736, for among the crowded audience of curial officials and Roman professors sat two distinguished exiles: the candidate's uncle, Chaldean Patriarch of Cyprus, and the Royal Prince of Mauretania. The latter, having been dethroned by his own brother two years before, had taken refuge in Rome and become a convert. Thomas Eva had done all his studies at San Sisto, nor was he the only extern to avail of the *studium*. An Irish Canon Regular named Stephen Burke was a student there from 1735 to 1737. More than once his examinations were postponed because he was so busy lobbying Propaganda Fide on behalf of his confrères in Ireland that he did not always manage to keep up with the class. When he did sit

for examinations, on dates chosen by himself, he did extremely well and in the course of time took on a public "conclusion" with only slightly less *éclat* than the Maronite of Aleppo. Twenty years later, John Thomas Troy outshone them both, for neither the audience nor even his own community could restrain themselves from crying out "*Bravo*" and "*Optime*" in appreciation of his performance.

Living conditions: food, medicine and ministry

Life at San Sisto was simpler and poorer than it is today, for it was regulated by severe constitutions long extinct and naturally determined by the prevailing conditions of the time. If the friars had little, only the rich had more, and not many people in the eighteenth century were rich. When they went out, as they seldom did, they went on foot, dressed in the full habit and wearing the round black beretta with its wide up-curved brim, under strict instructions to be back by six. Even when permitted to leave the convent, there were few places of amusement to which they might go. One of their recreations in the early years was to go to plays performed in other colleges, but even this was denied them in 1732 by a master general who would not so much as let them look out their own windows during Carnival.

Within the convent, the rooms were simply furnished. Each friar had a basin and jug of water, besides a chamber-pot and oil-lamp. He had ink to write and sand to serve as blotting-paper. During the intense cold of the Roman winter, the novices had only a single heated room or calefactory to which they might dash *in extremis* from their freezing cells. The officials of the house may have had fire-places in their rooms, or braziers perhaps, though the fumes of a brazier could kill the unwary. The choir of the church was lit by candles rather than by oil. In 1740 there were only two umbrellas in the house and hardly any private possessions of value. On the death of Barnaby Mangan in 1763 there was much to-do about his watch until it finally went to the subprior who undertook to celebrate 150 (presumably free) Masses for Father Mangan's soul. Thirty years earlier, bishop Michael MacDonogh O.P. of Kilmore was regarded as extraordinarily generous just because he donated a sacristy clock. But then,

apart from other gifts, he also sent them an Irish harp to enliven their recreations. During the first half of the century, the community did not so much as own a horse.

Although the whole emphasis was on individual poverty as against the "private life", arrangements were still made for pocket-money. They called it their "vestiary" because intended for the purchase of stockings, berettas, handkerchiefs and tobacco, and for postal charges too. From 1726 each priest was granted one free Mass a week for these purposes, on the understanding that the money would be lodged with the bursar until actually needed: "to avoid the least shadow of private property". Shadow or not, it naturally followed that the lodged vestiary of the thrifty would grow with the passage of time, eventually forming a "deposit" to which the individual had an uncontested claim. This explains how a student of the 1760s could give the house a loan, and why John Fottrell of Dublin was able to leave San Sisto a fortune at the end of a long and frugal life. Gifts from relatives went into this deposit too, and with the passage of time an actual cash-allowance was added to the weekly free Mass for which the celebrant might keep the stipend.

It was clear by 1777 that the former allowance no longer sufficed to meet minor personal expenses, and some fears were expressed that if the officials of the house did not get an increase they might not work so well, or even feel tempted to leave San Sisto for greener fields elsewhere. Accordingly they were granted (or granted themselves) two free Masses a week and ten scudi *per annum*. The prior and bursar, in view of their greater expenses, got 16 scudi, but the rest of the community only eight. The decision cannot have been well received by those who had no part in making it, for in 1782 every priest in the community, official or not, was permitted two free weekly Masses, while the vestiary of professed novices was raised from eight scudi to ten. The laybrothers also had an allowance, but not the simple novices. It was also customary to grant 34 free Masses to newly ordained priests, a number raised to 42 in 1775.

Their diet largely consisted of eggs (2,000 a month) and fish, with heavy emphasis on the tuna and salted herring still savoured today. They had plenty of wine, vegetables and milk-products, but still appreciated bishop MacDonogh's gift of two cheeses and a barrel of butter sent from Ireland in 1737. On special occ-

asions, doves graced the tables of the refectory, while visitors might be treated during Lent to sardines and caviare. More delicate fare was reserved for the sick: sugar, tea, coffee, whey and buttermilk, medicinal herbs, wine from Florence or Montepulciano, biscuits from Savoy, and perhaps even chicken or the ten pounds of apples forced on Thomas Burke during his regency.

The eighteenth century was no time to be sick, no matter what delicacies one might receive during a bout of tertian fever. Lung-trouble was countered by the wearing of hareskin or a sleeveless jacket of leather and iron. Leeches were freely used to suck away excess blood. The last illness of Thomas Vincent Kelly, prior of the house in 1739, makes sad reading. The poor man developed an ulcer in his throat and lost his voice. Chicken, butter, honey and barley-water were offered to him in vain. Not even English salt, balsam or tartar-emetic brought him relief. His doctor, claiming to have a secret cure, applied leeches to the patient's thighs, and in the opinion of the community killed the man he had been asked to cure. Backed by the formal judgement of the then *proto-medico* or Minister for Health, they refused to pay the doctor's bill.

This tragic incident and ever-mounting medical bills led James III to appeal on their behalf to the Hospital of St. Saviour's near the Holy Steps at St. John Lateran's, with the happy result that from December 1739 the community was able to obtain for nothing all the medicine it needed. Hitherto they had bought their medicine for half-price at the Minerva. This agreement became to some extent bilateral in 1763 when the Dominicans undertook to give a weekly conference to the chaplains serving the hospital. The practice was maintained until at least 1780, by which time the conferences had become the duty of the first regent who received a small token of gratitude for his pains both from the hospital and from San Sisto. The modest total came to three scudi a year.

The records of the house throw little light on the actual ministry of the brethren. Their remoteness from the city and concentration on Aquinas cannot have given much scope nor left much time for more directly pastoral pursuits. The Rosary Confraternity, inherited with San Clemente in 1677, continued to thrive, helped no doubt in matters spiritual by the friars but in every other respect a highly independent body. They had a *mac-*

china or elaborate tableau of Our Blessed Lady for use in the religious processions of the time, and this they were allowed to store in a house in the garden of San Clemente. In 1731 they put a sepulchral slab in the Rosary chapel, claiming rights of burial for their members, and in 1733 erected an altar of their own in a room giving onto the courtyard of the church. In neither case did they ask the permission of the community. Another group, the guild of tavern-keepers, which had nothing to do with San Clemente, caused some trouble in 1769 by erecting a tribune or platform stretching along the whole side of the church to the pillars then separating the Piazza di San Clemente from the Via San Giovanni, in order to watch the triumphal progress of the new pope, Clement XIV, on his way to take possession of the Lateran. John Thomas Troy, then subprior, successfully opposed their claim, so it was the Irish community which erected the tribune and invited their friends to occupy it.

Under the terms of a legacy received from Benedict XIII (d. 1730), the brethren were obliged to expose the Blessed Sacrament for an hour, morning and evening, on the first Sunday of the month. By 1738 one finds them fostering the devotion of the Forty Hours. The custom of having Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may have been discontinued, for the community decided in 1774 to hold evening Benediction in the Rosary chapel of San Clemente on the first Sunday of the month: "to increase devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin". At a slightly later date, in 1781, John Connolly gave catechetical sermons at San Clemente during Lent, but there is no way of telling whether this was the common practice of the community. All these activities were, curiously, at San Clemente and not at San Sisto. In any event, whatever they may have done to deepen the faith of the Romans is really a side-issue. The Irish were in Rome for quite another purpose: to prepare priests who would deepen the faith of the Irish.

A seminary of bishops

This title has become a consecrated phrase, thanks to Fr. Louis Nolan's book on the Irish Dominicans in Rome. The phrase is convenient in that it distinguishes San Sisto from the "college of martyrs" at Lisbon. Holy Cross, Louvain, so much

older and bigger than the other two, might well lay claim to both titles, though no one has ever thought of giving it either. On the other hand, the term is misleading, for only a tiny percentage of the alumni of San Sisto ever became bishops, while most of that small group owed their promotion as much to the patronage of Benedict XIII and James III as to their personal worth.

Almost ninety Irishmen lived at SS. Sisto and Clemente between 1677 and 1710, a period for which the house records are rather poor. Not all spent long in the convent, some perhaps no longer than a year or a month, and it is possible that some assigned there never actually reached it. Leaving such reservations aside, the overall number does credit to a poor and struggling college. The list includes Thomas Burke, grand-uncle of the historian of the province, who finished his days in 1724 as a penitentiary at Mary Major's; Ambrose MacDermott, bishop of Elphin (1707-1717), the second and last "*vicarius ultramarinus*" after the founder, John O'Connor, and Thomas Burke's predecessor as penitentiary; and Dominic O'Daly, bishop of Achonry (1725-1735), of whom we know practically nothing. One notices, among the host of others, the predominance of particular surnames: five O'Connors, MacDermotts and Dillons, three Farrells and quite a few pairs represented by the families of Berne, Burke, Donnelly, Fitzgerald, Geoghegan and Nangle. Obviously, the influence of Connacht was strong, but Leinster held its own.

Behind each of these names lies a story, but one which in most cases will never be told. Most of them experienced the general exile of 1698 or its long-enduring consequences. Many found in Rome, not only a school or a refuge, but also a grave. Some transferred to other convents or even other provinces of the order, enjoyed what one writer described as the *delizie straniere* of the continent, and never returned to the mission. The majority did, despite severe persecution in Ireland, to serve and preserve, if not in some cases to establish, the thirty-five convents of the province. Some, like Peter Cluan and John Gusman of Sligo, worked in Scotland. Others, like Antoninus Sall and John Donnelly, both regents of study at San Sisto, went back to become pillars of their respective convents in Waterford and Drogheda. There is still in the library of San Clemente a manuscript choir-book finely written by Father Donnelly during his time in Rome.

One might also mention Dominic Mulrunifin whose tombstone may yet be seen at Holy Cross in Sligo, and the notorious Thomas Hederman of Kilmallock whose later apostasy is well-known to students of Irish verse. After various adventures as a missionary in the French West Indies and as a Protestant minister in Limerick, he ended his days, about 1755, quite out of his mind, with the Dominicans of Bordeaux. The Irish provincial of the time, to his eternal credit, arranged for the poor old priest's support.

Taking up the record again from 1710 to 1797, one can say that about 170 Irish Dominicans belonged to the community during those eighty-seven years: a number practically equal to the average number of Dominicans in Ireland throughout the same period. So, from 1677 to 1797, the absolute total of Irish students and priests at San Sisto exceeded 250; a creditable contribution to the manpower of the houses in Ireland, even though many "Sixtinians" as they called themselves, had spent some of their formative years in Lisbon or Louvain. Louvain may have been bigger, and Lisbon easier to reach, but Rome did at least its fair share in training men for the mission.

Looking through the list of these names now, one is struck by the large number of students from Connacht and, to a lesser degree, from Leinster. Munster is more thinly represented, and those from Ulster fewer still, but the Irish Dominicans of the eighteenth century had less men in Ulster than in any of the other three provinces, and in Munster had only marginally more. Connacht was the backbone of the Irish province as a whole. Thus there were no less than six Burkes at San Sisto, five O'Kellys and four Lynchs, with many others particularly from Galway. One of them, James Bodkin, was to become not only a theologian of the Casanatensian library, but even provincial of the Roman province. That was a greater feat than the acquisition of an Irish mitre. Ulster, weak though it was, sent no less than five Mac Donaghs, including two contemporary Michaels of whom one was consecrated by Benedict XIII as bishop of Kilmore in 1728 while the other, known as "flog-the-pope" because he gave Benedict the discipline during Compline at San Sisto, died young as a missionary in the West Indies. Another Ulsterman, Dominic Brulaghan, one of the few writers San Sisto ever produced, wrote a booklet on Lough Derg and a large manual for prospective

missionaries. There were also five Plunketts (probably from the Roscommon branch of the family), four Brennans and innumerable friars from Mullingar, Longford, Trim and Athy: men who would constitute a majority in the country convents of Leinster before the collapse of most of the small convents in the closing decades of the century.

Quite a few of these priests went to the West Indies like Michael MacDonagh, or to Scotland with Dominic Colgan who had to flee that country with Bonnie Prince Charlie after the disaster of 1745. Others, like Richard Ean, Luke Armour or Thomas Moore, spent some time as embassy chaplains in London. The Netterville brothers, Thomas and John, were successively provincials of Ireland from 1765 to 1773, while Thomas had a second term from 1781 to 1785, and then lived on at Drogheda for more than another decade as the beloved father of the Sienna nuns. Another Sixtinian, Patrick Gibbons, was vicar-general of the province during the very difficult period from 1798 to 1801. Gibbons was then succeeded by the provincial John O'Connor, author of a large volume on the Rosary, who had also studied at San Sisto in his youth.

To return to the "seminary of bishops". Three have been mentioned already: Ambrose MacDermott of Elphin (1707-1717), Dominic O'Daly of Achonry (1725-35) and Michael MacDonogh of Kilmore (1728-46). The light-hearted John Brett moved from the bishopric of Killala (1743-48), "this western Siberia" as he described it, to that of Elphin (1748-56). Patrick Brullaughan, consecrated for Derry in 1751, took one look at his diocese and abandoned it, preferring the comforts of London and Bath to the rigours of the Irish mission. Two others, more distinguished than all the rest, deserve full-scale biographies rather than a passing mention. Thomas Burke, author of *Hibernia Dominicana* and bishop of Ossory (1759-76), was the elder of the two. The younger, John Thomas Troy, whom Burke affectionately called his "grandson", succeeded him as bishop of Ossory (1776-1786) and then, one might say at the request of all Ireland, became archbishop of Dublin until his death in 1823. Troy, to offer a purely personal opinion, was the most important Irish bishop of the eighteenth century.

San Sisto helped to train more than 250 priests until the arrival of the French in 1797 brought all studies to an end. The

college was founded to form priests, and did so in abundance. That seven of its alumni became bishops before 1797 was entirely incidental, and if anything more a loss than a gain, in that the order lost thereby the services of some of its most capable men. One should rather think of the hundreds of Sixtinians who never became bishops, nor ever wanted to, but went back dutifully to spend their lives under the penal code in the service of a despised people.

III

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC: 1798-1814

In the last quarter of the 18th century the community of SS. Sisto e Clemente generally numbered about fifteen priests, three or four students, and a few brothers. It was fairly well off, and with men such as Luke Concanen and John Connolly on the staff, reasonably scholarly.

Concanen, later first bishop of New York, who had been in the community since 1769, when he began theological studies after two years at the Minerva, became Prior in June 1781, with Connolly, his successor both at SS. Sisto e Clemente and in New York, as Subprior. On Concanen's appointment in 1787 as a theologian to the Casanate Library at the Minerva, Connolly, who had been a professor at SS. Sisto e Clemente from 1777, when he arrived from Louvain, and Regent of Studies from 1782, took his place as Prior from 1787-1796. As agents in Rome for Irish and English bishops and administrators for a decade and more on either side of the new century, these two men played a great part at a distance in the ecclesiastical life of Ireland, England, and, to some extent, America¹. They are also, but in a much more proximate way, part of the history and the fortunes of the twin convent of San Sisto and San Clemente (but more of the latter than of the former) in the period in the modern history of Rome known as that of the Roman Republic, when the French Revolution spilled

¹ On Concanen, and to some extent on Connolly, see V. R. Hughes, *The Right Rev. Luke Concanen O.P., first bishop of New York, 1747-1810* (Fribourg 1926).

over the borders of France into northern Italy and then worked its way through the Papal States to Rome itself.

In spite of disturbing news out of France from 1789 onwards, of which the community would have learned at first hand from the many émigrés who converged on Rome (there was one at San Clemente in 1792-1793), life continued much as usual, comfortably and securely, during the priorship of John Connolly. Priests were ordained, novices continued to arrive from Ireland (notably, as we shall see, Francis O'Finan in 1792), and the community was strengthened by the profession of two Italian laybrothers who were to be mainstays of SS. Sisto and Clemente over the next twenty years: Serafino Donati, who made solemn profession in the choir of San Clemente on 8 April 1793, and Antonio Giacinto Uberti, who made his there some three years later on 22 June 1796².

Uberti was professed just as Rome was beginning to tremble at events in the north of Italy, where Lombardy had been occupied by the French in May and the papal States were now being threatened³. To buy off the French, Pope Pius VI requisitioned all gold and silver from churches and convents in a circular of 6 July, but it was not until 17 August that the decree touched San Sisto and Clemente, when the Cardinal Vicar of Rome sent an order to the Prior (now Clement Dunne) to see to the transport of the gold and silver plate from the two churches to the papal mint for melting down into bars⁴. Napoleon, however, seized the Papal States anyway, and only terminated the occupation by the Peace of Tolentino (19 February 1797) that required the surrender of Bologna, Ferrara and the Romagna, and, in addition, many valuable manuscripts and works of art.

Pressure from France mounted during the Spring of 1797, and, as French troops prepared to move on Rome when called upon, there was no lack of encouragement on the part of certain

² SCAR 24, pp. 6-7, 10-11. An émigré secular priest lived at San Clemente in 1793-94: see H. Fenning, "The Vestibary Book of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, 1727-96", *Collectanea Hibernica* 10 (1967) p. 71. Possibly this priest (Claude François Comte) was still there in 1798: see n. 15.

³ See A. HERIOT, *The French in Italy, 1796-1799* (London 1957), pp. 155-167; A. CRETONI, *Roma Giacobina* (Rome 1971).

⁴ SCAR 27, 60 (printed circular); 27, 59 (mandate).

Romans to make an end of papal rule. By the Summer many of the Irish Dominicans were thinking of packing their bags and getting out of the city before the storm broke — with the notable exception, probably, of Connolly who, as he wrote the following January to a colleague in Ireland, was determined not to leave, for "if we all quit, this house [San Clemente] will be irrevocably lost to the province"⁵. As it happens, no one quit that Summer or Autumn, so far as one can see, and the feast of St Clement was celebrated with all accustomed solemnity on 23 November⁶.

The French, however, were only waiting for an excuse to enter Rome, and this was nicely provided for them when General Duphot, who was there to stir up a revolt (and accordingly was refused the sacraments as he lay dying), was shot down by papal forces at the Porta Settimiana, near the French Embassy (Palazzo Corsini) on 28 December⁷.

In spite of feverish diplomatic moves, and a great penitential procession on 17 January⁸, the French under General Berthier swept into Rome on 10 February 1798, occupied Castel S. Angelo, and at once required ten hostages, including the Vicar⁹. On the day following, a Sunday, the community of 300 Franciscans was given four hours to get out of the great Ara Coeli convent in the heart of Rome to make way for soldiers. More evictions took place next day; various officials were billeted on convents all over the city; fifteen couriers who were placed in the Franciscan church of the XII Apostoli did not like the meat and raised a fuss until they were served chicken. Castel S. Angelo and the Secretariate of State were occupied, and French passports were required of all wishing to depart Rome, on 13 February. Two days later a Roman Republic was proclaimed; the Pope was deposed, arrested, and then on 20 February

⁵ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804 (To Fr Roche in Cork, 20-1-1798).

⁶ *Diario di Roma*, n. 2392 (2-12-1799): a useful weekly journal of curial and Roman events.

⁷ G. A. SALA, *Diario romano degli anni 1798-1799*, ed. G. Cugnoni (Rome 1882-1888), I. 7; HERIOT, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁸ *Diario di Roma*, n. 2406 (20-1-1798).

⁹ P. COGAN, *The Diocese of Meath*, III (Dublin 1870), 218-219 (to bishop Plunkett, whose agent he had been since 1792, 17-2-1798).

moved to Siena and Florence, and finally in the next year to Valence in France¹⁰.

Given the tense relations between France and Britain, religious of British nationality (which the Irish were at the time) were fearful of their future from the outset of the Republic. On 14 February, just as "Trees of Liberty" were being planted in the Piazza di Spagna, and just as the ex-Dominican General Roy of the French forces was preparing for a splendid ball at the Palazzo Sciarra where he was lodged¹¹, the Dominicans of San Clemente were presenting an urgent petition to the Pope to allow Joseph McKey, a novice of four months' standing, to make his profession as soon as possible, because of the great uncertainty of the times.

The dispensation was granted on the very same day, but with the proviso that it should not be used unless the need were absolutely pressing¹². McKey, in fact, did not avail himself of the dispensation at once, for it was not immediately clear whether foreigners would be required to depart the city.

But signs were not wanting. On 14 February, a short four days after the take-over, the Treasurer General (Della Porte) ordered all English, Portuguese and Russian nationals who owned property in Rome, and all others who had property belonging to these nations, to submit a list of these holdings within twenty four hours, when officials of the Treasury would take over the properties¹³.

The Irish religious houses in Rome took a stance at once. When Barbiellini, the Treasury commissioner, reached San Isidoro, the Guardian, James McCormack, ignored him, and went with the superior of San Matteo straight to the French authorities, who, in the person of General Haller, gave them a written order which forbade anyone to molest the goods of their two convents. Fr Dunne of San Clemente did not go quite so far. When the commissioner arrived at San Clemente Fr Dunne simply pointed out to him that San Clement and San Sisto

¹⁰ SALA, *Diario*, I. 14, 26-27, 40, 46.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I. 45.

¹² SCAR 24, pp. 15-16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 28, 3, app. 4.

were not English but Roman institutions (an argument which Fr Mullooly was to reverse in 1849 and 1870)¹⁴.

At best these were delaying tactics. The authorities continued to demand a full report, and finally the community submitted a detailed account of the "Active State of San Clemente" on 19 April 1798. It stated that the community consisted of 11 Irishmen, 1 Frenchman, 3 Italian brothers, and a lay cook; that San Clemente had 22 rooms, 6 of which were in a bad state; that San Sisto had 26 rooms (but it was impossible to reside there in the Summer); that the community owed 170 scudi for food and drink for the period 1 March-19 April; and that it paid out 36 scudi, 20 baiocchi, annually in taxes, including interest on a loan from "Citizen" Luke Concanen¹⁵.

By that time the English and Irish colleges had been seized, and, as John Connolly reported at this time to a correspondent in Ireland, it was generally supposed that the same would happen to "the Irish convents of St. Matthew's, St. Isidore's and St. Clement's, notwithstanding the efforts of the incumbents of these houses to prevent it". As for himself, he was determined "to stay here until I shall be, *perhaps*, ordered away... As to private interest, it is plain I have none, for I imagine that in a few days I must quit the house I live in these twenty-one years last past"¹⁶.

He was not far wrong. The act of suppression of SS. Sisto and Clemente was published a few weeks later on 3 May over the signature of General Jean Saint Cyr¹⁷, and by 16 May the community was ready to leave for Ireland or elsewhere. Joseph McKey, the young novice, was professed on that day at San Clemente¹⁸; letters of credence were issued to members of

¹⁴ Ibid., app. 6 (witness of Fr McCormack in Cacciapoti case, 29-5-1800), app. 5 (witness of Dunne, 16-6-1800); see also app. 7 for witness of Francesco Zangori, the San Clemente cook.

¹⁵ SCAR 23, 80; see also 27, 70, for another note of the same time on goods and investments. The details of the Concanen loan of 800 scudi on 20-1-1797 are in SCAR 57, pp. 159-160. The French priest is possibly Claude François Comte (see n. 2 above).

¹⁶ COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III. 219-221 (letter of March 1798 to Plunkett). The Irish, English and Scots Colleges were confiscated and put up for sale on 28-3-1798, so the letter is probably 29-31 March.

¹⁷ SCAR 21, 22c.

¹⁸ SCAR 24, pp. 14-17.

the community for the journey¹⁹; and John Connolly closed his personal accounts (postage for letters to bishop Plunkett of Meath and others, brandy, chocolate, English cheese, a whip, a tour of Frascati, but this last an addition of 17 June)²⁰.

Two days after McKey's profession, the Republic posted the terms of suppression, article one of which carried a list of the suppressed houses and allowed that members of these places were free to choose where to reside in Rome or elsewhere. The Dominicans, for example, from the suppressed convents of S. Sabina, S. Maria in Monteverde, San Sisto and San Clemente could go to S. Maria sopra Minerva, if they chose²¹.

Most of the San Clemente community elected to leave Rome rather than stay at the Minerva, the general house of the Order where Fr Concanen had lived for some years and was, in fact, one of the *Socii*, or area representatives, of the Dominican General Fr Quiñones, now living in exile in Florence. Accordingly they applied for funds to the new Ministry of Finance, which on 22 March had been instructed by the Consulate to be ready to give them fifty scudi each for their journey. The invaluable curial diarist (and later cardinal) G. A. Sala notes on 1 June, however, that "the ten Irish Dominicans who have been expelled from San Clemente" were ordered instead by the Ministry to obtain their travel expenses from the Dominicans at the Minerva²².

Ten, indeed, may have been expelled, but only nine are recorded as having received such monies from the Dominican Procurator-General at the Minerva on 6 June: Clement Dunne,

¹⁹ SCAR 27, 63: to Luke Concanen of the Minerva from Fr Gaddi, Vicar of the Dominican Order, on 17 May 1798 for a journey to Ireland (which he never took). I am presuming that similar letters were issued about this time to members of the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente as such. The General of the Dominicans, Fr Quiñones, had been expelled on 23 March and his apartment at the Minerva sealed (SALA, *Dario*, I. 222); he died at Florence on 12 June. Concanen had been nominated bishop of Kilmacduagh in Ireland in February and received his faculties on 27 February (now SCAR 27, 67), but the nomination never took effect.

²⁰ SCAR 33. Although these expenses cover April and May (to 5th May), the tour of Frascati is noted as 17 June.

²¹ F. FORTUNATI, "Avviamenti nel pontificato di Pio VI dal 1775-1800", Vatican Library, MS. Vat. lat. 10730, fos. 210r-211r.

²² SALA, *Dario*, I. 240. The order from the Consulate is in SCAR 28, 3, app. 10 (the Cacciapoti case of 1800-1801).

the Prior, John Thomas Plunkett, the Subprior, Daniel Kennedy, Francis Peter Bushe, Mark Nowlan, Thomas Rearden, Daniel McCraith, Vincent O'Rourke, and Joseph McKey²³. And not all of these necessarily used their viaticum to return to Ireland. Since he reappears briefly at San Clemente (or so it seems) two years later, when he paid part of a debt on 2 August 1800, Daniel Kennedy, the Regent of Studies, may have found refuge in an unsuppressed house outside Rome or, perhaps, in a convent in the kingdom of Naples. About Clement Dunne there is no doubt. He continued to be Prior from Civitavecchia, where he acted as a curate, and only returned to San Clemente in late 1799, where he was still in charge in January 1801 when, in a letter to Fr Roche of Cork, Fr Connolly notes that "Dunne is Prior here, but has no Irish subject to command but myself"²⁵.

Fr John Connolly, the tenth of the Dominicans "expelled" from San Clemente, is not on the Procurator-General's list, nor is there a scrap of evidence to show that he ever thought of applying for the travel money. As he had intimated several months earlier, he was determined to hang on at San Clemente, in a hope of holding it, in one way or another, for the Irish Province. And he had qualifications to go with his determination. He had lived continuously in Rome and at San Clemente for twenty one years, longer than anyone else of the community, including the Prior, who had been there for nineteen. He was fluent in Italian, and from his decade and more as agent for Irish bishops, knew his way around Rome and the curia.

More to the point, he had the backing of his Prior, who himself seems not to have had the heart to remain. For as we know from that same letter to Roche in 1801, the community as a whole had been only too eager to surrender San Clemente, and only he and his Prior had shown any fight: "Had not Dunne and I, he wrote, opposed most of our confrères, who in expectation of obtaining a good sum of money from the French to return to Ireland, desired that St. Clement's also would give itself up to the French, rather than be seized by

²³ NOLAN, *Irish Dominicans in Rome*, pp. 54-55.

²⁴ SCAR 23, 87.

²⁵ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804.

the Romans, this convent would not possibly exist now, as the French surely would have sold it, and immediately found a purchaser on account of the pillars of the church". He knew what he was talking about, he assured Fr Roche. The Irish Augustinian church of S. Matteo on the Via Merulana and half of the convent "were demolished by the man who purchased them from the French". The Irish Franciscan church of S. Isidoro, he wrote at a later date, was just beginning to be ruined by the person who had bought it when the Republic ended²⁶.

In the light of what happened to these and other religious houses and churches in Rome, San Sisto and San Clemente did not fare too badly at the hands of the Republic. But where San Sisto was totally occupied by French troops in the Summer of 1798 and, as Connolly put it, "would cost a fortune to restore", San Clemente was never without an Irish Dominican presence and was still habitable at the end. For although the goods of the two convents had been put up for sale on 3 June²⁷, just as the bulk of the community was setting out for Ireland, Connolly, who rented a room a few doors away, managed to get permission from the authorities to keep the church open.

Life was not easy, of course, during that first Republican Summer. At best the general situation was chaotic. Altogether some thirty one churches and convents had been suppressed by that time (more would follow later), and there was a spree of buying, Santa Sabina, for example, the old home of St. Dominic, going for 3000 scudi. Statues and pictures were rounded up for transfer to France. The Vatican Library was despoiled on 25 July²⁸.

But if the French at least exhibited a certain taste and sensitivity, the Commission of four Romans which they had

²⁶ COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III. 233-234 (to Plunkett: 18-1-1800).

²⁷ See "Beni del soppresso convento di SS. Sisto e Clemente", in *Collezione di Carte Pubbliche, Proclami, Editti, Ragionamenti ed altre produzioni tendenti a consolidare la rigenerata Repubblica Romana* (Rome 1798), II. 90; SCAR 28, 3, app. 11; A. DUFOURCO, *Le régime Jacobin en Italie. Etude sur la république romaine* (Paris 1900), p. 250. In general on the sale of "Beni nazionali" (i.e. goods of foreign nationals), see F. DE FELICE, *La vendita dei beni nazionali nella Repubblica romana* (Rome 1960).

²⁸ SALA, *Diario*, II. 45; 116; 25.

set up to oversee the various suppressed churches was, as Sala points out and documents very graphically, as wanton as it was indiscriminate. S. Maria Maggiore was reduced to two chalices, a small monstrance, a pyx and a thurible. The tomb of St. Philip Neri, among others, was rifled for gold, lead and ornaments. The altars of S. Bartolomeo on the Tiber Island were smashed. The coffins of the Dominican cardinals at San Sisto were ripped apart for lead, and the cardinals' remains were dumped together in a common grave²⁹. The conduct of the Commissioners became so notorious, indeed, that the canons of S. Maria in Trastevere, St. John Lateran and the clergy of other non-suppressed churches, obtained permission from the French authorities to take various relics, reliquaries and saints' bodies into their custody from the suppressed churches. But the measure came too late, Sala says: "For many of these relics and remains had already been dispersed or had been rendered useless by these Commissioners, who had either disposed of them according to whim, or had broken open the surrounds to get at the reliquaries"³⁰.

San Clemente, too had had to suffer the Commissioners, though not as harshly as San Sisto. The Romans, Connolly wrote later, stripped the church of everything, "even an old stole which I used in the confessional". And they swept through it so thoroughly that he was "obliged to furnish the church, at my own expense, with everything necessary to say Mass"³¹. The bells of the church were removed — those beautiful bells, Sala notes — on 27 August³², but by 27 October French soldiers were lodged in the convent, and to prevent further mischief they allowed the ornaments on the Rosary Madonna in the church to be removed, "sotto la responsabilità del Cittadino Connolly sindaco di detto monastero"³³.

In effect, Connolly was on his own at San Clemente during these very difficult months, sixteen in all, before the Republic spluttered out in the Autumn of 1799. He was as resourceful

²⁹ Ibid., I. 256; II. 222; II. 161 (16-9-1798).

³⁰ Ibid., II. 106 (25-8-1798).

³¹ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804: to Fr Roche of Cork, 17-1-1801.

³² SALA, *Diario*, II. 115.

³³ SCAR 27, 72.

as he was diplomatic, and could rightly brag to Fr Roche in January 1801 that he had "saved the convent, church, library, organ, four sets of vestments, and some furniture of St. Clement's from any damage whatsoever", or, in greater detail, to bishop Plunkett a year earlier (18 January 1800):

Your Lordship has undoubtedly seen a plan of the church of St. Clement in Le Brun's "Explication de la Messe", in Mabillon, Montfaucon, and other celebrated writers on sacred antiquities. By having obtained leave from the Republic to open the church after its suppression, and serve the public in it as chaplain and confessor, without any emolument, I have saved it from destruction, as also the convent and library. When the organ and the best of the furniture of the convent were to be sold by the Republic, I bought them at a very low rate. It was to render this service to my Order that I determined to stay here, if permitted by the Republic.

But for all Fr Connolly's readiness afterwards to speak of his fine and courageous part in saving San Clemente³⁴, there are some curious gaps in his account. There is not, for example, any mention of the removal of the remains of St Cyril, the Apostle of the Slavs, on 18 August 1798, nor of the striking circumstances surrounding it; yet he was present ("essendovi stato anche presente un P. Domenicano Irlandese") when the notary Francesco Parchetti, who penned the above words, formally recorded the opening of Cyril's casket under the altar of St Dominic and the subsequent removal of the casket to the Chiesa Nuova for safekeeping³⁵. More importantly, Fr Connolly says nothing about a crucial moment in the history of San Clemente and of its survival during the Roman Republic: the

³⁴ In letters of 18-1-1800: to Plunkett, COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III. 233-235; 17-1-1801: (n. 3 above); 1-4-1801: to Fr Leen of Cork, Tallaght Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804 (from which quotation above comes); 29-12-1814: to Fr Leen, Tallaght Provincial Archives, Letters 1805-1814; 1-2-1815: to Plunkett, COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III. 274. This last letter, written when Fr Connolly, now a bishop, was about to leave Rome for Liège, Ireland and New York, adds an interesting detail: "By attending the Venerable Basilica of St. Clement's, gratis, during the French Government here, I have saved it and the convent from ruin, though I was thrice ordered to go to Paris for having contemptuously refused to swear allegiance to Buonaparte".

³⁵ Archivio di Stato di Roma, Archivio dei 30 Notari Capitolini: Parchetti, Franciscus, 1798, vol. 623, fos. 115, 144r; for the whole episode see L. E. BOYLE, "The fate of the remains of St Cyril", in *Cirillo e Metodio, I Santi Apostoli degli Slavi* (Rome 1964), pp. 159-194.

intervention of the canons of St John Lateran when San Clemente was threatened with demolition in late 1798.

The canons of the Lateran first appear on the San Clemente scene at the beginning of August 1798 when, in the person of Lorenzo Mattei, they obtained permission from the French authorities to take into their custody various relics in suppressed churches, notably, for our purposes, those of St Clement and St Ignatius, for the removal of which to the Lateran they received a licence on 22 August ³⁶. Later in that year, when San Clemente was due to be torn down to allow for a wider street from the Colosseum to the Lateran, Lorenzo Mattei and Callisto Marini, camerlengo and vice-camerlengo respectively of the chapter of the Lateran, conspired with some Italian functionaries of the Roman Republic to shame the French authorities into sparing San Clemente, and into handing it over instead to the custody of the Lateran. In a splendid petition to the Republic, Mattei and Marini argued that the church was the equal of any monument of profane art, and suggested, in words of which there may be an echo in Connolly's letter to Plunkett, that any attempt to interfere with it "would bring grave disrepute on our age" ³⁷:

Anyone who knows the value of antiquity, cannot but be roused by the duty of preserving the church of San Clemente. Scholars of all persuasions would blush if in their tour of the antiquities of Rome they did not devote some time to this church, many parts of which have been illustrated by Ciampini, Rondinini and many others, and have been the object of much research by Bignami, Du Cange, Mabillon, Bianchini, and many other celebrated writers. If a place such as this, which was singled out in a certain homily of Gregory, which was the delight of the Roman people, which was recorded by St Leo and St Jerome, which in its history is no less famous than pagan monuments, were to lose its splendour, or worse still were to become neglected, this could not happen without bringing our age into grave disrepute.

³⁶ Archivio di Stato di Roma, Parchetti, 623, fos. 80, 94r: petition; S. Giovanni in Laterano, Archivio Capitolare, O. LXXII, 21, fo. 3 (grant of petition).

³⁷ S. Giovanni in Laterano, Archivio Capitolare, O. LXXII, 21, fo. 3.

Because of the persistence of one of the conspirators, Antonio Brizi of Perugia, a consul of the Republic to whose role in saving San Clemente Callisto Marini would bear witness on Brizi's death almost thirty years later, the petition was granted eventually on 30 June 1799, and the keys of San Clemente were handed over to the Lateran chapter³⁸. Four days later the Lateran put its new rights into practice for the first (and, so far as I can ascertain, the only) time when Lorenzo Mattei claimed the relics of St Cyril from the Chiesa Nuova in the name of the Lateran on 4 July 1799³⁹.

Precious though it was, the custodianship of the Lateran did not last very long, at least at this stage of the Republic. Towards the end of September 1799, and a short month after the death of Pius VI in exile at Valence, news that Neapolitan troops were closing on Rome and that the French were about to withdraw spread all over the city, and there was a premature ringing of bells to celebrate the event on the last day of the month. The French finally departed on 2 October. On 8 October the papal Vicar of Rome, Cardinal Passari, arrived from Florence, and the process of restoring pre-Republican order began at once. On the day following his return the Vicar issued an edict that black only was to be worn by secular clerics, and that women must always have their heads covered in church. By the middle of the month many of the exiled or scattered religious were back in their old convents, if they still existed, and on 28 October all churches which had taken relics, vest-

³⁸ See D. PERNOSI, *Elogio dell'Avvocato Antonio Brizi detto nella chiesa dei PP. Carmelitani Scalzi di Perugia il 1° Febbraio 1827* (Perugia 1827), p. 3; testimonial of Marini in 1800. A copy of the eulogy was presented to San Clemente in 1827, and is in the archives. Although Connolly does not mention the Lateran's part in saving the basilica, the community in the immediate years after the Republic was aware of it: see a petition from these years (SCAR 24, 176) which acknowledges that the Lateran Chapter had held San Clemente "in commenda" during the Republic. On Antonio Brizi (1753-1826) see L. GENNARI in *Dizionario Biografico Italiano* XIV (Rome 1972), pp. 362-3. A moderate Republican, he saved the archives of Propaganda Fide and various churches like San Clemente from destruction, and on the testimony of Callisto Marini and others was absolved completely of his complicity in the Republic by the papal review Giunta in 1800, and, indeed was praised "for his services to religion". See also R. DE FELICE, *La vendita dei beni nazionali nella Repubblica romana* (Rome 1960), pp. 20, 45, 79-81.

³⁹ C. GASBARRI and V. E. GIUNTELLA, *Due Diari della Repubblica romana del 1798-1799* (Rome 1958), p. 154.

ments or church furniture from suppressed churches for safe-keeping, were ordered to hand them over to the Vicar of Rome within three days. The recovery of property which had been sold during the Republic, particularly the "Beni nazionali" (goods, that is, of foreign nationals), was not quite so straightforward, and special tribunals were set up to expedite matters and to see that justice was done⁴⁰.

At San Clemente an attempt was made to resume normal life and to recover lost property. Fr Clement Dunne, the prior, returned. The Torrione vineyard outside the Porta S. Giovanni began to function once more⁴¹. A list was drawn up by Fr Dunne on 17 December of all the goods possessed by SS. Sisto and Clemente before the Republic.⁴² At about the same time Fr Connolly gave an estimate of the financial position of a community that consisted of five religious (probably the three Italian brothers, Dunne and Connolly) and a cook. The annual income, he said, was 1200 scudi, and he estimated expenses at 911 scudi, 55 baiocchi⁴³.

But with no new pope in the offing (Pius VII was not elected until 14 March 1800) the city was at sixes and sevens. And there was much confusion about the position of "British convents" such as San Sisto and San Clemente, as Connolly notes in a letter of 18 January 1800 to bishop Plunkett of Meath. Expectations were high at first, he says, when the Neapolitan commander-in-chief immediately issued an edict that all purchases of ecclesiastical property during the period of the Republic were null and void. But he then changed his mind, ordering instead that all such purchasers could keep these properties provided that all rents and profits from them were paid to the Neapolitan government. The British in Rome, Connolly goes on, made an appeal to Sir William Hamilton and Admiral Nelson at Palermo, who decided to make a Mr Fagan,

⁴⁰ FORTUNATO, "Avviamenti", MS. Vat. lat. 10730, fo. 268v; SALA, *Diario*, III, 13.

⁴¹ SCAR 306 ("Uscite della Vigna, 1780-1800"): "Spese fatte dopo prender possesso del convento 1799". The last entry had been in April 1798. This new one is December 1799.

⁴² SCAR 23, 81. There is another statement of the financial position of the house which was made at the order of the Vicar of Rome on 20-9-1800: SCAR 23, 82.

⁴³ SCAR 33. Average expenses included 520 scudi on food and laundry.

a layman, administrator of all British goods. All in all, Connolly concludes, things were bad in Rome. There was a scarcity of food, and "our affliction is increased by not knowing when we shall have a Pope, who is to be Pope, nor where he is to reside when made"⁴⁴.

Mr Rupert Fagan seems to have worked to great effect on behalf of the "British convents". He administered the goods of SS. Sisto and Clemente from 29 December 1799 to 26 September 1801, and one of his finest achievements (and a valuable source for San Clemente in the years 1798-1801) was the recovery of a small vineyard in the Via Cupa, near the Porta S. Lorenzo and the Torrione vineyard. Well before the Republic it had been sold on 22 January 1789 to a Fr Antonio Cacciapoti for 650 scudi which Cacciapoti had not paid off by 1798. After the order of the Treasurer-general on 14 February 1798 that there should be a public accounting of all property owned by English, Portuguese and Russian nationals, Cacciapoti listed the vineyard as English, and was allowed to retain it on payment of a sum to the French commissioners. On the action of Fagan, judgement was given against Cacciapoti sometime in 1800, but he appealed it. The judgement, however, was upheld by the papal Tribunal of Justice in 1801, Fagan producing evidence that the vineyard had been sold to Cacciapoti who, in spite of repeated requests before 1798, never paid the price (testimony of John Connolly and Serafino Donati, 27 May 1800), and, more importantly, that in February 1798 SS. Sisto and Clemente, as well as S. Isidoro and S. Matteo, were recognized by the French authorities as Roman not as British possessions (testimony of Fr Clement Dunne, Prior, 16 June 1800, and of Fr James McCormack, guardian of St Isidore's, 29 May of the same year)⁴⁵.

This and some other small triumphs aside, things continued to be tight at San Clemente for some time. Some of the books from the library had to be sold, a fact commented on by archbishop John Troy of Dublin, the former bursar, regent

⁴⁴ Connolly to Plunkett, 18-1-1800: COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III. 233.

⁴⁵ SCAR 28, 3: *Signatura iustitiae pro Sancto Clemente contra R.D. Ant. Cacciapoti* (printed Rome 1801): see also SCAR 21, 22a. For an account of income during Fagan's administration see SCAR 23, 97. On 15-4-1807 Fr Connolly, then vicar and bursar, arranged an emphyteutic lease of this vineyard: SCAR 400, pp. 419-431.

of studies and prior, in a letter of 1 April 1800 to Luke Concanen at the Minerva: "I lament the loss of any of the library books at St. Clement's. Nothing surely but extreme necessity could justify the sale of any of them"⁴⁶. Possibly the books in question were certain lives of the saints which the community asked permission to alienate about this time, promising to replace them from England as soon as it could⁴⁷.

As we may gather from a remark of his, "The rejection of the proposal you mention is very strange, but the motive you assign for it is very bad indeed". Troy may have been overly influenced by Concanen who, not for the first nor last time, was at odds with Connolly, now vicar as well as bursar of San Clemente since 22 February⁴⁸, because of the illness of Fr Dunne. Perhaps also Troy did not fully appreciate the difficulties with which Connolly was faced. Writing to Fr Lane of Cork on the very same day that Troy wrote to Concanen, Connolly allowed that San Clemente had recovered its "lands and funds", but went on to say that the income was "but trifling, because the Pope's Bank in which we had a great deal of money, is insolvent since the beginning of 1798, and many of the convents suppressed by the Republic, that had much money of ours at interest, are allowed two years to pay their debts"⁴⁹.

Fr Connolly's letter may not have reached Ireland by 27 June when the Provincial Chapter met in Dublin, but the general news from Rome had already caused such disquiet that the Chapter instructed the Provincial to look into the possibility of establishing a college or house of studies in Ireland, now that the house in Louvain was no more and San Clemente was "ad tantas angustias redactus"⁵⁰.

In Rome, on the other hand, the General of the Dominicans, Fr Gaddi, was determined to place San Clemente and the

⁴⁶ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture Riferite, Irlanda 1788-1801, fo. 107.

⁴⁷ SCAR 27, 45 (undated).

⁴⁸ SCAR 28, 2.

⁴⁹ TALLAGH2, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804.

⁵⁰ Ibid., *Acta Capitulum Provinciae Hiberniae*, 1720-1846, pp. 245-246. In a letter of Connolly to Fr Leen of 10-9-1802 (ibid., Letters 1780-1804) he asks, "Are the brethren doing anything to found a Study in Ireland?" The same query was made of Fr Roche in the letter of 11-9-1802 (ibid.).

abandoned San Sisto on some sort of firm financial footing and to make them function once more as the unit they had been before the Republic. In June 1801 he successfully petitioned the new Pope for a reduction of the Mass obligations of the community by two-thirds for a period of ten years⁵¹. In early 1802 he made a searching visitation of the community. Given the state and size of the community at San Clemente (two priests and three brothers)⁵², his visitation charge of 28 February was a shade unrealistic on some points, for example, that the community should transfer each year to San Sisto after the feast of St Clement (23 November), as was the old custom, and reside there until after that of St Xystus (6 August) — a practice which in fact was never to be resumed again. But on others it was sharp and practical. All debts were to be paid off at once, and any revenue remaining (and there should surely be some since the "family" was so small) was to go to the repair of San Sisto and to the maintenance of novices. The community was to institute proceedings for the recovery of various monies and books which had been lent to or taken away by sundry religious (Dominicans, presumably). By the end of February the bursar (Fr Connolly) was to render an account of all expenses to date to Fr Luke Concanen of the Minerva, whom Fr Gaddi appointed as administrator of the house with full power over the vicar (again Fr Connolly)⁵³.

If the visitation charge fell a little short of a show of confidence in the man who had served San Clemente so well during the Republic, it hardly improved the already fraying relations between Connolly and Concanen. But Fr Gaddi clearly was worried by the size of the debt on the house (1757 scudi in the following June)⁵⁴ and possibly thought Connolly a little improvident.

⁵¹ SCAR 33, 88: letter of Fr Gaddi on 31-12-1801. Fr Gaddi, strictly speaking was Vicar, not General, of the Dominican Order at this time, and did not become General until 1804. During the Republic, and after the death of Quiñones in June 1798, he had administered the Order from Forlì. See A. MORTIER, *Histoire des Maîtres Généraux de l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs VII* (Paris 1914), 427-466.

⁵² The three brothers (Giacomo, Serafino Donati and Antonio Uberti) signed for 10 scudi each for a year's pittance for 1802 in September and December: SCAR 28, 11.

⁵³ SCAR, *Visitationes*.

⁵⁴ SCAR, 23, 90.

Though he was no Fagan, Fr Concanen certainly took the administration of San Clemente seriously. Every account, no matter how small, had to pass through his hands, from the laybrothers' annual allowance of ten scudi each for clothing to work done in the house, church, and vineyards⁵⁵. Since he lived not at San Clemente but at the Minerva, about a mile away, he was at a certain disadvantage, of course. But he was helped to some extent by the appointment in March 1802 of a new bursar, Francis Finan (later O'Finan), who had been a student at San Clemente from 1792 to 1796 and had returned from Ireland towards the end of January⁵⁶.

Meeting the debts of the house was another matter, with little or no extra income to hand. Many were outstanding from the days of the Republic, though Fr Connolly had managed to pay off some of them, for example, that to Duke Francesco Sforza Cesarini which had been due since November 1798⁵⁷. Fr Concanen now did his best to pacify undoubted creditors while parrying the threats of persistent but spurious claimants such as the brothers Schubert, who urged that San Clemente owed them some money for three small lots which they had acquired from the property of San Clemente during the Republic but had had to hand back afterwards. On 16 July 1802 he settled half an account of John Ennis, an English tailor, for clothes made on 19 May 1798 (presumably for some of the contingent that departed then for Ireland), 9 September 1798, and 20 March 1801. On 5 September he paid Rupert Fagan some 177 scudi for expenses incurred (printing bills included) between 13 January 1800 and 27 November 1801 in the Cacciapoti case and in six others⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ See SCAR 28, 11; 23, 92, 98, 123; 28, 7.

⁵⁶ He first signs the Mass Books on 30-1-1802 (SCAR 213). He is noted as "sindick" in SCAR 33 on 14 June, when he attested to monies received from Concanen for Masses.

⁵⁷ SCAR 23, 89.

⁵⁸ SCAR 21, 22; 23, 86; 28, 8, 10. A letter from Concanen to Connolly in SCAR 33, but undated, suggests that the Schubert case was not easily disposed of: "There does not a day pass that I am not tormented by Schuberts Curiale or Esattore". Apparently the Schuberts were also at war with the Irish Franciscans and Augustinians: "They assured us that a guard of soldiers will be sent by order of Monsig. Tesoriere to take possession of the gardens of St. Isidore's and St. Matthew's. To prevent this, and further *gavatojas* on our side, I have given 30 piastres *al conto*..."

Yet for all the old debts and current expenses with which Concanen had to concern himself in 1802 and 1803, there is no evidence in the kitchen book for the period of a frugal diet. The table was adequate, there were guests from time to time (and Fr Concanen about once a fortnight), and the feasts of St Clement and St Patrick continued to be celebrated with a certain style⁵⁹.

Towards the end of 1803 some important changes took place in the personnel of San Clemente. Fr Francis O'Finan departed for Ireland. Fr Clement Dunne, who had been Prior from 1796 and had been ill for some years, died on or about 28 November, when Fr Gaddi appointed Fr Connolly superior "on the death of the Prior". On the day following a new name appears in the Mass books, that of Fr Joseph Taylor. A month or so later, probably on 9 January 1804 when Fr Connolly was nominated bursar once more, Fr Taylor became Prior of San Clemente⁶⁰.

A man of some means, the Abbé Taylor, as he was known, had set out from Ireland with a servant for Italy, probably at the beginning of 1803. Very little is known about him otherwise before his arrival at San Clemente. But according to a letter of 1834, long after his death in 1819, he was commissioned by the then Provincial, when about to leave Ireland, to enquire at Louvain about the fate of the archives of the Irish Province which had been at the Irish Dominican house in Louvain and had been deposited with a benefactor just as the French forces were nearing the town. Fr Taylor, it is said, interviewed this person in Louvain, but was informed that the French had taken the archives away⁶¹. (They have not been located since).

⁵⁹ SCAR 324 ("Libro della cucina, 1801-1824"), pp. 7, 8, etc. This Kitchen Book begins in December 1801. From this and from the Mass book of 1802-1805 (SCAR 213) we learn of Dominican guests such as Fr Edmund French of the Irish Province, who stayed from Jan. to May 1803.

⁶⁰ SCAR 28.15: appointment of Connolly as Vicar, but with proviso that the financial side of the house was still to be under Concanen. For Taylor's signature in Mass Books, see SCAR 213 (29-11-1803). Since Fr Connolly was appointed bursar on 9-1-1804 (SCAR 20.15), it seems likely that Fr O'Finan had departed for Ireland before Christmas 1803.

⁶¹ The letter is printed in D. D. C. POCHIN MOULD, *The Irish Dominicans* (Dublin 1957), p. 173. From SCAR 29, 27 (20-2-1807), it appears that Fr Taylor was a Preacher General (P.G.).

To Fr Connolly, Fr Taylor's arrival at San Clemente was a godsend. In a letter of his in October 1804 he claims that it was he who suggested to the Dominican General that "Fr Joe Taylor, then here on his tour of Italy and a monied man who had it in his power to be of great service to this house in its distressed state", should be offered the priorship⁶².

From the start, Connolly and Taylor, to quote that same letter, "agreed very well". But Concanen and Taylor did not. Concanen's spell as administrator presumably ceased when Taylor, as Connolly puts it, "justly thought that Concanen was meddling too much in our affairs, as usual. Concanen therefore very seldom comes to St. Clement's"⁶³.

To Connolly himself, Concanen was not as helpful as he could have been with his own income: "He would not, Connolly wrote in 1805, lend it in any way without security or interest, such as he can get from others". What was more, San Clemente was still being held to an annual payment of 40 scudi "for his state and religious needs" as interest on 800 scudi which Concanen had given to San Clemente back in 1797⁶⁴. And this at a time when the papal bank had had to cut back on the interest on shares held by San Clemente and others, and when "Prior Taylor and I are sometimes obliged to lay out our own money for the convent".

What annoyed Connolly above all, in that letter of 1805, was the fact that Concanen had left nothing to San Clemente in a will which Connolly had witnessed some time before: "Instead of leaving to St. Clement's after his death a thousand crowns which he put out at interest, of his own money, about ten years ago, the interest is to go after his death for our convent of La Quercia at Viterbo for the maintenance of a student of the province of Ireland in it". Further, Connolly goes on, "He has furnished rooms for himself in the Quercia, and in our convent at Tivoli, but appears very seldom at St. Clement's where Mr. Taylor does not permit him to command and I have never flattered him". Then, feeling perhaps that he

⁶² TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804: to Roche, 27-10-1804.

⁶³ Whereas he had been a regular visitor until then: see SCAR 324, pp. 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, etc.

⁶⁴ See SCAR 23, 126: "Vitalizia del P. M. Concanen. 36" (27-1-1806), and SCAR 57 (Consigli 1769-1797), pp. 159-160.

might have gone a little far, Connolly adds, "I mention these particulars with reluctance, only to counteract misrepresentations that may be made in Ireland of the state of St. Clement's".

Things must have been rough at San Clemente in the Spring of 1805 to have caused such a waspish and uncharacteristic letter. Clearly Connolly was depressed at the time. The community seemed to be forlorn and not a little lost. There were, he wrote, only Taylor, Taylor's servant ("who came with him from Ireland"), himself and the three Italian brothers. But one of these brothers (Antonio Uberti) was "always away at the vineyards", the other (Serafino Donati) was both sacristan and porter, while the third, "good old Br. Giacomo", was "no longer able to do any service but by prayer"⁶⁵. Yet Concanen, secure and comfortable in his position as Provincial of Scotland (his title as socius to Fr Gaddi from mid-1606), Casanate theologian, and agent of many Irish and other bishops, had not lifted a hand to help, remaining as aloof and patronising as he was niggling and censorious.

Concanen, for his part, was deeply dissatisfied with San Clemente. He often complained, as Connolly notes in that letter of 1805, that there was no attempt to obtain novices or students, "tho' it is with difficulty that we can maintain the few fryars that are at present here". He was also, Connolly said, disturbed at the "improvements" to the house — probably the new kitchen and refectory for which Taylor had paid 25 scudi out of his own pocket in the Summer of 1804.

Taylor, in particular, offended his taste. He knew him, he thought, only too well. They had been students of philosophy together at the Minerva in 1767-1769, and in September 1769 had begun theology on the same day at San Clemente, from which Taylor, ever his own man, had withdrawn after five months, with the General's permission, to study theology in some convent "more conducive to health". He was ordained priest, apparently, in 1770 before he left Rome (although this seems a little early for that event), and was, at the age of thirty five, out of his native diocese of Meath in 1782 during

⁶⁵ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1805-1814: to Roche, 11-5-1805.

⁶⁶ SCAR 28, 16: holograph of payment of these expenses by Connolly, with Br Antonio Uberti as witness. See also SCAR 23, 126.

a census, as chaplain to the Neapolitan Ambassador in London.

To Concanen, as he wrote in a letter of 1808 to Fr Gaddi, Taylor was "capricious and worldly", wishing "to take San Clemente over for himself and his lay-people". He was, to quote some letters of Concanen to Troy (their professor of the Autumn of 1769), "silly", "a giddy, empty cipher", an "empty, vain and useless cipher". As for John Connolly, Concanen's old colleague, quondam subject, and ultimate successor, whom, in fact, he "strenuously recommended" for the bishopric of New York in 1808, he was hand in glove with Taylor, if not his mentor⁶⁷. Neither, Concanen was convinced, had the interests of San Clemente at heart, a conviction that was to be expressed very unambiguously in a codicil to a second will in 1810, two years after he himself had become bishop of New York. Should San Clemente still be in existence at the time of his death, Concanen wrote, certain monies were to go to it, but only if it was in charge of "someone other than Fr Taylor or Fr Connolly"⁶⁸.

Part of Fr Concanen's problem, perhaps, and a possible key to the remark, "for himself and his lay people", may have been the fact that Taylor's travelling-companion or servant, Walt Byrne, was in residence at San Clemente, together with a Mr Fanning (both of whom were still there as late as 1812). On the other hand, the presence of Fr Dominic MacDonough at San Clemente in secular dress from November 1803 may not have helped either. And he, for good measure, also had a servant.

A Dominican who had been a student and priest at San Clemente from before almost a year at Dresden (where he engaged a servant for the first nine months of 1802), he moved to Munich, and then made his way south to Siena, Pisa (where he stayed with the Papafava family) and Viterbo, reaching Rome on 28 October 1803. He stayed at the Hotel Rome for a week,

⁶⁷ SCAR 55, fos. 35v-36r (*Liber studiorum*); J. BRADY, "Documents concerning the diocese of Meath", *Archivium Hibernicum*, n. s. 8 (1941) 218. For the descriptions of Taylor, see HUGHES, *Concanen*, p. 205: "bisbetico e secolaresco"; Dublin Diocesan Archives, Troy's Roman Correspondence, Large brown file, fo. 340.

⁶⁸ HUGHES, *Concanen*, pp. 222-224, from SCAR 28, 44. Hughes was unaware of the earlier will cited above.

then moved to "quarters", from which he sallied forth from time to time to visit a theatre, dine, engage a drawing master, take piano lessons, buy a volume of canon law. All this was relieved by periodic excursions to the country, for one of which (to the Abruzzi) he bought himself a "Malta uniform".

There seems to be no doubt that the "quarters" Fr Mac Donough went to after his week in the Hotel Rome were in San Clemente, for payments which are noted in the logbook to "l'Abbé" (Fr Taylor) begin precisely from November 1803. There is no sign of his signature in the Mass book of this period, and not until much later, so probably he was a guest, not a member of the community, for some years. What is certain is that he was tutor to the Papafava family of Padua, his hosts in Pisa the Autumn of 1803, for in October 1804 Fr Connolly notes in a letter to Fr Roche that "MacDonough is here as preceptor to a Paduan nobleman"⁶⁹.

Since the payments to Fr Taylor (l'Abbé or Prior) run regularly from November to April each year from 1803 to 1807 and in no other part of the year, the Papafava family probably spent the Winter in Rome and moved north during the Summer months, taking Fr MacDonough with them. During these Winter sojourns at San Clemente MacDonough dressed as a secular priest (or, as Connoll put it to Roche, "with proper licence dresses as abbé"), and presumably lodged his servant Gaspar (to whom there are payments from time to time) there too.

In the Spring of 1807 Fr MacDonough received his last payment from the Papafavas, "quitted" them on 21 July, and joined the San Clemente community formally on the eve of the feast of St Dominic, 3 August. He had then 162 scudi in his pocket and some money in the bank (his bankers were Schulteis of Vienna), and was to prove a valuable member of the community in time of need, paying, for example, for the kitchen and refectory laundry from his own money in January 1808. In December 1807, probably, he became bursar of the house, and his friend Count Papafava wrote him on 2 January 1808, "So you have taken to dressing as a Dominican again. I am glad, because this may mean that you are resolved to stay on in Rome".

⁶⁹ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, Letters 1780-1804: to Roche, 27-10-1804.

But all was not well with MacDonough. Clearly he had had some difficult moments with Concanen. For when Papafava asks MacDonough to give his regards "to all his friends at San Clemente", he adds, "I am not going to discuss Concanen with you — Di Concanen non vorrei parlarvi", as though Mac Donough had been unburdening his soul to him⁷⁰.

Fr MacDonough was not in good health at that time, Papafava was sad to note. In fact, just when he appeared to be settling down at San Clemente and winning the respect of Concanen (who on 20 May 1808 described him to Troy as "an honest, active and zealous syndic of St. Clement's"), Fr Mac Donough became seriously ill. Probably this was in the following July, for both the kitchen and vineyard books say that the accounts from January to June 1808 were compiled from notes found in MacDonough's room after his death. At all events Fr Connolly began using MacDonough's logbook for jottings of his own from September, and on 8 October Concanen noted in a letter to Troy that "Lector MacDonough" had died "a few days ago" and was "a terrible loss to the house"⁷¹.

By this time Fr Taylor was Prior for a second time, much to Concanen's annoyance. His first term had ended in January 1807, and Connolly had filled the gap until the reappointment of Taylor in September of that year⁷².

Fr Taylor's second term saw the consecration of Fr Concanen as first bishop of New York on 24 April 1808, the death of MacDonough in September of that year, and the appointment of Fr Connolly as theologian to the Casanate Library in succession to Concanen, again in September. Two novices, Murphy and Ryan, arrived from Lisbon in the Autumn of 1808, but

⁷⁰ SCAR 23, 133. The Papafava family — the Papafava Antonini dei Carraresi — was one of the most distinguished families of Padua: see *Enciclopedia* XXVI, 247. In SCAR 28, 33 there are four letters of 1808-1809 from Count Papafava to Connolly.

⁷¹ See SCAR 324, p. 31; SCAR 305. The logbook (SCAR 103) by tradition is Fr Taylor's. But on internal evidence there is no doubt that it belonged to Fr MacDonough; apart from the payments to "the Prior" and "l'Abbé", there is the fact that the notebook ends in Jan.-Feb. 1808, and that there are notes in August 1808 in Connolly's hand (record of letters from various Irish bishops). Concanen's letters are in Dublin Diocesan Archives as in n. 67, 363-364, 365 (20-5-1808; 8-10-1808).

⁷² Connolly was in charge from 7-1-1807 until at least 14-9-1807: SCAR 28, 25; 29, 27; 23, 130.

went to study at the Minerva, San Clemente providing them with habits, breviaries, and a copy each of Roselli's *Philosophia*⁷³.

For most of Fr Taylor's second term the community, if one excludes the laymen Byrne and Fanning, was the same as it had been at the beginning of his first: two priests, three brothers, and a cook. Unlike Fr Concanen when he had been made theologian to the Casanate, Fr Connolly remained on at San Clemente, among other things keeping a Rosary Sodality of some thirty four women ("zitelle") going on Sundays and Feastways from Rosary Sunday in October of each year until the following feast of the Assumption. Points were awarded for attendance, and a prize for the best was presented by a local man, Signor Marelli (Signora Mariana Massi, with sixty three points, bettered all comers by a single point in 1807-1808)⁷⁴.

Life, however, was far from idyllic. The political climate was murky, the financial position of San Clement unstable. Worst of all, perhaps for the peace of the house, there were difficulties with bishop Concanen which at one time or another were to involve the General of the Dominicans, the Propaganda Congregation, and even the pope.

From the outset San Clement was on the wrong foot. First of all Fr Taylor treated Concanen "most unworthily" on the day of his consecration as bishop. When Concanen arrived unexpectedly for dinner just after the consecration ceremony, Taylor "slipt away" and "his dear companions Fanning and Walt Byrne shut themselves up in their dining-room" (Concanen to Troy, 20 May 1808). Then, through sheer lack of funds, it seems, the community fell back in the payment of the annual pension due on Concanen's gift of 1797. This was a severe blow to Concanen. A long stay at Livorno from June to September 1808, while searching for a passage to New York, had left him short of ready money. His financial worries increased when, on returning to Rome in October with little hope of immediate transport, he was "unwilling to force himself" on San Clemente

⁷³ Ibid., 23, 129: 13-10-1808. Fitting them out came to 70 scudi. The Novice Master at the Minerva was given 30 scudi each for their use, and they themselves were given 6.50 scudi for laundry, and a scudo as pocket-money. Connolly became Casanate theologian on 14-9-1808: AGOP, Acta Congregationum, p. 100.

⁷⁴ SCAR 28, 28: 1807-1808, 1809-1810.

and chose instead to reside at the Minerva, his old home. For, as he informed archbishop Troy in Dublin on 19 November 1808, he was now obliged by the General of the Dominicans to pay for his keep there. After a fruitless appeal to Taylor and Connolly, Concanen turned to the pope, who immediately granted him the interest on 2700 scudi which the late Fr Mac Donough of the San Clemente community had invested in the papal bank⁷⁵.

The interest (scudi 13.50 a month) helped a little for the time being, though it did not come near what San Clemente owed him. Nor did it improve relations with San Clemente, now deprived of the handy MacDonough revenue. Fr Gaddi, too, turned against Concanen at this point, and joined with Taylor and Connolly in an attempt to persuade the pope to rescind his award of the interest. In Connolly's view, as expressed in a letter of 7 March 1812 to Troy, Concanen, "though with thousands of scudi at his command had effectively feigned poverty with the pope". Six months after the papal grant, a pathetic letter of Concanen to Troy noted that Gaddi, Taylor and Connolly "wish me to depart [for New York] lest they should be obliged to maintain me"⁷⁶. By December 1809, with still no hope of a ship, he was so desperate that the Prefect of Propaganda had to intervene in his behalf, ordering San Clemente to pay the arrears on the 1797 deposit.

Taylor's reply was negative and emphatic. As soon as the Cardinal's letter of 9 December had reached him, he said, he had contacted the debtors of the convent but had been unable to raise even a penny. Now he had to report that it was absolutely impossible to carry out the Cardinal's order without depriving the community of San Clemente of the barest necessities. The Best he could do, he said, was to give Monsignor Concanen a credit note of 27 scudi on some shares to help him cover the expenses of November and December⁷⁷.

There is no record that any further payment was made or

⁷⁵ *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, ed. T. P. Moran, III (Dublin 1884), pp. 540-541; HUGHES, *Concanen*, pp. 110-111, 205-206.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 542-543 (20-5-1809); Connolly's letter is in Dublin Diocesan Archives (see n. 67), fo. 384.

⁷⁷ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite, Irlanda 1802-1810, v. 18, fo. 55.

that the total debt was ever honoured. A bare seven months afterwards the bishop died at Naples aged sixty three on 19 June 1810, still trying after two years of utter and humiliating frustration to negotiate a passage to his fledgling diocese in the New World. Another five years would pass before New York had its first resident bishop. And as at almost every stage of their long careers together in Rome from the 1770s, it was John Connolly, his junior by some three years, who stepped into the shoes of Luke Concanen as second bishop of New York.

Five weeks after Concanen's death San Clemente was suppressed for the second time in twelve years. For over two years there had been great unease in Rome ever since a French army had occupied the city anew. Pope Pius VII considered himself a prisoner and refused to negotiate with Napoleon. In 1809 the Papal States were incorporated into the French Empire, and when Pius excommunicated all parties concerned in the annexation, he was arrested, deported to Grenoble, and then placed under custody at Savona.

Pressure on the religious houses, particularly those in charge of nationals from countries hostile to or at war with Napoleon, had been increasing since Pius' departure. The "British" houses in particular missed his presence, for, as Connolly had written in 1807, "His settled determination not to permit, as far as it lies in his power, the British subjects resident here to be anywise molested, will always be remembered with gratitude by us"⁷⁸.

On 5 April 1810, at the request of the Mayor of Rome representing the Consulate, Connolly prepared a note of the financial state of San Clemente. Part of the minute is in English and is laconic, tired and resigned: "Abbot [the Commendatory Abbot, a cardinal] has all the income. Fryars obliged annually to discharge 300 Masses"⁷⁹. In fact he and the community knew by this time that the position was hopeless and that suppression was around the corner; probably this was what Luke Concanen had in mind in his codicil of 10 April when he wrote, "should San Clemente survive" — "se questo sussi-

⁷⁸ COGAN, *Diocese of Meath*, III, 365-366: Connolly to Plunkett, 28-1-1807.

⁷⁹ SCAR, 28, 38.

sterà". On 6 May the laybrother Antonio Uberti received 16 scudi from Taylor to purchase secular dress, as did Serafino Donati on 8 May, James Ryan, one of the two students at the Minerva, by 29 May, and Connolly himself by the next day⁸⁰.

The decree of sequestration of all religious houses was issued by the Consulate on 28 May 1810, and, according to a letter of Concanen two weeks before his death, all religious were to be out of these houses by 15 June⁸¹. Accordingly an inventory was made of all the goods of San Clemente and seals were placed on the library and archives. The Torriane vineyard closed its accounts on 1 June⁸². Frs Taylor and Connolly continued to sign the Mass books for some time afterwards, Connolly until 21, Taylor until 30 June⁸³.

The formal sequestration took place on 27 July in the presence of the Receiver, Luigi Montanari, the Mayor, Duke Braschi, the Commissioner, Pio Jordani, the custodian of the seals, Filippo Foscini, and Fr Joseph Taylor, the Prior. According to the process as signed by Jordani, Taylor, Montanari and Braschi, the seals were first examined and found to be intact. Then the goods were checked against the inventory. Finally, when Taylor, on request, handed over the accounts for January - June 1810 (income, 981 scudi; expenses, 985) and three volumes of titles and deeds to Montanari, the whole of San Clemente was formally entrusted to his care: "alla custodia del Padre Superiore Taylor"⁸⁴.

There is little or no documentation for the period of sequestration (July 1810 - June 1814). Various properties of the two convents were sold off by the Republic in 1811 and 1812⁸⁵, and Don Giuseppe Buoncompagni, brother of the Duke of Piombino, bought the gardens of San Clemente and most of the convent (see the petition of 19 October 1814 below). An earthquake in 1812 did some damage to the church and

⁸⁰ SCAR 28, 42; 28, 39; 25, 228.

⁸¹ *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, III, 540: to Troy.

⁸² SCAR 305: "Qui finiscono le spese della Vigna, perché in questo mese di Giugno 1810, fu soppresso il Convento dei Francesi".

⁸³ SCAR 214.

⁸⁴ SCAR 28, 37. Because these volumes of titles and deeds were not returned after 1814, the community had a "Libro Mastro" of their holdings drawn up, with documentation, in 1832. This is now SCAR 400.

⁸⁵ See SCAR 400, pp. 289-309, for a list of these properties.

convent of San Clemente, a report on which, with estimate of costs, was commissioned by the Republican administration on 10 March 1813. In the convent there were cracks in the walls, and the rooms of "the rector, sacristan and cleric" would have to be repaired (presumably those reserved for Fr Taylor, the official custodian, Fr Connolly and a brother, after the Buoncompagni sale). In the church the "Albani" (Clement XI) ceiling in the right aisle would have to be made proof against leaks. As well, the walls needed to be painted, and some thirty panes of glass would have to be replaced. The total cost was estimated at 270 scudi, and the work appears to have been done in that Spring and Summer⁸⁶.

After the collapse of Napoleon, Pius VII returned to Rome on 24 May 1814, and immediately began the process of restoring religious life in the city. An unsigned petition, but drawn up by Fr Taylor, for the restoration of the goods of San Sisto and San Clemente was granted by Cardinal Pacca, Secretary of State, on 27 June⁸⁷, and on 11 August Fr Taylor leased a part of the gardens of San Sisto to the Apostolic Camera, a transaction that was to prove a steady source of income over the next sixty years⁸⁸. Although later documents describe 27 June 1814 as that of the "Repossession" of San Clemente, there still remained the question of the vineyard and, more pertinently, the convent and two gardens. By 1 October, however, the vineyard was in operation once more⁸⁹, and on 19 October Fr Connolly, then "Acting Superior", successfully petitioned the Commission on Ecclesiastical Goods for the return of "the college and gardens" which had been sold to Buoncompagni, asking as well that repairs should be carried out at public expense "for the sake of the young students who will come to it when it is ready for them". The petition was granted a month later, so presumably the whole convent was reoccupied shortly after that⁹⁰. But the small community (reduced, pro-

⁸⁶ SCAR 28, 46; *Archivio di Stato di Roma. L'Archivio della S. Congregazione del Buon Governo, 1592-1847, Inventario* (Rome 1956), p. 116.

⁸⁷ SCAR 23, 139; see SCAR 23, 140 for a document of 20 September.

⁸⁸ SCAR 400, pp. 376-379; see also SCAR 64, n. 49. During the Republic, the mayor of Rome, Tournon had cultivated "exotic flowers" at S. Sisto.

⁸⁹ SCAR 305: "Spese della Vigna... dopo che fu ricuperata dal Convento, 1 ottob. 1814-feb. 1815".

⁹⁰ SCAR 28, 47. Printed from here without dates in Zucchi, *Roma Domenicana*, IV. 292.

bably, by then to Fr Taylor and a brother) was unable to draw on rents due to it from various religious communities until August 1815, when the Commission, which had reserved to itself the right of collecting all such rents, began to reimburse San Clemente for the "first year after Repossession"⁹¹

This was the last known formal act in behalf of San Clemente by Fr John Connolly, to whom we owe some invaluable letters a little later (December 1814, January 1815) on his experiences during the Republic of 1798-1799. On 6 November he was consecrated bishop of New York in succession to Concanen. He left Rome, where he had lived for some thirty seven years, for Ireland in the following February, reached New York in November, and after a difficult ten years as bishop died there in 1825. In a sparse will of 4 February 1825 he left 1500 scudi for the "Irish Dominicans of Rome in appreciation and thanks"⁹².

And what of San Clemente, now that John Connolly had gone? Although Fr Nolan, clearly depending on a petition of 1832⁹³, says in his *Irish Dominicans in Rome* (p. 65) that from the time of the departure of bishop Connolly in February 1815 until the arrival of Fr O'Finan and a bunch of students in May 1816, San Clemente was in the care of two Spanish Dominicans (a priest and a brother), this is to forget Fr Joseph Taylor, whom Fr Nolan never mentions at all.

This unsung if elusive man who, it is said, saved the core of San Sisto and San Clemente from complete despoliation between 1810 and 1814 by the simple device of placing both properties under his own name and becoming their proprietor in law⁹⁴, lived on in Rome for another four years, though probably not at San Clemente. For the first year after bishop Connolly departed, Taylor was in fact both the only Dominican of San Clemente and the only Irish Dominican in Rome, and

⁹¹ SCAR 23, 143.

⁹² SCAR 400, pp. 369-371; an authentic copy of the will is in SCAR 108.

⁹³ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite nei Congressi, Collegio di S. Clemente dal 1809 al 1832, fo. 511 (18-2-1832).

⁹⁴ SCAR 25, 199: a document of 8-10-1861 authorizing Fr Mullooly to safeguard the goods of San Clemente, for example by holding them in his own name just as Fr Joseph Taylor "had held them and saved them" during the Roman Republic.

if not any longer Prior (as the Dominicans in Ireland seem to have thought as late as 6 July 1816 at their Provincial Chapter)⁹⁵, was at least the Superior in name. On 1 May 1816, indeed, and just ten days before Fr O'Finan took up the priorship, Taylor, as "Procurator" of San Sisto and San Clemente, renegotiated the lease of the San Sisto gardens to the Camera which as "former Prior" he had entered into in August 1814⁹⁶.

But apart from correspondence with Fr Olivieri at the Holy Office about certain Dominican affairs in Ireland in December 1818⁹⁷, a gift of wine in February 1819, and a record of some stipends given him by O'Finan in May and October 1819⁹⁸, he is only heard of again on 29 November of that year when a solemn Requiem Mass was offered for his soul at, appropriately, San Clemente, where he was buried in front of St Dominics altar⁹⁹.

At his death, however, there was not an Irish Dominican community at San Clemente, nor had there been for three and a half years. Rather, the reconstituted Irish Dominican community in Rome was ensconced, securely and forever it seemed at the time, in the fine, spacious church and convent of S. Maria della Pace, a mile or so away on the fringe of the Piazza Navona.

The only link with the pre-Roman Republic community of San Clemente was the Prior, Fr Francis O'Finan. But it was a fragile link at the best. For O'Finan, who as a student had spent three or four miserable years in constant ill-health at San Clemente in the 1790s, detested the place. Over the next thirty years until his death in Rome in 1847, Fr O'Finan so successfully conveyed his feelings to his students and colleagues alike, that San Clemente came to be regarded by the Irish Dominican province on the whole as a distinct liability.

⁹⁵ TALLAGHT, Provincial Archives, *Acta Capitulorum Provinciae Hiberniae*, 1720-1846, p. 279.

⁹⁶ SCAR 23, 144.

⁹⁷ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite nei Congressi, Irlanda, v. 21, fo. 637.

⁹⁸ SCAR 319; SCAR 215, pp. 115v, 112v. The three or four Irish Dominicans buried there were transferred to a vault in the lower church by Fr Mullooly in 1867.

⁹⁹ SCAR 216.

IV

S. MARIA DELLA PACE AND SAN CLEMENTE, 1816-1846

If Frs. Connolly, Taylor and to a lesser extent Concanen are at the heart of the history of San Clemente in the years of the Roman Republic, Fr. Francis Joseph O'Finan may be said to dominate that of the next thirty years, 1816-1846.

A son of Thady Finan or Finnan of Corimla in the parish of Kilmoremoy, county Sligo¹, he was born in 1772, entered the Dominican Order (as Finan) at San Clemente on 24 September 1792, and was solemnly professed in the choir of San Clemente on 13 October 1793. After studies in philosophy and theology (as Finnan), he was ordained priest about Easter 1795, and probably returned to Ireland via Naples in the following November². He was briefly (and still as Finan) in Rome again in 1802-1803, when he was bursar at San Clemente. Setting out for Ireland in late 1803, he taught theology in Waterford from 1805, and in 1812 (but now as O'Finan) was appointed rector of the Irish Dominican College in Lisbon, when he presented to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide a book which he had had printed "against the Jansenist Carlo O Conon" (to quote a letter of archbishop Troy to the Congregation in that year)³.

In early May 1816 Fr. O'Finan arrived in Rome from Lisbon with orders to establish once more an Irish Dominican community

¹ SCAR 400, pp. 464-467: a copy of O'Finan's will at Tivoli, 1.11.1847.

² SCAR 54, pp. 6-7; 51, p. 148; 59, pp. 207, 210, 211. He received his first pittance as a priest on 1 May 1795: see H. Fenning, "The Vestimentary Book of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, 1727-1796", *Collectanea Hibernica* 10 (1967) 71.

³ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite, Irlanda 1811-1815, v. 19, fo. 46: Troy to Propaganda, 12.9.1812.

in Rome. He was accompanied by John Thomas Molloy, a theological student, and five young novices: Raymund J. Browne, Peter A. Hughes, Francis J. O'Coughlan, William Joseph McDonald, and Raymond Patrick Griffith. But instead of setting up the community at San Sisto or San Clemente, as one would have expected, Fr. O'Finan decided after a day or two in Rome (at the Minerva, presumably) that some place more inviting and less depressing than these two dilapidated if venerable convents was called for in the circumstances.

The search did not take very long. With the help of Cardinal Litta, Prefect of Propaganda, and by courtesy of its lone resident, abbot Eusebio Sala, Fr. O'Finan soon found a temporary home in the old Vallombrosian monastery of S. Prassede, a short walk across the Oppian Hill from San Clemente and almost in the shadow of S. Maria Maggiore. There on 11 May 1816 he was read in as Prior of SS. Sisto and Clemente and successor to Fr. Joseph Taylor in the presence of Abbot Sala, the six young Irishmen from Lisbon, and two Italian laybrothers, Vincenzo Genovesi and Michelangelo Ricci, whom he had acquired at the Minerva to take the place of Serafino Donati, now at Lucca, and Antonio Uberti, those redoubtable brothers of the old community of pre-Republican and Republican days.

Were the "Liber professionum 1793-1906" (SCAR 54) our only source for the S. Prassede interlude in the history of San Clemente (and of San Sisto, too, though now, as it had been since 1798, no more than an ailing appendage of San Clemente), we should be very short indeed of detail for the very first stirrings of the new Irish Dominican community in Rome. But as to the period after the end of the Republic of 1798-1799, there is an additional source to the book of professions and random archival documents in the Kitchen Book for 1801-1824. For after a lapse of some years this begins afresh in 1816 with the record of O'Finan's installation of 11 May and the above list of the community, and then for the next eight years notes comings and goings, guests at meals and the like in precise little marginal jottings opposite the menu of the day and the cost of the various dishes. Much of what follows depends on this neat and improbable "Libro della Cucina 1801-1824" (SCAR 324).

From the first day at S. Prassede the young community formed a compact, self-contained unit, with little or no contact

with abbot Sala, the solitary Vallombrosian who served the church. And although S. Prassede was not a Dominican house, and much less a canonical novitiate, it was treated as both for the time being by O'Finan and the Roman authorities. Raymond Patrick Griffith, for example, who had been clothed with the habit at Lisbon on 1 February and had had his novitiate interrupted by the journey to Rome, was allowed to proceed to profession as though S. Prassede were a proper novitiate and as though his time as a novice had not been broken. He was duly professed on 17 March 1817 when abbot Sala and Serafino Donati from Lucca were guests at dinner⁴.

The original nine stayed together for a while, with O'Finan, the only priest, as Prior, bursar, novice master and professor all in one. In July, however, the student Molloy left for studies at La Quercia in Viterbo, and on 8 October some of the burden was taken off the shoulders of O'Finan when Fr. Ludovico Maria Grazioso arrived as novice master and professor, posts he held until 13 May 1819 when he left to become Prior of Viterbo⁵. Two of the novices, Browne and O'Coughlan, departed the community sometime in the following Spring, as did one of the brothers, his place being taken by Giuseppe Angelo. On 7 July 1817 three new postulants, Patrick Charles Flood, James Augustine Morris and Dominic James Walsh, arrived from Ireland and received the habit on 4 August at the altar of St. Dominic in San Clemente. Halfway through their novitiate under Grazioso they were joined briefly by another young man, Phillip John O'Reilly, who reached S. Prassede from Ireland on 26 January 1818 and was given the habit there a month later⁶.

Just then, when the novitiate was so promising, it was suddenly closed down. O'Reilly had been clothed for barely two weeks when he was packed off to Viterbo to begin his novitiate there. Next day (12 March) Flood, Morris and Walsh were transferred to the Minerva to complete theirs⁷.

All the same there was no sadness, only excitement. Twenty two months after he had found a refuge there for his reconstitut-

⁴ SCAR 324, p. 87; 54, pp. 19-23.

⁵ SCAR 324, pp. 71, 217.

⁶ SCAR 54, pp. 23-27, 30-31; 324, p. 135.

⁷ SCAR 324, pp. 143, 144.

ed community of San Clemente, Fr. O'Finan was preparing at last to move it out of S. Prassede — not, however, to San Clemente itself, which bleak and quite uninviting had played no part in the life of the community during those months except for the three clothings and the ritual celebration of the annual feast of St. Clement, but to a large, airy and highly desirable place for which he had been angling for almost a year and a half, S. Maria della Pace.

From the very first day of his return to Rome at the beginning of May 1816 (and, I suspect, even before he had set out from Lisbon), Fr. O'Finan seems to have been determined to find an alternative to both San Sisto and San Clemente for the Irish Dominicans in Rome. In the case of the senior house, San Sisto, this is understandable, since Fr. Connolly and Fr. Taylor had paid little or no attention to it during the Roman Republic and it was, as O'Finan would note in October when signing a contract with the Apostolic Camera, "dangerous to occupy because it has been abandoned for ages on account of the bad air and the political situation". It is less so in that of San Clemente, for the preservation of which Connolly and Taylor, not to mention the Lateran Chapter, had worked so effectively. As would be proved some eight years later, the convent was habitable, and there was nothing wrong with the church that could not easily be righted.

Yet there is not the slightest evidence that Fr. O'Finan made any sort of an attempt to ready San Clemente for use in the year of his arrival in Rome with his young community or during his three years as Prior. His interests were elsewhere, as is clear from a petition to Pius VII which belongs probably to his first Summer in Rome.

The two convents of San Sisto and San Clemente, the petition says, are on the brink of ruin, so it begs the pope to allocate to the Dominicans of the Irish province a religious house and church in some healthy part of Rome. After "the fatal overthrow of papal government" the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente is so badly off that it cannot restore San Sisto. As for the convent of San Clemente, it is absolutely necessary to abandon it altogether. Originally it was meant to serve as a Summer retreat from "the pernicious air" of San Sisto, but experience has shown that it is in a very unhealthy location indeed, since "many robust

and hearty young men have died there over the years because of the climate". Were the convent to be abandoned by the Irish Dominicans, the petition went on, the church of San Clemente need not suffer, since the chapter of the Lateran, which had held it "in commendam" during the Republic, could look after the running of it⁸.

In all of this, it may be noted in passing, there is never any question of handing San Sisto or San Clemente or both back to the Dominican Order or over to another religious community. What Fr. O'Finan in fact wanted was to obtain a new place to live in yet retain San Sisto and San Clemente. San Sisto, after all, had extensive, rentable gardens attached to it, and there were parts of the convent of San Clemente that could be rented out too. In other words, while living elsewhere the Irish Dominicans in Rome would continue to be the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente and the proprietors of both places.

Whether or not this draft was ever sent to the pope, Fr. O'Finan seems to have been encouraged by authorities in Rome in his desire to find a better home than San Sisto or San Clemente for his young community. The problem of what to do with the "dangerous" San Sisto was soon solved, and there was no outcry. Where Fr. Taylor in 1814 and in May 1816 had leased only a part of the gardens there to the Apostolic Camera, the administrative and fiscal arm of the papacy, Fr. O'Finan now negotiated an agreement on wider and better terms. On 28 October 1816, some six months after he had lodged his community at S. Prassede, he entered into a 29-year emphyteutic contract with the Camera, and for the goodly sum of 390 scudi a year leased to it not only all of the gardens and outhouses as a nursey and botanic garden for the city of Rome but also most of the convent itself. His only condition, a very shrewd one in the circumstances, was that the Camera should keep the church of San Sisto and the chapter-room of St. Dominic in the cloister open to the public⁹.

After this useful and long-term agreement, San Sisto plays no further part, except as a source of revenue, in the history of

⁸ SCAR 24, 176. Undated.

⁹ SCAR 23, 144.

the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente for the next forty years or so. From now on the history of the Irish Dominicans in Rome is that of San Clemente, as indeed it had tended to be since 1798. Of course, in that Summer and Autumn of 1816 it was not easy to see just where San Clemente was to fit into the new plans for the community, short of confiding the church to the care of the Lateran Chapter; the complex as a whole had no gardens and the like to attract a "caretaker" as responsible and rewarding as the Camera. But once the affairs of San Sisto had been sorted out for a large chunk of the immediate future, Fr. O'Finan probably thought it enough for the moment to provide San Clemente with a chaplain for the church. The important thing now was the quest of a church and convent "in some healthy part of Rome", to quote the petition once more. By the beginning of October 1816, in fact, and some three weeks before the contract with the Camera that took care of San Sisto, Fr. O'Finan was already pursuing a possibility that seemed admirably to answer his needs, the abandoned church of S. Maria della Pace, off the Piazza Navona.

Compared with San Sisto and San Clemente, the church and convent of S. Maria della Pace were modern and well-appointed¹⁰. Built probably by the Florentine architect Pontelli about 1480 at the expense of pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484) to compensate the Canons Regular of the Lateran for the loss of the Lateran Basilica, the convent has a splendid cloister with double loggia done by Bramante in 1504, and the church, if one omits the baroque façade by Pietro da Cortona in 1656, is a repository of the art of the Cinquecento. There are tombs by Vincenzo de' Rossi, and a brilliant altar by C. Maderno enshrines the miraculous image of the Madonna della Pace which, it is said, gushes blood when struck by a stone. The second chapel on the right was designed by A. de Sangallo the Younger and is richly decorated in marble by S. Mosca. There is a fresco of the Madonna with Saints by B. Peruzzi in the first chapel on the left side. Over the arch of the corresponding chapel on the other side there is the famous painting of the Sybils (Cumana, Persica, Frigia and Tiburtina) done by Raffaele in 1514. Three centuries after these great artists, the Canons Regular of the Lateran were ex-

¹⁰ See N. Maurice-Denis and Robert Boulet, *Romé* (Paris 1935²), 765-765.

pelled in the early days of the Republic and their Congregation dissolved, and by the time O'Finan reached Rome in 1816 the parish church of La Pace (as it was called) was served by a secular priest, while the whole of La Pace, church and convent, was in the hands of creditors, nine in all.

According to Zucchi, in his well-informed *Roma Domenicana*, it was Cardinal Litta, the Prefect of Propaganda, who first suggested the Pace to O'Finan. This is not impossible, for, as Zucchi has pointed out, there is a letter of Fr. Gaddi, the Vicar of the Dominican Order, in which on 1 April 1818 he begs the Cardinal to help O'Finan and the Pace creditors reach a conclusion, and reminds him that it was really he who had first set the negotiations in motion¹¹. On the other hand Fr. Gaddi may simply have meant that the Cardinal had encouraged the venture or, perhaps, had put the two parties in contact with each other. As it happens, S. Maria della Pace would not have been unknown to Fr. O'Finan. To some extent, indeed, the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente itself was a creditor of the Pace convent, and O'Finan would have been aware of this and of the suppression of the church and convent from his spell as bursar in 1802-1803, or from a glance at the account books when he first took office as Prior. For the Pace still owed the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente for a loan of 1180 scudi before the time of the Roman Republic. After the first phase of the Republic, the community had to suspend a series of Masses for one Catarina Visigni, since the stipend for the Masses came from interest on this loan of which there had been no sign since the suppression of the Pace during the Republic. A year after these Masses had been suspended, Fr. Connolly obtained copies of documents relating to the claim of his community against "the Lateran Congregation of S. Maria della Pace", but the loan was never recovered. In the returns of the house for 1814-1815, when the community was attempting to recover some of its loans over the years before the Republic, there is a resigned note in the entry on the loan to the canons of La Pace, "It is rumoured that they are bankrupt"¹².

¹¹ ZUCCHI, *Roma Domenicana*, II. 138.

¹² SCAR 214; SAR 23, 142 n. 7.

At all events, Fr. O'Finan obtained permission from Fr. Gaddi on 5 October 1816 to treat with the committee of nine chief creditors of S. Maria della Pace¹³, and in turn the committee was authorized by a judge of the Court of Taxes to begin to discuss matters with O'Finan on 8 October. The negotiations, however, were slow and cautious and stretched over nineteen months, the final result being a twenty-six page contract of 4 May 1818 in which, fortunately, most of the stages are outlined¹⁴.

Fr. O'Finan's initial offer, it appears from that contract, was direct and straightforward: in return for the church and convent of S. Maria della Pace, including the library and a shop, the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente would shoulder the burden of all the Mass obligations of the Pace and of the maintenance of the church and convent. After some time the committee agreed to these general terms, but pointed out that without an intervention on the part of the pope it could not engage itself in a contract which involved the transfer of endowed Masses, particularly since it was not clear that SS. Sisto and Clemente had the capital with which to guarantee those Masses. Fr. O'Finan, however, countered this objection by offering the gardens of San Sisto as collateral provided that the creditors also put up some of the Pace holdings. Then, on behalf of the creditors, he petitioned the pope that the onus of Mass obligations be transferred from the insolvent Pace to the San Sisto gardens and certain Pace properties, and that the creditors be empowered to sell off the holdings that remained.

When Pope Pius VII readily granted this petition on 4 June 1817, Fr. O'Finan made one of his boldest moves. Now that the way to a final contract was clear, save for details, he asked the pope to grant S. Maria della Pace directly, immediately and in perpetuum to the Irish Dominican Province, and with any conditions he should care to impose. On 8 August the pope issued a *Motu Proprio* to this effect, but ordered his Camerlengo, Cardinal Pacca, to have an inventory made of all statues, paintings, and other works of art in the church and convent, and as well

¹³ AGOP IV, p. 262.

¹⁴ SCAR 24, 152: a certified copy, dated 24.10.1819, of formal process of 4.4.1819 as registered by the notary. ZUCCHI, *Roma Domenicana* II. 140-142, prints a part of the process.

stipulated that the Irish Dominican Province was responsible for their preservation.

In spite of this stunning success, Fr. O'Finan had to wait another nine months before his dream was fulfilled. The inventory took a long time to complete, and although his hopes of a completion of the agreement seemed high in early March 1818 when he closed the novitiate at S. Prassede, there were details which took another two months to iron out.

The main problem seems to have been the library of the Pace, which was part of the capital ceded to SS. Sisto and Clemente by the creditors to join the gardens of S. Sisto as backing for the founded Masses. For although the creditors showed considerable good will by obtaining a papal reduction of the load of these Masses on 10 September 1817, and then by obliging SS. Sisto and Clemente to only 500 obligations out of the reduced total of 726, Fr. O'Finan haggled for quite a time over the value placed on the library. He was strongly of the opinion that the estimate of 5,000 scudi in the inventory (now SCAR 23, 149) was much too high for a library of some 900 volumes, and requested that an independent expert should evaluate the library. Much to the creditors' discomfort, Fr. O'Finan was correct. The expert found that the library had been overvalued by some 200 scudi, a sum which the creditors agreed to pay back once the instrument of transfer of La Pace to the Irish Dominican community had been drawn up.

This was, in fact, the last hurdle. Almost two years to a day after the return of a full Irish Dominican community to Rome, the act by which the church and convent of S. Maria della Pace was handed over to the Dominicans of SS. Sisto and Clemente representing the Irish Dominican Province formally was concluded at a notarial Rogito or public transfer on 4 May 1818, during which, among other things, Fr. O'Finan renounced any exception or plea in law to which he or his successors normally could have recourse in case of default, and in particular any exception or plea based on his or their responsibilities to the convents of San Sisto or San Clemente.

At S. Prassede preparations for the move to the Pace had been going on for several days before the Rogito. On 3 May the community gave a dinner for Abbot Sala, "nel partire suo monastero". Four days later it began moving its effects, and there

was a special meal for the workers, who made seven trips in all from S. Prassede to La Pace that day. Although the Kitchen Book does not record the community's first meal at S. Maria della Pace, it seems clear from the baptismal register of the church that the Pace began operating as an Irish Dominican house on 25 May 1818¹⁵.

With the acquisition of S. Maria della Pace, the future of the Irish Dominicans in Rome seemed to be assured, and Fr. O'Finan was happy to style himself "Coenobiorum SS. Sisti et Clementis et S. Mariae Pacis de Urbe" when he issued dimissorial letters for minor orders to Raymond Griffith, his old Lisbon and S. Prassede novice, on 6 June 1818¹⁶. The parish of the Pace was in the capable hands of a new addition to the community, the "Curato" Fr. Giacinto Cipolletti from Ascoli Piceno, later General of the Dominican Order from 1835 to 1838 and a firm upholder of the ideas of Fr. O'Finan with respect to San Clemente and the Pace. The Torriane vineyard, which Fr. O'Finan had overhauled completely a few months after his return to Rome, was functioning smoothly and providing a steady supply of wine and vegetables for the community¹⁷. There was a fair hope that the Apostolic Camera would soon reimburse the community for losses of property suffered by San Sisto and San Clemente during the Roman Republic.

The community, too, began to prosper. When it moved to the Pace in May 1818 it had eight members, probably O'Finan, Grazioso, Cipolletti, Hughes, McDonald, Griffith, and two brothers. On 1 August a laybrother, Pietro Domenico, received the habit. In 1819 three clerical postulants were admitted to the novitiate: John Spachmann Hill, an Englishman of thirty nine years who, with the consent of his wife, wished to work as a Dominican in America, on 20 January; James Joseph Lyons on 20 March; John Thomas Hughes on 30 October¹⁸.

¹⁵ SCAR 324, pp. 153-154; ZUCCHI, op. cit., II. 163. NOLAN, *Irish Dominicans in Rome*, p. 66, says that the change took place on 4 May, and that the Pace was "granted" to the Irish Dominicans on 23.11.1817 (following, I presume, the petition of 1832 in SCAR 24, 5), but does not note that the formal contract with the creditors was on 4.5.1819, nor that the *Motu proprio* of the pope was on 8.8.1817.

¹⁶ SCAR 23, 149.

¹⁷ SCAR 307: Vigna 1817-1826.

¹⁸ SCAR 324, pp. 152; 54, pp. 31-32, 34, 39-44.

Fr. O'Finan's concern for the health of these young men, which was such a feature of the petition to the pope in 1816 and was at the root of his search for a new home, was further rewarded some six months after the move to La Pace. O'Finan had been ill for much of that Summer of 1818, and in October he and an ailing student, Francis O'Coughlan, went to recuperate at Tivoli in the hills east of Rome¹⁹. There he had his attention drawn to an abandoned church and convent which had belonged to some Benedictine nuns before the Republic. On returning to Rome he penned a petition to Pope Pius VII asking him to grant this church and convent of S. Michele to the Irish Dominicans as a Summer house, and Pius, with great alacrity, allowed the petition on 8 December, "since experience had shown that the climate of Rome during the Summer was prejudicial to the health of Fr. O'Finan's Irish students and that the climate of Tivoli was a great help to them"²⁰.

The bishop of Tivoli gave his consent on 11 December, and so it was that on 19 December 1818, some four hundred years after the Ambrosians of San Clemente had sought and obtained from the pope of the day a similar *villeggiatura* near Tivoli for much the same reasons, Fr. O'Finan as Prior of San Clemente took formal possession of S. Michele in Tivoli, a Summer residence which was to serve generations of Irish Dominicans until 1937, when another Summer house was purchased at Romeno near Trent in the north of Italy²¹.

In the meantime San Clemente had been pushed into the background, and there is nothing to suggest that when the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente settled into S. Maria della Pace in May 1818 it had any thought of residing again in either of the convents after which it was named. The library of San

¹⁹ SCAR 324, p. 182.

²⁰ AGOP XI, 144.

²¹ Strictly speaking, the papal grant only took effect on 26.12.1818, when O'Finan had settled with the papal treasury: see SCAR 28, 51, which contains Mullooly's transcript of a decree of treasurer on that date, asking the bishop of Tivoli to consign the convent to the Irish Dominicans. According to Mullooly the legal instrument of the transfer is in the episcopal chancery at Tivoli. Later, in July 1823, the Dominicans of S. Biagio in Tivoli fixed up a part of their convent for the non-professed novices from La Pace, so that they could continue their novitiate at Tivoli during the Summer months: SCAR 28, 53.

Clemente was moved to the Pace in November 1818 and the January following. The feast of St. Clement, of course, was celebrated each year by the community of La Pace at San Clemente, and professions regularly took place there. But the community seemed to think that to maintain their ownership of the church and convent it was sufficient to engage a chaplain (a Spaniard by 1820) to say Mass there every day²².

Eventually there came a day of reckoning, mainly because of the great determination and persistence of the Cardinal Titular of the church, Benedetto Naro Patrizi.

A Roman by birth and a highly cultured man, he became a cardinal at the age of seventy two and titular of San Clemente on 8 March 1816, a month or so before Fr. O'Finan and the new community reached Rome from Lisbon. At the outset, Cardinal Naro seems to have understood the need to reside at S. Prassede, and when he took possession of San Clemente on 23 July he paid for the dinner of the San Clemente community at S. Prassede on the following day²³. But when the community moved out of S. Prassede to La Pace in May 1818 without any indication that this was merely a temporary measure, and without any attempt at putting San Clemente in order, Naro turned difficult. Convinced that his titular church was being "abandoned" by the community that was supposed to look after it, he approached Cardinal Consalvi, the Secretary of State, who sometime in 1820 or 1821 told the Pace community that it should either maintain San Clemente or jettison it altogether²⁴.

The rebuke could not have come at a worse time for the community. For there were internal difficulties at the Pace, and the records of the years 1819-1821 are a merry-go-round of Priors, temporary superiors and casual vicars.

When Fr. O'Finan's term of office ended in May 1819, he was not reappointed but was succeeded by Joseph Harrigan, Prior of Limerick, who had been in Rome briefly in 1817 from 25 October to 12 December on what the Kitchen Book calls "his own affairs", and had footed the bill for the community's dinner (wine and fire not included) on 8 December²⁵. To say the least he was

²² SCAR 163, fo. 116r.

²³ SCAR 324, p. 61.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ SCAR 324, p. 121.

a curious choice of Fr. Gaddi, the Vicar of the Dominican Order, given that Fr. Olivieri, an official of the Holy Office and a former Vicar of the Order, had explicitly accused Harrigan (and Fr. Gibbons of Dublin) in 1818 of planning to make themselves "Priors in perpetuum".²⁶ Probably his close friend O'Finan (who had written him on 7 March to set out for Rome at once and "to bring me books")²⁷ had worked hard behind the scenes to persuade Fr. Gaddi that in spite of Olivieri's accusations Harrigan was just the man for La Pace.

Fr. Harrigan arrived from Ireland on 21 June, took over formally as Prior on 29 June, and after visits to Tivoli with O'Finan to inspect the new Summer convent of S. Michele, returned to Ireland on 4 August via Paris, to which address O'Finan sent a letter on 8 August²⁸.

For the next eighteen months S. Maria della Pace was without a resident Prior. Fr. O'Finan, now novice master once again, was vicar for most of the time, with William McDonnell in charge for the month of May 1820 while he was away in Tivoli, and Cipolletti, now regent of studies, as pro-vicar during O'Finan's four-month absence at the baths in Lucca from June to the beginning of October. Harrigan, however, did not return again, and Giacinto Cipolletti, who had been replaced as Parish Priest by Rosario Bardari on 30 January 1820, was appointed third Prior of La Pace in or about 4 February 1821²⁹.

It was precisely during these eighteen months when Harrigan was absent and O'Finan was acting superior that Cardinal Naro took a very decisive step in his endeavour to rehabilitate his titular church. Spurred on by the neglected but far from moribund old Rosary Confraternity, whose statutes Concanen had reworked when he was Prior, the cardinal stood on his rights as titular and instructed the Apostolic Camera to take San Clemente away from the Irish Dominicans.

The Camera, however, took some time in gathering evidence. But on 10 August 1822 it formally took over the administration

²⁶ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite, Irlanda v. 21, fos. 336-337. The petition of Harrigan to the Dominican General is in SCAR 26, 27; see also 164B.

²⁷ SCAR 163 (O'Finan's notebook, under H).

²⁸ SCAR 324, pp. 221-223, 228; 163, H.

²⁹ SCAR 324, pp. 254, 264; 54, pp. 43, 44; 324, p. 241; 23, 154.

of the church from the Irish Dominicans, and began to clean it up. Next day it presented a draft of the terms of requisition to the Pace community. By now Cipolletti was Prior. He challenged the draft at once, and in particular rejected the accusation, which Naro also had made, that the Irish Dominicans had squandered the goods and revenue of San Clemente on S. Maria della Pace. In a letter to Cardinal Consalvi he pointed out forcefully that the income of the church of San Clemente as such (in contradistinction, that is, to the income from properties owned by the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente) was not a concern of the Irish Dominicans of La Pace. Since the suppression of the Ambrosians in 1645, all the income from the church as such had been the preserve of the current Commendatory Abbot ³⁰.

This was not the whole truth. In fact the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente had been awarded fifty scudi (later reduced temporarily to twenty five) a year from the Abbacy of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio by Clement XIII in 1766 ³¹. But the position of the Commendatory Abbot had always been a sore point from the earliest days of the Dominican occupancy of San Clemente in 1645. He was not the titular cardinal. He was a papal official (a nephew, perhaps, or a nuncio) to whom the pope of the day assigned the revenue from the holdings of the old joint Ambrosian monastery of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio. There is no evidence that he was obliged to contribute in any way to the upkeep of either San Clemente or San Pancrazio from the revenue of his sinecure. Fr. Cipolletti, indeed, put it bluntly in a memorandum to Pius VII that the real reason why San Clemente was in such a sorry state was because the Commendatory Abbot "had all the goods" ³². Perhaps he was moved at this point by a report which an architect had prepared "at the request of the Prior" thirty years earlier. The walls of the church, the architect said, were cracked, the foundations bad, "since they do not rest properly on virgin ground". The wooden ceiling was badly damaged by water and, in any case, was pushing the walls out. The only

³⁰ SCAR 30A, 19: part of a draft letter in Cipolletti's hand. These is a memorial of Naro to Viviani, the Dominican General, in SCAR 164B, together with Cipolletti's reply.

³¹ SCAR 33; 20, 96 (bull of concession, 17.12.1767). For documents on Commendatory Abbots see SCAR 109.

³² SCAR 30A, 16.

reasonable course, he felt, was to abandon the church completely "lest it come down around the ears of the community one fine day" ³³.

Because of Cipolletti's representations, the Camera reworked the terms of requisition. On 23 April 1823 the revised terms occasioned a spirited commentary from the Pace community. While the three signatories (Frs. Cipolletti, Prior, O'Finan, Master of novices, Hughes, bursar) accepted "with sorrow" the fact that they had to cede San Clemente to the Camera, the new document was not to their complete satisfaction. The description of San Clemente as a church that was "abandoned" and "served by a stray priest" was unwarranted: the community had supplied a chaplain at its own expense and had done its best to repair the ravages of the Republic, a task, unfortunately, which proved to be beyond their means. There was, they continued, no mention in the document of the reasons (health, etc.) why the Irish Dominicans had not returned to San Clemente after the Roman Republic. Nor was there any allowance for the fact that certain effects in the sacristy (chalices, vestments, presses) were not the property of the church but of the community. Something, too, the memorandum concluded, should be done about the founded Masses and the revenue from the Abbacy of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio. The founded Masses were tied to the church, so the Dominican community should be relieved wholly of their burden. The income of twenty five scudi a year from the Abbacy was, on the other hand, a perquisite of the community, not of the church, so the community should not be deprived of it ³⁴.

This requisition issue, however, was still up in the air a year later when Fr. O'Finan departed the community for Lucca on 6 July 1824 to take up a post as confessor to the Archduchess of Tuscany ³⁵.

All in all, Fr. O'Finan's eight years between S. Prassede and S. Maria della Pace as Prior and Master of Novices had been good ones. As Prior for three years he had negotiated the "per-

³³ SCAR 30A, 19, among the Cipolletti papers. In fact the report was commissioned by John Connolly, when Prior (1787-1794): the original is SCAR 20, 103f.

³⁴ SCAR 23, 163.

³⁵ SCAR 325, p. 3.

petual transfer" of S. Maria della Pace to the Irish Province by papal *Motu proprio*, and had acquired S. Michele in Tivoli as a retreat for his own community. As Master he had formed a number of promising young men, from Raymond Griffith, his first novice and later Vicar Apostolic in Africa, to Vincent Schuwirth of the Dutch Province (professed on 22 July 1823), John Thomas Hynes, the future bishop of Demarara in British Guiana, who was professed on 9 June 1820, and Robert Concanen White, a nephew of bishop Luke Concanen, who received the habit at S. Maria della Pace on 24 December 1822, was professed there a year later, and would be a force in the Irish Province for fifty years and more³⁶.

Fr. O'Finan had been a good administrator, too. He had leased S. Sisto profitably, had refurbished the vineyard, had struck a hard bargain with the Pace creditors, and had seen the community's financial position strengthened considerably in 1822 when it received a goodly sum from the Camera in compensation for losses San Sisto and San Clemente had suffered during the Roman Republic³⁷. With the backing of the able Cipolletti he had fought the same Camera in 1822 and 1823 for better terms when faced with the certain loss of San Clemente. Now as he departed for Lucca it was only a matter of time (or so it may have seemed to O'Finan) before the Camera came to heel and met the reasonable demands of the Pace community with respect to the requisition of San Clemente. One thing at least was certain: the community was securely in possession of S. Maria della Pace. There was a papal *Motu proprio*—and in chirograph form at that—to prove it. And even if the community were to decide at some point to reject the terms of the Camera and restaff San Clemente, it could never be made to part company with the Pace.

Almost three months to a day after O'Finan had set out for Lucca, and notwithstanding the *Motu proprio* of 1817, the Irish Dominicans were out of the Pace, ignominiously and forever, and his great achievement was in ruins.

Once again it was Cipolletti, though now no longer Prior, who had to take the blow. He had ceased to be Prior in the previous June of 1824, and had been succeeded by none other

³⁶ SCAR 54, pp. 51, 53-55, 52, 58-59.

³⁷ SCAR 400, pp. 432-437 (12.8.1822), 441 (20.7.1822).

than Joseph Harrigan of Limerick, who had arrived from Ireland on 20 February. Fr. Harrigan's second spell of office lasted longer than his first in 1819, but it was none the less erratic. On 25 August he presided at the profession examination of John Thomas O'Shea. Ten days later he set out again for Ireland (or, rather, Limerick, as the Kitchen Book nicely notes), and did not return until just before Lent in the following year³⁸. The profession of O'Shea on 30 August was in fact the last of an Irish Dominican at S. Maria della Pace. And when Harrigan arrived back in Rome some seven months later it was not to the Pace but to San Clemente.

The end of the Irish tenure of the Pace was unexpected and unceremonious. On the morning of Thursday 30 September 1824 Pope Leo XII sent for Fr. Velzi, the Vicar General of the Dominicans, and told him bluntly that the Irish Dominicans were "to get out of the Pace as arranged and leave the disposal of it to the pope", who would himself pay for the transport of the effects of the community to San Clemente³⁹.

So far as I can ascertain, Pope Leo never gave any reason for this abrupt decision nor for his reversal of a papal *Motu proprio*, one of the most solemn of papal documents. In a long memorandum which he and O'Finan put together some twenty years later, Cipolletti states that the order to get out of the Pace was due to the fact that the Jesuits had just taken over the Collegio Romano and the priests who served the Collegio wanted the Pace as a residence, the Apollinaris College, to which they were supposed to go, being too small⁴⁰.

Possibly this is correct, but it is just as likely that the pope was simply tired of the whole affair of the Pace and San Clemente. In spite of a large indemnity in 1822 from the Camera for properties and revenues lost or impaired during the Roman Republic, the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente at La Pace had made no effort to expend some of this money on San Clemente (not to mention San Sisto, which seems never to have been in contention), so as soon as Leo was elected in September 1823, Cardinal Naro took the matter up again with the new pope.

³⁸ SCAR 324, p. 338; 54, p. 60; 325, p. 5.

³⁹ AGOP IV, 267, fo. 105.

⁴⁰ SCAR 24, 160 (O'Finan papers).

Of course the long negotiations with the Camera over the future of San Clemente were in progress all the while, so the community may not have felt an obligation to repair the church. There is a possibility, too, that the community itself was not entirely sure of its mind on San Clemente and in fact had blown hot-and-cold all along to the confusion of everyone. According to a diary cited by Zucchi, the community had reversed its decision after its memorandum "in sorrow" of 22 April 1823 yet had done nothing about setting itself up again at San Clemente⁴¹. If this is so, then the point of Pope Leo's "get out of the Pace as arranged" some eighteen months later becomes a little more understandable.

Fr. Velzi communicated the pope's *viva voce* order the very next day, 1 October, to Fr. Cipolletti, now Regent of studies and Vicar of the Pace. He insisted that the Pace must be evacuated at once, since he had to make a report to the pope without delay⁴². Cipolletti, naturally, was shocked, but although he protested in the name of the absent Harrigan that the Pace "had been ceded in perpetuum" to the Irish Dominican Province by a chirograph of Pope Pius VII, he obeyed the order immediately⁴³.

San Clemente, of course, was totally uninhabitable (and in fact took some three months to make ready), but Fr. Velzi arranged temporary quarters for the Pace community at Santa Sabina. A week later, on 7 October, some of the community departed the Pace for Santa Sabina, the others the day following. The "Libro del Vitto" or Kitchen Book for the years 1824-1831, which notes these events, has a record of the *viva voce* mandate of Leo under 8 October and adds that by further order of the pope Fr. Cipolletti, a brother (Arsenio Canoniques) and the cook were to remain on at the Pace for the time being (which they did until 13 January 1825)⁴⁴.

The church and convent seem to have been ready for occupation by 10 January 1825, for on that day the Camera formally handed the church back to the Irish Dominicans, and allowed

⁴¹ ZUCCHI, *Roma Domenicana*, II. 140; the diary is that of Mons. Canali, Vice-Gerent of Rome.

⁴² AGOP IV, 267, fo. 105.

⁴³ AGOP XI, 14.

⁴⁴ SCAR 325, p. 7; SCAR 33.

them to keep "on deposit" various pieces of furniture, a set of vestments and a chalice which it had provided for the church since August 1822. Possibly the community did not move in until 21 January, the day on which the Kitchen Book (SCAR 325) takes up the record of meals again with the words, "A di 21 gennaio comincia la spese del vitto nel venerabile convento di S. Clemente"⁴⁵.

On 21 January 1825, after a lapse of some twenty seven years, a full Irish Dominican community—six religious and two servants on 8 March—was established once again in San Clemente, with Fr. Joseph Harrigan as Prior (but not to return for another month), Fr. Giacinto Cipolletti as vicar, regent and bursar, and Dominic Walsh as Master of novices (which he had been since O'Finan's departure in the previous July).

The only lasting reminder of the community's six years at S. Maria della Pace was the Pace library which, mixed in with that from San Clemente, the community had moved with its other effects at the beginning of the New Year. It was a fine library, too, the core of which was the library of Cardinal Oliverio Carafa (1430-1511), a nephew of Pope Paul IV and archbishop of Naples. The bulk of it still survives today, and besides incunabula and 16th-century editions of classical literature, law, theology and philosophy, there are some fifteen MSS. dating from the 13th to the 16th century, several of which were written for Carafa himself and for his contemporary, Cardinal Philibert Hugonet⁴⁶.

Whatever the community may have felt at its banishment from La Pace, Cardinal Naro, the instigator of it all, showed his appreciation of its return at once. Some time before the move back he had had an altar erected in the chapel of St. Catherine, and had provided benches for the church, some of which are still in use. Now in 1825 he saw to the restoration of the frescoes

⁴⁵ SCAR 325, pp. 7b, 8. From December 1825 until February 1829, while Joseph Lyons was bursar, the Kitchen Book is only gossip on occasions. As soon as he departs on 11.2.1829, the gossip resumes for a year or so. After 1831 the books cease to note anything except accounts. The instrument recording the handing back of San Clemente by the Camera is in SCAR 164B.

⁴⁶ See L. E. BOYLE, "Manuscripts and Incunabula in the Library of San Clemente, Rome", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 29 (1959) 206-227.

of Masolino there⁴⁷. And when he died at the age of eighty nine on 6 October 1832 he was buried behind his altar in that chapel, with a simple slab on the wall to commemorate him. Later his executor placed a more elaborate inscription on the back wall to the right of the Crucifixion fresco. Unfortunately, as one may see from some sketches made for a volume on the chapel by G. Dall'Armi in 1809, the executor destroyed part of the fresco in order to sink the oblong slab into the wall. As a result, a scene showing a ladder thrown on the ground, the rest of the horse, and a man attacking the horse and its rider, has disappeared. So also has a portion of the left-hand section of the fresco, where a woman with hands outstretched to the group of sorrowing women has been obliterated by a wooden tabernacle, now long since removed but possibly put up in 1819 when Naro presented the altar⁴⁸.

It is unlikely, all the same, that the loving concern of Cardinal Naro for his titular church had the wholehearted respect of the community of San Clemente. A deep resentment at what was thought to be a quite unjust treatment by the papacy lingered on in the community for years, the root cause of which was expressed straightforwardly by Cipolletti, who in Harrigan's absence, had to shoulder the burden of the transfer. Though they had obeyed the command of the pope, he wrote to Velzi, the Vicar of the Order, they could not forget that the pope had reversed the chirograph of Pius VII which had solemnly conferred S. Maria della Pace with all its rights on the Irish Dominicans⁴⁹.

Fr. Harrigan returned from Ireland on 14 February 1825, and on 23 April received James Vincent Corcoran to the habit, the first in the new phase of San Clemente⁵⁰. The novitiate, however, was discontinued in 1826, and simple novices were from now on sent on to La Quercia at Viterbo or Perugia for their training immediately after clothing.

A fair attempt was made during Fr. Harrigan's priorship in

⁴⁷ P. E. VISCONTI, *Città e Famiglie nobili e celebri dello Stato pontificio: Dizionario storico* (Rome 1847), p. 95.

⁴⁸ G. DALL'ARMI, *Le pitture di Masaccio esistenti in Roma nella basilica di S. Clemente colle tente lucidate dal Signor Carlo Labruzzi* (Roma 1809).

⁴⁹ AGOP XI, 14.

⁵⁰ SCAR 54, p. 61.

1825 and 1826 to improve the condition of the church and convent. The church was repaired here and there and painted, as were the library and the student chapel, while the large sum of 5600 scudi of the compensation money from the Camera in 1822 was deployed in remodelling the "novitiate" or east wing of the house⁵¹. But living at San Clemente had its difficulties and its hazards. A memorial presented to the President of the Commission for Streets in, probably, the Winter of 1826, stated that the church and the convent were on the edge of ruin and urgently needed repairs. There was, it said, a constant danger of flooding during the Winter season, and if draining were not provided in the following Summer another flood would "wreck one of the most distinguished monuments of Rome"⁵².

The damp, chesty Winters probably were relieved a little for the students, never more than two or three, by the charge of the General of the Dominicans to provide them with coffee and chocolates once a week from January 1827⁵³. Fr. Harrigan, in particular, must have found the going rough. Yet although he was in indifferent health and had to have special food on Ash Wednesday and other days of Lent, he preached a series of sermons in English at San Clemente during the Lents of 1825 and 1826. He was away quite a lot, however. On 2 July 1825 he went to Tivoli for three weeks, then on to Naples for two months, leaving Fr. Cunningham, who was a theology student at the Minerva, as Vicar. In April and May 1826 he was ill for some time, and on 4 June he resigned as Prior and left for Ireland⁵⁴.

After an interregnum of eighteen months under Joseph Lyons, who had been bursar since 30 November 1825⁵⁵, Harrigan was succeeded on 30 October 1827 by Ignazio Buffa from S. Sabina, whose first act was to have the room of the Prior repainted⁵⁶.

Fr. Buffa had been a member of the Pace community briefly in 1823⁵⁷, and was one of a long line of Italian Dominicans who

⁵¹ SCAR 301 (accounts of 1825-1826); Provincial Archives, Tallaght, Letters 1857-1858 (letter of Robert Concanen White, 12.2.1858).

⁵² SCAR 23, 165.

⁵³ SCAR 301.

⁵⁴ SCAR 325, pp. 9, 20, 21, 26; 23, 172 (illness cost 70 scudi); *Diario di Roma*, 19.2.1825, 8.2.1826.

⁵⁵ SCAR 325, p. 33.

⁵⁶ SCAR 301.

⁵⁷ SCAR 54, p. 53.

had worked with and for the Irish Dominicans in those years after the end of the Roman Republic. Apart from a succession of brothers, Fr. Grazioso, the Master of novices from 1816-1819, and Fr. Bardari, the "Curato" of the Pace from 1820-1822, there was the redoubtable Giacinto Cipolletti (1819-1825), to whose intelligence and administrative ability the convent and church of La Pace owed so much during the six years of their existence as Irish Dominican properties. As bursar, Prior, Regent of studies, curate of the Pace parish, Cipolletti served the community with uncommon dedication, and with his neat, distinctive hand, passed on a meticulous record of these years in the kitchen books, Mass ledgers, vineyard and other account books⁵⁸.

From 1825, when in November he moved from San Clemente for good, other Italians drifted in and out of the community over the next five years: Mauro Reggio (later Prior), Francesco Tonna (the "Lector artium" from 1827 and described by the Kitchen Book as "Il celebre Padre Tonna" when he departed in 1830), Samuele Mazzucchelli (a student in 1828 and later an eminent if controversial member of the American Province), and one or two others⁵⁹. But the presence was not overwhelming. When Br. Luigi Fiori was installed as procurator of the convent on 16 July 1828, the notarial act gives the community as Buffa (Prior), Lyons (lector and bursar), Tonna (lector), John Savage, Michael Cahalan, James Coholan, and Robert Concanen White, a composition not so very different from that of the community when it was at S. Prassede and La Pace⁶⁰.

A few years later the underpinnings of the community were secured for years ahead by the admission (by unanimous consent) of two Italian brothers in the tradition of Serafino Donati and Antonio Uberti: Patrizio Cecchini, who joined the community on 8 September 1830 and served as cook for many years, and Frediano Giurlani, a tertiary from 1826 at San Clemente who began his novitiate as a brother on 23 January 1831 and managed the Torrione vineyard until his death some thirty four years later. Since both of these men were from Lucca, they may reflect the

⁵⁸ During his time as bursar he lent some 300 scudi to the community, which was paid back to him on 7.2.1826: SCAR 301.

⁵⁹ SCAR 325, pp. 178, 301.

⁶⁰ SCAR 23, 169.

zeal of Fr. O'Finan at Lucca for his late community, or, possibly, the affection for San Clemente of Serafino Donati who, though living now in Lucca, was still a regular visitor at San Clemente as late as 1825, some thirty years after he had been professed there⁶¹.

Midway in Buffa's priorship, however, the four Irish students of the day, who apparently had been depressed for some time by what they deemed an overly Italian representation in the community, found voice as soon as they were ordained (Winter was ordained just a week earlier) and on 29 April 1829 appealed to Dublin (and, presumably, to the General also) for an Irish superior⁶². Possibly their unease had been heightened as Thomas Butler (pro-Regent in 1827 and 1828) left for Malta about the end of the year previous, Joseph Lyons (bursar from 1825) for Ireland in February, their colleague John Savage on 3 April for Lisbon, leaving only Frs. Buffa and Tonna, the Prior and the professor, as senior members of the community⁶³.

The response of the General, Ancarani, to this letter of Henry Winter, James Coholan or Coghlan, Michael Cahalan and Michael Muldowney, was, as far as one can see, to invite Butler back from Malta, ordering the community to put on a reception for him when he returned on 28 September. Butler came back formally to live at San Clemente on 19 October, took office as "President" when Ignazio Buffa retired from the priorship to the Minerva on 4 November, and received the degree of Master in Theology on 1 December⁶⁴.

This did not solve the problem, for Butler was clearly a temporary superior and in fact had departed San Clemente by the following Autumn. On 15 October 1830, indeed, and about the time of Butler's departure, Fr. Andrew Fitzgerald, the Provincial, had to report to Ancarani that some of the San Clemente community were constantly writing back to Ireland and saying

⁶¹ SCAR 54, pp. 63, 46; see also SCAR 24, 24, and 28, 57 (1.8.1833: permission to dispose to his family at Lucca of a small legacy from his father); 325, p. 17: Serafino Donati on 31.5.1825.

⁶² Provincial Archives, Tallaght, Letters 1825-1840.

⁶³ SCAR 325, pp. 128, 135. James Joseph Lyons, the students reported, "was obliged to fly the convent, being no longer able to hold out against the perfidy of the Italians".

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 162, 165, 168.

that the place was being invaded by Italians. These letters, he said, implore us not to let San Clemente pass into Italian hands and become lost to the Irish Province⁶⁵.

The difficulty, of course, was that an Irish Provincial had little or no say in the matter of who was Prior of San Clemente, since for over a century the appointment of the Prior of SS. Sisto and Clemente had been in the hands of the Dominican General by favour of Pope Benedict XIII. There was the fact, too, that there did not seem to be any likely Irish Prior on the horizon, now that O'Finan had other duties. Apart from Fr. Butler, who had other preferences, the Irish on the spot at San Clemente or at the Minerva were all too young and untried.

It is no great surprise, then, to find that Fr. Butler's successor on 1 November 1830 was an Italian Dominican, Fr. Mauro Reggio, a fleeting member of the community in 1826, or that his successor on 15 October 1831 was Fr. Giuseppe Mennini from the Minerva, who became not only full Prior but also Master of students and "Rector of the Irish Dominican College", with Fr. Luigi Biondini as bursar for a time, and the bulk of the community composed of three if not all of the signatories of the 1829 letter: Winter, Cahalan, Coghlan and Muldowney (who became bursar towards the end of 1832)⁶⁶.

Fr. Mennini seems to have gone the full length of his three-year term, and to have taken his job seriously. The term is notable for two things at least. First, Fr. Mennini attempted to put straight the record of the finances of San Clemente. Two years earlier, Fr. James Joseph Lyons, just before his departure for Ireland in January 1829, had drawn up a devastating memorandum on this very point. The house was "a desolate one", he wrote. The vestments in the sacristy were so bad that their use had to be forbidden. There was not even a relic of St. Dominic nor a container for the holy oils. When he took over as bursar

⁶⁵ SCAR 23, 168.

⁶⁶ SCAR 59, p. 7; 54, p. 65. Among the students I may mention Anthony Fahy, the great Argentinian missionary after whom a square is named in Buenos Aires, who arrived for the first time at San Clemente on 31.10.1829, and was professed on 8.9.1830 (SCAR 325, p. 172; 54, pp. 62, 63); and also Thomas Folan, later Prior of San Clemente (1858), who was examined for the diaconate on 25.5.1832 (SCAR 54, p. 65). John Thomas O'Shea, the last to be professed at the Pace, held a solemn disputation at the Minerva on 11.8.1829: A. WALZ, *Il Pontificio Ateneo Angelicum* (Rome 1950), p. 20.

in the Summer of 1827, the house had a debt of 1033 scudi, and probably would still have had it at the end of his eighteen months as bursar but for the timely arrival of 1446 scudi from the will of bishop John Connolly. During his time as bursar all he had to offer the rent-collector was a list of rents, etc., which Cipolletti had once jotted down on a loose sheet of paper. He himself had had to institute a search for documents in order to understand just what the list meant.

Part of the reason for the lack of documentation was, of course, the fact that the Republican Commissioners had taken away much of the original deeds and records in 1810. Fr. Mennini now took up where Lyons had left off. In late 1831 or early 1832 he commissioned a search in the notarial archives of Rome for all instruments and deeds which directly or indirectly had a bearing on all properties, rents, loans, endowments, etc., of San Sisto and San Clemente from the days when the Dominicans of San Sisto first took over San Clemente in 1645: a formidable undertaking which appears to have been completed by 20 June 1832, when the researchers and copyists were paid for their work⁶⁷.

The second notable thing in Fr. Mennini's priorship was an imaginative but luckless attempt to have the community moved from San Clemente to a better location.

This again was at the beginning of his term. On 18 February 1832, just a year after the election of Gregory XVI, the community of San Clemente (prompted possibly by O'Finan through Winter) made a moving appeal to the pope to allow it to leave San Clemente for the vacant Greek College in Via del Babuino or any other place he might care to suggest. After the community had been dismissed summarily from S. Maria della Pace by Pope Leo XII, it had never taken the matter of a home other than San Clemente up again in any form with him, nor with his successor Pius VIII (1828-1829) during his brief pontificate. But with the election of Pope Gregory XVI the time seemed right for a fresh try. He was a Camaldolese monk, who had had to suffer suppression during the Roman Republic when abbot of S. Gre-

⁶⁷ SCAR 24, 12: 62 scudi. The volumes copied are now SCAR 47, SCAR 400. Fr Lyons' testy memorandum is in SCAR 330 ("Stato attivo 1829").

gorio in 1807, and had been Prefect of Propaganda from 1826 until his election and knew well the problems of the Irish Dominicans.

The petition itself is brisk and business-like, but the accompanying justification of the petition (surely the work of O'Finan and Cipolletti) is a fine summary of the main points of the history of San Clemente from the time (wrongly placed in 1667) when the Irish Dominicans first took possession of it, providing many precious details which have been made use of in this and other chapters, such as the arrival of O'Finan from Lisbon in 1816 with "five young Irishmen", the sojourn in the Vallombrosian monastery of S. Prassede, and the move from there to S. Maria della Pace. As in O'Finan's successful petition to Pius VII in 1816, the petitioners harp on the unsuitableness of San Clemente to young religious. The professors are listless in their teaching and the students unable to concentrate. The place is so low-lying with respect to other buildings in the area that "the bad air" (malaria) lodges there. Since the return to San Clemente in 1825 many young Irishmen have become ill, with the result that some are impeded in their studies, others have to return to Ireland and in some cases die there soon after, still others are rendered useless for missionary work. Consequently, the expenditure on medicine is well above normal, and is only exceeded by the expense of combating the persistent humidity and of paying for a three-month villeggiatura away from it all at Tivoli, the cost of which would easily support a student for a year⁶⁸.

It was a tour-de-force on the part of Mennini, Winter and the rest of the community, not to mention O'Finan and Cipolletti in the wings, and it deserved a warm word of sympathy if not a small round of applause. But all it received from Pope Gregory was a laconic and final "The Dominican Fathers of San Clemente are to stay where they are". As the Prefect of Propaganda reported it in rather more words, "His Holiness, having considered all the circumstances, not only refused the request for the Greek College but also said forcefully that they should stay put in the most ancient and devout church of San Clemente"⁶⁹.

The community, naturally, stayed put, though there were times

⁶⁸ Archives of Propaganda Fide, Scritture referite: Collegio di S. Maria dei Fornaci... e di S. Clemente dal 1809 al 1832, fo. 511.

⁶⁹ SCAR 24, 5.

when the resolve was to weaken a little over the next fifteen years, not least when the Province stepped in directly to take the matter of San Clemente in hand in 1840. At the time of the petition, indeed, if the Province was aware of it at all, it was not a change of air that was the topic in Ireland but rather the whole future of the Irish Dominicans in Rome. The Province was small and contracting—from 253 members all told in 1756 and 131 in 1800, it was now down to 85, and reached its lowest ever at 65 in 1846, after the Famine—and Rome and San Clemente were far away and costly. As Fr. Andrew Fitzgerald put it to Fr. Ancarani in 1830, the Dominicans at home in Ireland kept on asking themselves and him, "Will San Clemente ever be of any use to us?"⁷⁰

A year earlier in a letter of 15 August 1829, shortly after he had been confirmed as Provincial, the same Fitzgerald had some pertinent things to say about San Clemente and its role as he painted a very gloomy picture of the Province as a whole.

His predecessors, he wrote to Ancarani, had not been very careful about whom they admitted to the Order in Ireland, accepting anyone (often a relative) recommended by one of the brethren. Further, many novices had been ordained priests as soon as they completed their novitiate, and then were allowed to roam about as they pleased, in Connaught particularly, where there is little or no ecclesiastical discipline, and eventually took on the mores of the peasantry ("commiscendo cum vulgo et rusticis, similes illis fiant"). My problem, Fitzgerald went on, is what to do with these? "I cannot send them to Rome, because they are totally unlettered, nor can I send them to Lisbon, where there is no studium at present, and no vestige of regular discipline". He regretted very much that neither San Clemente nor Lisbon had really contributed very much to his Province and that they were, in fact, outside of his jurisdiction. He knew, of course, that the General had his own ideas about San Clemente, and that the place was in good hands, but he himself would prefer to see Lisbon set up once more as a studium rather than San Clemente. For one thing, it was nearer to Ireland. For another, it cost very little to get there by ship. If well administered the

⁷⁰ SCAR 23, 168. For the figures see D. D. C. POCHIN MOULD, *The Irish Dominicans*, p. 198.

revenues of the Lisbon house would support twelve students and two professors (the rector included). Lisbon, if completely re-organized and placed under the jurisdiction of the Province, offered, in his estimation, some hope for the future; otherwise the outlook was dismal, and the Province would soon face extinction. He now asked the General to reconstitute Lisbon, and suggested John Pius Leahy (the future bishop of Dromore), then twenty eight years of age and eleven years professed, as the man to head the studies there.

In the remainder of this letter, which gives a complete and not very flattering run-down of the general state of the Province and of each house, the only thing of note for present purposes is that the late Prior of San Clemente, Joseph Harrigan, was living outside his convent in Limerick and proving a handful. He was, Fitzgerald said, the blot on an otherwise good record of the Limerick house⁷¹.

Fitzgerald's preference of Lisbon over San Clemente as a house of studies, with which the General was in agreement in fact, could have been a severe and perhaps mortal blow to San Clemente. But although Fr. Leahy did set out for there as regent on 5 December 1829⁷², the proposed house of studies never came to anything, mainly because of the suppression of religious houses in Portugal in 1833, and San Clemente found itself in favour once more in the Province, or at least until the next change of wind. Fr. Peter Smyth, who became Provincial in succession to Andrew Fitzgerald on 14 July 1832, summed up the new mood in the Province in a letter of 15 July 1834 to Olivieri, the new General of the Order. There was, he wrote, great fear in Ireland for the future of the Lisbon house. San Clemente, therefore, he said, "is the last hope for the continuing of studies in the Irish Province"⁷³. Writing a few months later to O'Finan, now since 12 May Socius to Olivieri and Provincial of Scotland, Smyth was a little less pessimistic: "By keeping St. Clement's *as it should be*, it will be quite sufficient, to preserve succession, for our beloved Order, in this poor province"⁷⁴.

⁷¹ SCAR 23, 181.

⁷² SCAR 73, 183 (Fitzgerald to Ancarani).

⁷³ SCAR 24, 36b. Smyth was elected on 14 July 1832 with a majority of 20 out of 23 vocals: SCAR 24, 10.

⁷⁴ SCAR 24, 131: 1.9.1834.

Fr. Smyth's plans for San Clemente and the studium there included the appointment of an Irish Prior, Michael O'Regan, on which the General was agreed, and of an all-Irish staff. "With Mr. O'Regan being Prior, he wrote O'Finan in that same letter of 1 September 1834", Mr. Winter Professor and Mr. Muldowney Procurator, I am more than cheered at the bright prospects dawning on poor St. Clement's and, of course, poor Dominican Ireland". As O'Regan, the new Prior in place of Mennini, was about to leave for Rome a few weeks earlier, Smyth had given him a letter for Henry Winter there. Praising O'Regan as a man who "with all the zeal of a true Dominican leaves his native land and happy home to render a service to this poor province of Ireland", Smyth expressed a hope to Winter "that under O'Regan's guidance, St. Clement's will flourish"⁷⁵.

It did not, as it happens, or at least not in the eyes of Henry Winter, one of the signatories of the appeal of 1829 for an Irish Prior and the second-in-command of the new San Clemente. "I apprehend, he wrote O'Finan, now bishop of Killala, on 7 February 1836, that the fair prospects we had cherished of St. Clement's are now on the road to a rapid decline"⁷⁶.

To Winter, who, admittedly, had an axe to grind, O'Regan had been a disaster. The simple novitiate at San Clemente had been closed down in 1825, after the move from La Pace, but had been resurrected in 1835, with Winter as novice Master⁷⁷, as part of Smyth's plan to make San Clemente the nursery of the wilting Irish Province, complete with novitiate, studium, and Irish officials. Now, Winter wrote to O'Finan, Fr. O'Regan had just refused to allow that Dominic William Connolly and Vincent Bernard McDermott, two postulants who had been sent from Ireland by Fr. Smyth, could make their novitiate at San Clemente. Instead, with the consent of the General (Giacinto Cipolletti, no less), and abetted by John Thomas Hynes (who had tried to persuade one of Winter's students to go to Lisbon), O'Regan had arranged for them to make their novitiate at Santa Sabina (where in fact they arrived on 9 February)⁷⁸.

⁷⁵ SCAR 24, 160b.

⁷⁶ SCAR, 24, 160c.

⁷⁷ SCAR 24, 36: 31.3.1835.

⁷⁸ SCAR 24, 43.

Altogether, Fr. Smyth's "Irish" experiment at San Clemente was not a happy one, and was somewhat in disarray when he ceased to be Provincial in mid-1836. One of the few things which Winter and O'Regan seem to have seen eye-to-eye on was a petition of no great weight which with the new bursar, Thomas Cantwell (Muldowney's replacement in November 1835), they drew up under, I suspect, the guidance of O'Finan, since the petition is among his papers, in a second attempt to persuade Gregory XVI to assign another place in Rome to the Irish Dominicans. The main arguments are those of the petition three years earlier, but the three signatories made a new point that of the three colleges in Europe which the Irish Province once had, only San Clemente now remained for the education of missionaries⁷⁹.

The petition was never sent. Fr. O'Regan ceased to be Prior in the Spring of 1837, being followed by Fr. Dominic Cotts, first as President (19 June 1837), then as Prior on 6 January 1838⁸⁰. Under pressure from bishop O'Finan, Henry Winter stayed on in Rome for another two years in order to assist the studium to get off the ground. The simple novitiate, of which he was Master, was, of course, dead, and was in fact the last clerical novitiate ever at San Clemente. The studium, however, which had been dormant since the end of the scholastic year 1828-1829 and the departures of Fr. Butler and Fr. Tonna shortly afterwards, came to life once more in the Autumn of 1838 when the two novices at Santa Sabina had made their profession and had been joined at San Clemente by two others who had begun their novitiate much later.

Fr. Winter shared the courses for 1838-1839 with Gr. Giuseppe Clotet of the Province of Aragon, who had been appointed Lector primarius on 22 November 1838, at the beginning of the scholastic year. Fr. Clotet gave lectures on the *Praelectiones theologicae* of P. M. Gazzaniga, to the four students (Dominic Connolly and Bernard McDermott; Thomas Mullins and William Madden), Fr. Winter on the *Theologia moralis* of P. M. Antoine.

⁷⁹ SCAR 24, 160. (O'Finan papers). Since O'Regan ceased to be Prior in mid-1837 and Cantwell was appointed bursar by Cipolletti on 19.11.1835 (SCAR 24, 41), the petition is probably in 1836.

⁸⁰ SCAR 57, pp. 161, 163.

On Winter's leaving for Ireland in December 1839, Fr. Clotet took over both courses, with Mullins, Madden, and a Spaniard, Cabot, as students, the two seniors from the previous year now being at the Minerva for their theological studies⁸¹.

With the end of that second scholastic year of the rejuvenated studium, 1839-1840, the studium was closed down, apparently for good. The wind had, indeed, changed, and Fr. Smyth of the "high hopes" for San Clemente six years before, was now proposing to pull the Irish Dominicans out of it once and for all.

* * *

What with bad reports of conditions and finances, the failure of Fr. O'Regan to set the house on its feet, and the return, disenchanted, of Henry Winter, the Province was persuaded by mid-1840 that it should give San Clemente up as a bad job and place its students elsewhere. Towards the end of the year, Fr. Peter Smyth, then Prior of Esker in Galway, was sent to Rome with Robert Concanen White as his assistant to study the whole question. What the Province had in mind, he wrote the General (Fr. Ancarani again) on 6 January 1841, was to "transplant" the Irish Dominicans in Rome from San Clemente to the Minerva, renounce San Clemente to the Apostolic Camera, and retain S. Michele in Tivoli as a Summer-house. A "mature Irishman" would be Prior of S. Michele and would, at the Province's expense, represent the interests of the Province in Rome⁸².

How serious these proposals were I do not know, but they are never heard of again. About ten days later, while he was awaiting a reply from the General, Smyth was crossing St. Peter's Square in the company of an Italian Dominican when he was introduced by the Italian to a French priest, Vincent Jandel, then a postulant at Santa Sabina, and one of a group of disciples which Fr. Lacordaire, the great French preacher, had formed in an effort to reestablish the Dominicans in France.

Père Cormier, in his life of Jandel, gives some details of that chance encounter, though he does not give the names of the Irish and Italian Dominicans. Jandel, it appears, had been visiting the

⁸¹ SCAR 58, pp. 1, 19.

⁸² AGOP.

Dominican Master of the Sacred Palace. When the Italian Dominican presented Jandel as a companion of Lacordaire and a prospective Dominican, the Irishman disclosed that he had come to Rome to renounce San Clemente to the Apostolic Camera, since the brethren no longer wished to live there. Jandel took him up at once. San Clemente was just the place that he, his three fellow-postulants at Santa Sabina and Fr. Lacordaire had been dreaming of for some time as a base from which to revive Dominican life in France. The Irishman was non-committal. He promised to do his best for them, but warned Jandel of the bad location of San Clemente, the climate, and the state of the buildings there⁸³.

Jandel, for his part, was excited as he returned to Santa Sabina. He could see the French Dominican San Clemente as a great, sensitive centre of religion and culture. He was sure that "if San Clemente were to become the property of the Province of France, as I have every reason to hope, we shall have rendered an inestimable service to those artists for whom we shall preserve this place, giving them every facility to study and copy the masterpieces which decorate our church and which foreigners admire so much"⁸⁴.

That evening he wrote to Lacordaire in France about this idea of turning San Clemente into a French Dominican house, and then on his own initiative began negotiations with Fr. Ancarani and the Irish Dominican representatives. For the moment, however, all that the General would allow was a pied-à-terre at San Clemente, a place where Jandel and his three companions could make their Dominican novitiate with Lacordaire as their superior. There were difficulties, too, with the Congregation of Religious Discipline, which was not quite sure whether or not to permit such an unusual novitiate. But it was generally taken for granted that the decision would be favourable, and at the beginning of March, six weeks or so after the exchange with Fr. Smyth, Fr. Ancarani permitted Fr. Jandel and his three fellows to instal themselves at San Clemente, and wrote a note to Fr.

⁸³ H.-M. CORMIER, *Vie du Révérendissime Père Alexandre-Vincent Jandel* (Paris 1899), pp. 77-78.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Dominic Cotts, the Prior, asking him "to receive them charitably and to give them such beds and furniture as they may need"⁸⁵.

The French Dominican postulants who arrived at San Clemente on 3 March 1841 —Jandel, who had been superior of the minor seminary at Nancy, Hersheim, a convert Jew, Piel and Besson, both artists— were four of a group of five (one, Requedat, had died) which Fr. Lacordaire had placed at Santa Sabina on 16 May 1840, a month after he, a secular priest since 1827, had taken solemn vows as a Dominican at La Quercia, Viterbo. They had been waiting at Santa Sabina all this while for permission to begin their novitiate together as the nucleus of a new French Dominican Province to take the place of the old suppressed in the French Revolution in 1790, and they now hoped as they prepared to begin their long-delayed novitiate that when Fr. Lacordaire arrived from France in a few weeks time he would have a few more postulants with him.

San Clemente, needless to say, was in no condition to house four and possibly more at short notice, so the postulants were not able to occupy rooms right away. Though it had twenty two rooms, not more than eight or nine had been in use at one time since the return in 1825.

Under the direction of Piel, however, the French set about making their quarters habitable so that the novitiate might begin as soon as Fr. Lacordaire arrived⁸⁶. Carpenters, plasterers, plumbers, painters, and seamstresses were engaged. The church and all the rooms in the house were painted or whitewashed. The refectory was repaired and plastered. The kitchen was cleaned up and new plumbing installed. Cloth for habits was purchased and run up. Sheets were bought, and twelve planks, twelve chairs, nine benches, nine lamps, nine crucifixes, six mirrors⁸⁷.

The laybrother Salvatore Nenni of the San Clemente community kept the accounts, numbering the bills as they came in, and paying them, if possible, on the spot. The cost was borne by Fr. Lacordaire through Fr. Vincent Lamarche, subprior of the Minerva, who either advanced money to Neroni or paid him later.

⁸⁵ SCAR 24, 116d.

⁸⁶ See E. CARTIER, *Le R. P. Hyacinthe Besson. Sa vie et ses lettres* (Paris 1865), I. 85, 106-107.

⁸⁷ SCAR 24, 143-147.

Neroni's itemized account is in SCAR 24, 123, and it has been checked off against the invoices by Lamarche. The total cost in scudi came to 1028, towards which Neroni acknowledges the receipt of 930 scudi in all, the latest payment from Lamarche being on 17 June 1841⁸⁸.

When Fr. Lacordaire arrived from Paris (where he had been since the previous November) on 7 April 1841, he found that his books and his four disciples were nicely installed at San Clemente, where he immediately went together with five other postulants who had accompanied him from France⁸⁹. The retreat for the postulants was not due to begin until the end of April, when the repairs and renovations would be totally out of the way, so Lacordaire gave classes in Scripture and Cassian to his nine postulants (ten, when another, Danzas, arrived) to keep them occupied, and, though tone-deaf, took part in all their chant practices⁹⁰.

All seemed well, and only a matter of time before the retreat and the novitiate began. On 19 April Lacordaire had an audience with Gregory XVI, who greeted him with "Ecco il predicatore" and promised (as Lacordaire reported to Montalembert next day) that he would approve at once whatever the Congregation of Religious Discipline would propose to him with respect to the reestablishment of the Dominicans in France⁹¹. In fact the Congregation, possibly because of political pressures, turned out to be unfavourable to the idea of a French "national" novitiate in Rome, and on 29 April it issued its decision, which the pope at once approved, that there could not be a novitiate for French Dominicans at San Clemente since no French Province existed.

Lacordaire did not take the decision as a final one. He and his men began the retreat for clothing as planned on 1 May under the Spanish Dominican who was to have been their novice Master⁹². Each afternoon they visited the various churches in

⁸⁸ See also SCAR 24, 129 for monies paid out between 14 March and 2 April, and various receipts in SCAR 24, 131-133, 135, 137-138, 143-147.

⁸⁹ The only direct Lacordaire item in the San Clemente archives is an invoice for the carriage of a box of medicines from Civitavecchia to Santa Sabina on 19.9.1840: SCAR 24, 141.

⁹⁰ M. FOISSET, *Vie du R. P. Lacordaire* (Paris 1870), I, 517.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 521-525.

twos, and on 5 May paid a special visit to S. Maria Maggiore for the feast of St. Pius V. As he reentered San Clemente from that visit, Lacordaire was greeted in the cortile by the news from the Secretariat of State that his ten postulants should not be clothed with the Dominican habit in Rome, but should disperse at once—and without Lacordaire—to two separate novitiates far apart: Jandel, Aussant, HERNSHEIM, Bourard and Rey-la-Fontaine to La Quercia at Viterbo; Piel, Danzas, Besson, Bonhomme and Augustin to Bosco near Turin⁹³.

This was the end of the San Clemente interlude in the story of the renaissance of the French Dominicans. The La Quercia postulants departed on 11 May, the five for Bosco two days later, leaving Lacordaire somewhat lonely and pensive: "I write you, he wrote to Madame Swetchine in Paris, from a deserted San Clemente. This morning at six those of our brothers destined for Bosco set out; the others for La Quercia preceded them by thirty six hours. I am alone after being surrounded by a numerous and charming family. We parted from each other with the greatest sorrow and joy, full of confidence. We love one another and hope to find ourselves one day united together in France. Yesterday was the day of my birth. Today is that of my baptism"⁹⁴.

It would not be long before he would experience a sort of death, too. For he and Jandel would soon be at loggerheads over the authentic tradition of the Order, he as Provincial, Jandel as General. But, to quote a letter of his to Jandel in 1852⁹⁵, there remained a wistful dream of what might have been had he and Jandel not been separated so rudely in May 1841:

Without the violent separation to which we were subjected in 1841, look what would have happened. We should have lived at San Clemente all together for one or two years: we should then have studied our rules, practised the religious virtues, and blended our dispositions together. You and I, the only priests at the beginning, would have put our experience in common together,

⁹³ CORMIER, *Jandel*, pp. 79-80; B. CHOCARNE, *Le R.P. H.-D. Lacordaire* (Paris 1866), I. 388-390.

⁹⁴ CHOCARNE, I. 339.

⁹⁵ From Flavigny, 24 March 1852: R. DEVAS, *Ex umbris* (Hawkesyard n. d.), pp. 155-156.

and corrected respectively your faults of character and mine... No bitterness would have disturbed our relations: you and I, the one General, the other Provincial, supported by the Holy See, would have established for ever the harmony and solidity of our Province. But the enemy of all good did not allow this simple and natural course. He separated us from one another.

San Clemente, on the other hand, did not fare too badly. Because of this all too brief and tragic French "occupation", it had been completely refurbished at no expense to itself. In all fairness, however, one should note that extensive repairs, amounting to some 350 scudi, had been done to the novitiate in April, September and December 1840, well before the arrival of the French, though they were not paid for until 25 June 1841, after the French had departed⁹⁶.

More or less ordinary life was resumed at San Clemente after Fr. Jandel, Fr. Lacordaire and the others had gone their several ways. But postulants from Ireland were not welcome and were sent instead to Viterbo for their novitiate. John Thomas Hynes, now a bishop, complained of this in a letter from Rome on 14 November 1842. San Clemente, he wrote, would be an ideal place for the novices, if the revenues, which were "a little short of 1200 dollars a year", were properly used. But given the composition of the community, this was unlikely. The only Irishman was Fr. Andrew O'Brien (who was acting superior because of the illness of Fr. Cotts). The others were Italians, and all "living at the expense of the Irish Province": the bursar (Giuseppe Martini), his brother, (a layman), one laybrother, and a Genoese carpenter.

In late 1842 Fr. Cotts was replaced by Fr. Giuseppe Clotet as Prior, and in November 1844 the studium came back to life briefly, with Clotet, the Prior, lecturing on the *Summa philosophiae* of Roselli in 1844-1845, and on Roselli's *Physica* in 1845-1846, the students in both years being Joseph Carbery, Vincent Doherty, Michael Costello and Thomas MacDonnell⁹⁷.

⁹⁶ SCAR 24, 142. Other work done by a carpenter in December 1840 (possibly in preparation for Smyth's visit) was paid for by the Dominican curia on 12 April 1841: SCAR 24, 117.

⁹⁷ SCAR 58, pp. 37-40. For the letter of Tynes see D. WALSH, "The correspondence of Dr. Hynes, O.P.," *Archivum Hibernicum* 28 (1966) 145 (n. 72).

But although the Smyth proposals of 1840 seem never to have been broached again, the air of uncertainty about the future of San Clemente that had prevailed since 1816 probably increased in 1846 when the Provincial Chapter decided to abandon the whole idea of a studium at San Clemente and to send the students daily to the Minerva instead. The finances of the house had not improved either. By 1846 and 1847 they were so treacherous, and the general mood of the house so uneven, that the thoughts of some at San Clemente and elsewhere turned once more to Fr. O'Finan's old dream of acquiring an entirely new place away from San Clemente, or even of recovering S. Maria della Pace, in a hope of maintaining the presence if not of bettering the future of the Irish Dominicans in Rome.

Joseph O'Finan was now a bishop in retirement. For all his neglect of San Clemente during his three years as Prior of SS. Sisto and Clemente thirty years before, he had in fact encouraged the community after his project at La Pace had fallen through in late 1824. During his years at Lucca as confessor to the Archduchess of Tuscany (1824-1834) he had regularly visited San Clemente and on occasion had lent a helping hand, as when in 1826 he loaned 227 scudi to the community at no interest⁹⁸. After a brief moment as Socius and Provincial of Scotland in 1834-1835, and an unhappy period as bishop of Killala in the West of Ireland in 1835-1837, he had returned to Rome, and for the last ten years of his life helped the community in many ways. He knew Lacordaire, who presented him with a signed copy in 1839 of his *Mémoire* on the reestablishment of the Dominicans in France⁹⁹, and probably encouraged the San Clemente venture of Lacordaire and his postulants.

Nolan in his *Irish Dominicans in Rome* suggests that O'Finan did much to stabilize San Clemente after the withdrawal of Lacordaire's men, devoting himself "to putting the convent in a condition to be used once more by his Irish brethren" (p. 88). In support of this he cites a letter of the Irish Provincial, Patrick

⁹⁸ SCAR 301: 4.12.1826.

⁹⁹ *Mémoire pour le rétablissement en France de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs* (Paris 1839). The copy (now in San Clemente archives with the small collection of O'Finan papers: SCAR 160) is inscribed, "Au Monseigneur Offina. Hommage du profond respect. H. Lacordaire. 9 Avril 1839".

Dunne, of 6 March 1845 (now SCAR 24, 116a) in which the Provincial states that "we owe your Lordship a lasting debt of gratitude for your practical zeal on behalf of our Irish Province, the strong and justifying evidence of which we have in the re-establishment of S. Clement's. Nothing could be better or more to our minds than the manner in which it is at present constituted. A good foundation is laid, and we must try and assist in the superstructure".

There is possibly a little exaggeration here on the part of both Nolan and the Provincial. San Clemente did not really need to be put "in a condition to be used once more" by O'Finan's Irish brethren in 1841 or 1842. When the French contingent departed, San Clemente was in a better condition, materially speaking, than it had been for years, after all the renovations, repairs and expenditure. As for the Provincial, whose picture of San Clemente in 1845 is a shade short of the reality in that year, he may well have been harking back to 1816-1819 and to O'Finan's "reestablishment" of the Irish Dominican community in Rome, though not at San Clemente.

There can be no doubt that O'Finan was a source of strength, and on occasion of money, to the community at San Clemente in the decade of his retirement. In his will of 1 October 1847 he left the community the interest at four and a half per cent on 2600 scudi¹⁰⁰, and, in a touching gesture, willed something personal to each of the young men of the community: a silver service to James Brady; a gold chain with French cross to Fr. Joseph Carbery, who had looked after him and had written much to him at Tivoli; a silver watch to Fr. Thomas McDonald (or MacDonnell, as above), a relative; a silver cross to Fr. Vincent O'Doherty; a French Bible and glasses with a silver frame to Fr. Joseph Mul-lowney (or, as he is later, Mullooly)¹⁰¹.

But his affection was for the community and not for San Clemente as such. He seems never to have forgotten that he had been plagued by illness while resident there as a student from 1792 to 1795, and had in fact been unable to take his examinations at the regular time on that account in 1793, 1794, 1795; or that

¹⁰⁰ SCAR 54, 71. See also SCAR 400, pp. 464-467.

¹⁰¹ SCAR 24, 191.

Thomas Rock had died at Naples in 1792 of malaria contracted at San Clemente, as had Fr. Clement Donnelly at Louvain about the same time¹⁰². No more than Cipolletti, he never really accepted nor understood the expulsion from the Pace in 1824. To the very last, he supported every move to abandon San Clemente or to get the Pace back.

In the Spring of 1847, some six months before his death, and with the connivance of Giacinto Cipolletti, now an official of the Holy Office, bishop O'Finan threw his weight behind a petition of the community of San Clemente to the new Pope Pius IX for the return of S. Maria della Pace to the Irish Dominicans. Between them the two erstwhile Priors of the Pace made what was to be the last attempt we know of to rid the Irish Dominicans of San Clemente once for all.

Bishop O'Finan's contribution to the appeal was a resumé of his part in the acquisition of the Pace some thirty years earlier, and he sent a folder containing this and the grievances of the community of San Clemente to Cipolletti, who wrote on 2 June 1847 that he would begin to work on it at once. Cipolletti's final draft of the petition was, like the petition of 1832 in which his hand is so evident, accompanied by a "Foglio informativo" or justification in which there is a succinct history of the manner in which the Pace was acquired in 1818 and lost in 1824. Ad-ducing the inevitable arguments about bad air and the like, Fr. Cipolletti noted with some force that water had lodged at the entrance to the convent (Piazza San Clemente) during the previous Autumn and Winter, with the result that the community had to pass through the church (from the Via S. Giovanni) to get in and out of the house¹⁰³.

Word of the petition soon reached Ireland, and Robert Concanen White, who had been his novice at the Pace, wrote O'Finan on 16 August to report that the Dominicans in Ireland were "looking forward with a lively interest to your Lordship's endeavour to gain back the Pace for us from the illustrious Pius IX. We expect that act of justice from a man of his enlarged and truly enlightened views"¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰² SCAR 59, pp. 207, 208, 210, 211, 276.

¹⁰³ SCAR 164.

¹⁰⁴ SCAR 44.

There is no record that the petition was ever exposed to the justice of Pius IX. Perhaps, wisely, the community had second thoughts. It is a nice irony, however, that one of the community and a confidant of Bishop O'Finan in that Spring and Summer of 1847 when the petition was being put together, was Fr. Joseph Mullooly (or Mullowney, as he was then), who had joined the community at the end of the previous year and was to become its bursar on 1 December following, a few days after bishop O'Finan's death. For it was Mullooly who as bursar and Prior over the next thirty years and more until his death in the Summer of 1880, provided a continuity and a clarity of purpose which rescued San Clemente from the malaise and shiftlessness which had infected it, and the threat of abandonment which had hung over it, since the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente was reestablished in Rome in 1816.

V

JOSEPH MULLOOLY AND SAN CLEMENTE, 1847-1857

Joseph Mullooly was born at Lanesborough (Rathcline), County Longford, on 19 March 1812, a son of Gilbert Mullooly, a farmer, and his wife, Bridget Dowd. In 1840, armed with a testimonial letter signed by his parish priest, Patrick Dawson, and authenticated by the signature and seal of the bishop of Ardagh, William O'Higgins, he set out for Italy, where on 7 September 1841 he took the Dominican habit at La Quercia near Viterbo¹, some six months after Jandel and the other French protégés of Père Lacordaire had been forced to leave San Clemente for the novitiates of La Quercia and Bosco. He never returned to Ireland again, and of the thirty nine years he spent in Italy before his death in 1880, all but five were passed as a member of the community of San Clemente.

Mullooly was professed at La Quercia on 8 September 1842². Sometime within the next three years, and certainly before being sent to Perugia for further studies on 11 November 1845, he became a priest, possibly because he had had some training at the seminary in Longford before joining the Dominicans. The letters dimissory for the priesthood are from the Prior of La

¹ There is a memoir by Alexander Henry, ed. G. G. Doran, "A Chapter towards a Life of the Late Rev. Joseph Mullooly, O.P.", *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Third Series, 12 (1891) 1108-1121. Fr. Henry was a confidant of Fr. Mullooly's until the latter's death in 1880. The memoir, which Doran discovered in a presentation copy of Mullooly's book picked up at a sale in Cork in 1890 of the library of Monsignor Neville, Dean of Cork, has no details of Mullooly's early life, but is valuable on some aspects of his later life at San Clemente.

² NOLAN, *The Irish Dominicans in Rome*, p. 99.

Quercia³; and in the document of assignation to Perugia he is described as "Reverendus Pater Frater"⁴. After a year at Perugia he was assigned by the General of the Order, Fr. Ancarani, to San Clemente on 25 October 1856⁵, and had arrived there by 14 November, when his signature (but as Mullowny not Mullooly) first appears in the Mass ledgers in his neat, cultivated hand⁶.

By then he had completed his second year of theology and had had a favourable report on his progress from the Perugia Dominicans⁷. It was not until the following May (1847), however, that he resumed his studies, obtaining permission from Fr Ancarani to study at the Minerva convent in Rome for the degree of Lector in Sacred Theology⁸. He took the degree on 23 January 1849⁹, and the examination for confessions on 20 April¹⁰. By then he had been bursar of San Clemente for some eighteen months and was beginning to make his presence felt.

When Fr Mullooly settled into San Clemente in November 1846, never to leave it again, the community was a small, ragged one which had been ruled for some years by two Dominicans of the province of Aragon, Giacinto Clotet as Prior and Giuseppe Martini as bursar, and an Italian Dominican, Antonio Martini, as master of novices¹¹ (though the bursar Martini had just been replaced towards the beginning of November by Fr Vincent Molloy)¹². There were two young priests: Joseph Carbery, later bishop of Hamilton, Ontario, had been a priest for over a year; Thomas McDonnell, who a year later would leave for Ireland in bad health, had just been ordained¹³. The only students in residence were Michael Costello, later a distinguished antiquarian, and Vincent O'Doherty, both of whom

³ SCAR 28, 63.

⁴ Ibid., 24, 158.

⁵ Ibid., 24, 163.

⁶ SCAR 222, pp. 134 ff. Fr Nolan, *op. cit.*, p. 110, is incorrect in stating that "the first indication of his presence at San Clemente is on 12 March 1847".

⁷ Nolan, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

⁸ SCAR 24, 169 (14.5.1847).

⁹ Ibid., 24, 204.

¹⁰ Ibid., 52, p. 79.

¹¹ Ibid., 24, 165; cf. 52, p. 68.

¹² Ibid., 28, 64.

¹³ Ibid., 52, pp. 67-9.

were studying at the Minerva¹⁴. They remained on at San Clemente until December 1851, and were to be together again at San Clemente, under Fr Mullooly, from 1868 to 1875, when Fr O'Doherty died¹⁵. There were several brothers, the most enduring of whom was Fra Frediano Gurlani, who joined the community a little before 1826 and died at San Clemente in April 1865¹⁶.

The new bursar Fr Molloy was fairly energetic at the beginning of his term of office, and extensive work was done in late 1846 and early 1847 on the dormitories over the library, the roofs and the campanile. But by the summer of 1847 things were going downhill and Molloy seems to have lost heart. The then superior (vicar) of the house, Lorenzo Varano, who had taken over after Fr Clotet's departure for Spain, wrote a despairing letter to bishop O'Finan at the summer house in Tivoli on 17 September. Reporting that he and the students had arrived safely from Tivoli, Varano noted that there was no money in the house and that Fr Molloy was insisting that he was no longer bursar and hence bore no responsibility for the condition of the house. Everything, Fr Varano concluded, is in a mess here — "*Qui non si capisce più niente*"¹⁸.

Fr Molloy resigned formally on 1 October, and was replaced by Fr Mullooly on 1 December¹⁹, a few days after bishop O'Finan had died at the Minerva at the age of 75. O'Finan, who in one way or another had had a hand in the fortunes of San Clemente for thirty years (or, if one counts back to his student days there, over fifty), and had spent part of the summer of 1847 preparing a petition to pope Pius IX for the recovery of the church and convent of La Pace, was, by a nice turn of events, the one who unwittingly ensured the future of San Clemente. For as Fr Mullooly himself wrote in a memo of 1849, it was Bishop O'Finan on his death bed who persuaded him to take office of bursar when he was slow to accept it. Although his attitude to San Clemente was the opposite of O'Finan's, Fr. Mullooly

¹⁴ Ibid., 67, 77 and 83.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 339, 1 and 2.

¹⁸ Ibid., 27, 170.

¹⁹ Ibid., 52, p. 72.

clearly had a great affection for the old man, an affection which seems to have been shared by most of the young men who passed through San Clemente in his time. As noted earlier, the bishop left a French Bible and a pair of silver spectacles to Fr Mullooly²⁰. Five years later Fr Mullooly commissioned the portrait of O'Finan which now hangs in the salone at San Clemente from the Dominican painter Serafino Guidotti, whose name will occur again in this narrative²¹.

In his memorandum of 1849, Fr Mullooly noted that when he took over the bursarship in 1847, San Clemente was destitute and in debt to the tune of 500 scudi. In his opinion this lamentable state of things could be traced to one single source—to the indolence and unconcern of the Province of Ireland where San Clemente was concerned. But he was hopeful. As long as the administration was in Irish hands, there was nothing to fear. But now that San Clemente is no longer in the hands of certain "Genovesi", care must be taken to ensure that it never gets out of Irish hands again²².

Six months after Mullooly had become bursar San Clemente in fact had acquired its first Irish superior for years on 5 May 1848²³ in the person of Thomas Mullins, who had been one of the students in 1838 when San Clemente resumed its role as a house of studies under Fr Clotet²⁴. But in effect it was Fr Mullooly who was running the place by the time he came to write the 1849 memo. This is particularly evident during the Roman Republic of 1848-1849. After the flight of Pius IX to Gaeta on 24 November 1848²⁵, a Republic was proclaimed in Rome on 4 February 1849. Immediately the Republican administration gave an order that all churches should submit inventories, that to San Clemente being issued on 14 February.

²⁰ Ibid., 400, pp. 461-67.

²¹ Ibid., 340, p. 32.

²² Ibid., 24, 200.

²³ Ibid., 54, 72.

²⁴ Ibid., 58, p. 37.

²⁵ Pius left the Quirinal incognito on 24 November. The only support I can find for the story, reported by Nolan, op. cit., p. 112, that the pope slipped into San Clemente on his way to Gaeta to pray at the tomb of St Clement, is a comment in the memoir of A. Henry (p. 1110): "He [Fr Mullooly] and St. Clemente had not been absent from the Pope's escape to Gaeta". There is nothing about this episode in the sources cited in the authoritative article of G. Mollat, "La fuite de Pie IX à Gaëte", *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 35 (1934) 268-82.

Fr Mullooly (but signing himself as Muldowny and as "Superiore") made a spirited protest. Surely, he wrote, it was not the intention of the Republic to submit foreigners to the Republic's private laws? If, however, the administration is really serious about an inventory of San Clemente, "I shall be forced to invoke the protection of my sovereign, the Queen of Great Britain"²⁶.

But the authorities were not impressed. On 1 March San Clemente was warned that it must comply with the order of 14 February. When it had not been complied with by 16 April, another warning was sent. This time Fr Mullooly sent an historical note on San Clemente and its vineyards, reiterating its status as a community of foreigners. The officials (in this case of the Rione Monti, in which San Clemente is situated) were not to be put off. On 19 April at 4 p.m. the "Deputy Accountant of the Presidency" came to San Clemente and took an inventory²⁷. Fr Mullooly, however, was one jump ahead of him. Shortly before the Accountant arrived, all the account books for 1831-1846 were packed off to the Torriane vineyard, outside the Porta Maggiore, to be buried there. That was a clever move, but it resulted in the complete loss of those account books. For a month later, some Republican soldiers invaded the vineyard, found the account books and, as Mullooly states in his memoir, burned them²⁸.

All that Spring of 1849, and at a moment when he was making preparations for his lectorate and confession examinations at the Minerva, Fr Mullooly was very busy indeed in an effort to establish beyond all doubt to the Republican administration that San Clemente and its property were under the protection of the British crown. To press home the points made in his replies to the officials of the Rione Monti, he had a local nun make two English flags for him on 23 April, just after the inventory had been taken, and had run one of them up over San Clemente²⁹. What really worried Fr Mullins, the Prior, and Fr Mullooly was a threat by the forces of the Republic to take over part of San Clemente as a military hospital. At one point (so Fr Mullins told the British Agent Petre) some National

²⁶ SCAR 24, 81.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 24, 207-10.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 24, 200.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 340, p. 6: 24, 201a.

Guards had threatened to burn down San Clemente if the British flag were to be hoisted or, if hoisted, were not taken down at once³⁰. As Fr Mullins put it in a letter to the Dominican Provincial in Dublin on 27 June, "we are lucky not to have been burned out"³¹.

The Torrione vineyard, however, which had been in the possession of San Clemente from the very beginning of the occupancy of the Irish Dominicans in 1677, was not quite so lucky. On 8 May 1849 some officials of the *Pubblica Sicurezza* burst into the vineyard, beat up the custodian, and made off with some 200 barrels (thus Fr Mullooly) of wine³². As soon as the news of this reached San Clemente Fr Mullooly went with some men to protect the vineyard against what he termed in his Master Ledger "the brigands of the insane Roman Republic"³³. According to Alexander Henry, a very close friend of Fr Mullooly, in an article in the *Weekly Register* of 9 October 1858, Fr Mullooly was fired at; according to Fr Nolan "on good authority" in his *Irish Dominicans in Rome* (1913), he was seized and was about to be taken to S. Callisto to be shot, "when he contrived to scribble off and get conveyed to the British Ambassador a short note describing his plight, and seeking protection". What is certain is that Fr Mullooly went to the vineyard, ran up his second British flag, stopped whatever was going on there, and had an inventory made on the spot by a notary of all the damages. He then went back to San Clemente and fired off several letters to the Ministry of Finance³⁴.

When the papal government, with French help, reasserted itself in the Summer of 1849, further memorials were drawn up by Fr Mullooly and sent to the papal commissioners on 22 August and 14 September, the latter including the notarial act of the damages to the vineyard³⁵. Damages also were sought against

³⁰ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Hib. Dom., 1841-1894, p. 91.

³¹ Ibid., p. 85: see the letter (p. 91) of British Foreign Office, at the request of Lord Palmerston, to William Fagan, Esq., M. P., on 6 June 1849, asking that Fr Mullins submit expenses for damages done to San Clemente property.

³² SCAR 24, 212e; see *ibid.*, 200 and 189, where Fr Mullooly reports that 14 cases were taken away, leaving San Clement "without a drop of wine".

³³ Ibid., 340, p. 6.

³⁴ Ibid., 24, 212c-f.

³⁵ Ibid., 24, 212a-b.

merchants who had bought the wine seized by the security forces³⁶.

Most of these documents from April to September are in the hand of Fr Mullooly, though he is not mentioned at all in a letter on the Revolution which his superior, Fr Mullins, wrote to the Provincial in Dublin on 27 June 1849³⁷. Fr Mullins himself, always a retiring man, does not appear much in the records of the period in the archives of San Clemente, apart from one or two things like the letter above and a letter in August 1849 to the Cardinal of San Sisto thanking God and congratulating the Cardinal on the deliverance of San Sisto "from the hands of monstrous tyranny". He stayed on as superior until 25 October 1850. By then Fr Vincent Jandel, one of those disciples of Fr Lacordaire who had lived so briefly at San Clemente some nine years earlier, was the head of the Dominican Order, having been appointed Vicar by Pius IX on 30 September. Two days after the resignation of Fr Mullins, Fr Jandel appointed his old colleague from the novitiate at La Quercia³⁸, Fr Joseph Mullooly, as superior of San Clemente.

Fr Jandel remained head of the Dominican Order until his death in 1873, and was the architect of its renewal. Fr Mullooly, who outlived him by some seven years, was likewise the superior of San Clemente for the rest of his life, two brief periods, four years in all, excepted. It is to these two men, though at different levels, that the restoration of San Clemente owes everything.

For what it is worth it may be noted here that one of the first acts of Fr Mullooly's initial spell as superior of San Clemente was to make sure that he would be known in future as Joseph Mullooly and not by any other form of that surname. There seems, indeed, to have been some confusion on his own part as well as on that of others about the termination of the surname. Although his letters dimissory for the priesthood in 1845 and his assignation in the next year to Perugia give his name as Mullooly⁴⁰, he himself from his arrival at San Clemente

³⁶ Ibid., 24, 219 and 221.

³⁷ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Hib. Dom., 1841-1894, p. 95.

³⁸ SCAR 24, 213.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ SCAR 24, 158.

in November 1846 until September 1850 signed himself in Mass books and other places as Mullowny, including the ornate opening page, with harp and shamrocks, of the master ledger which he opened in January 1849: AMMINISTRAZIONE DEL R. P. L. GIUSEPPE MULLOWNY. It is as Mullowny as well, and sometimes in his own hand, that the name appears in the Vestuary and Kitchen books of the period 1846-1850⁴¹.

The first hint that he was beginning to drop the Mullowny form of his name occurs on 13 January 1850 when he signed the Vestuary book as Mullooly, though he continued to sign the Mass books as Mullowny up to the end of September, a month or so before he was appointed superior. From October onwards, however, the Mullowny form disappears once for all. What is more, as soon as he was appointed superior, he painstakingly went back over all the account books, Mass ledgers and vestuary records to November 1846, changing "wny" to "oly", not always with complete success, as may be seen on the opening page of the master ledger⁴².

With much the same concern for detail, Fr Mullooly set out to right the affairs of San Clemente and its twin, San Sisto. Because of the uneasy financial circumstances of the house, one of his preoccupations from the outset of the superiorship was the tax on religious houses instituted by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on 6 October 1848. Although the Congregation had decided that "Luoghi pii nazionali esteri" were exempt from the tax, it had not considered San Clemente to belong to this exempt category of "Foreign national pious establishments". San Clemente had protested at the time, but it was not until Fr Mullooly became superior that this matter was pursued with any vigour. In a long memorandum to the government in 1850 or 1851 in which he termed himself "President of the College of San Clemente", Fr Mullooly recounted the history of San Clemente from 1667, when it had been ceded to the Dominican Order, and argued that San Clemente qualified as a "Luogo pio nazionale estero" since it was under the protection of the British Government and had the right of flying the

⁴¹ Ibid., 222 (Mass Ledger 1841-1855), 303 (Vestuary Book), pp. 16, 17, 23, 25, etc.; 350 (Kitchen Book).

⁴² Ibid., 350.

British flag as, indeed, it had done in the time of the Roman Republic. Further, when Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, had ordered Lord Lister to go to Rome in 1849 to protect British national establishments, San Clemente had been expressly named as one such place⁴³.

After the parliamentary commission in charge of taxation had replied that the exemption applied only to ambassadors and their residences, Fr Mullooly went directly to the pope, saying that it was a curious and indeed unheard of thing that the principal requirement of a "Luogo pio nazionale estero" was that it should be under the immediate jurisdiction of an ambassador⁴⁴. When nothing came of this he wrote a letter on 4 September 1851 to cardinal Patrizi, Vicar of Rome, in which he expressed surprise that the reasons for exemption submitted by him had not been taken seriously by the commission. From his point of view the interpretation given by the commission not only was fuzzy and cloudy but also had no support in law. He trusted that the cardinal would support his petition, and hoped that, as a result, "Irish Dominicans, when they return to their native land, where there is at present much discussion between Catholics and Protestants about the conduct of government in the Papal States, may be quick to raise their voices wholeheartedly in defense of that government"⁴⁵.

Nothing, apparently, came of the submission or of the innuendo. But it did not really matter all that much. What Fr Mullooly was attempting to establish here, as on many other occasions, was the corporate identity of San Clemente as a foreign national entity, a "Collegium Hiberniae Dominicanae", as he was to put it later, a "Collegio San Clemente", as it is today. He was already lining up arguments which, in 1875, would persuade the Italian Government⁴⁶ that San Clemente was not subject to the Law of Suppression of 1873.

⁴³ Ibid., 24, 201: undated, but 1850 or 1851.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 24, 201b.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 24, 209.

⁴⁶ *Sul Collegio Irlandese di SS. Sisto e Clemente in Roma. Voto legale* [Rome 1875]: this document, addressed to Augustus B. Paget, British Minister in Rome, and signed by Visconti Venosta on the part of the Italian Government, states that "The Irish Institute of SS. Sisto and Clemente" is an Institute set up for the benefit of foreigners, that it is a College or Seminary independent of the religious corporation which resides there, and that it is a "non-suppressed entity".

Actually, San Clemente was not doing too badly at the time. Even without the exemption from the tax, it was slowly, under the prodding of Fr Mullooly, beginning to raise its head above water. By the end of 1850 it had a surplus of 600 scudi over expenses for the year. By 12 May 1854 it was showing a profit of 1000 scudi, an achievement upon which Fr Mullooly was complimented by Fr Jandel when he made a visitation of San Clemente on that day⁴⁷.

Relations with Fr Jandel, however, were not all that smooth, chiefly because Jandel was known to have his eye on San Clemente as a likely place to house a missionary college which he was thinking of setting up. Fr Mullooly wrote lengthily about this to the Provincial in Ireland on 8 June 1851: "You must be aware, he wrote, that the Vicar General has made an attempt to deprive the house of independence as a provincial establishment and to convert it into a missionary hospice... I persuaded him from coming to any final decision without previously consulting the Irish Province". Fr Mullooly, as could be expected, was wholly adverse to the idea "of abandoning St Clement's". It was a great honour for the Irish Province to have a "respectable establishment in Rome". Of course, he went on, there will be those in the Province who will ask, "What has St Clement's done for the Irish Province for the past forty years?", and there will be others who will say that the place is "insalubrious". This last objection (a favourite one of Bishop O'Finan and all who had passed through La Pace in its six years of existence as an Irish Dominican Community) was, he felt, to be "attributed to imagination". He had, he said, his own idea for San Clemente as a house of studies for the Irish Province, but would not discuss it now. For the moment the pressing problem was the fact "that the French Dominicans think they have a claim to St Clement's in virtue of some pact they made with Fr White in 1841, who was then the representative of the Irish Province in Rome... Fortunately they got out soon". It was his own firm conviction that Jandel "would love to have St Clement's", and that, if he was not mistaken, "Fr White would not make the slightest objection"^{47a}.

⁴⁷ SCAR 350, p. 44 (at end of book).

^{47a} Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Hib. Dom. 1841-1894, p. 149.

Fr Robert White (or Robert Concanen White, after his uncle Bishop Concanen), one of the last those professed at La Pace from 1818 to 1824, had been one of the negotiators in the projected handover of San Clemente to Lacordaire and his group of postulants in 1841. He had met Jandel then and with Fr Mullooly at La Quercia, and was now in Rome as Assistant to Fr Jandel for the English-speaking provinces of the Order. So Fr Mullooly had every reason to be worried. But in spite of Fr Mullooly's distrust of him where the future of San Clemente was concerned, he was on friendly terms with the older man. Fr White wrote Fr Mullooly regularly, effortlessly and, on occasion, resoundingly. Mullooly and he had this much in common at least, a devotion to the memory of Bishop O'Finan, Fr White's Prior for a time at La Pace and Fr Mullooly's mentor some twenty years later. But when Fr Mullooly sent a copy of the portrait of O'Finan by Serafino Guidotti to White, the latter made short work of the painting in a letter of 24 May 1853 from Dublin: "I wish you could convince that unfortunate Serafino that he can never do honour either to us or to himself by his painting. I have not yet decided whether I shall throw his [O'Finan's] likeness into the Liffey or into the fire. Half a crown would have been too much to throw away on such a vile production"⁴⁸. It is due to Fr White's meaty letters to Fr Mullooly, and to some extent to Mullooly's own letters to him, that we are able to catch some glimpse of what was going on in San Clemente in those years when Fr Mullooly was protecting it from the designs of a very persuasive General of the Dominican Order and trying to restore it to the favour of a quite disinterested Irish Province.

Fr Jandel seems to have shelved this plan for San Clemente soon after this, but later would come up with other and no less imaginative ideas. Meanwhile Fr Mullooly continued to strengthen the financial underpinnings of the house. In early 1849, a little over a year after he had become bursar, he had a chicken run installed in the garden, and any surplus eggs were sold off⁴⁹. Now as bursar and superior he developed more schemes for saving money or for building up reserves. To provide vegetables for the house (and also for sale), part of the

⁴⁸ SCAR 44.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 340, p. 3.

Torrione vineyard was turned into a garden, the remainder being dug out and restocked with vines. At the time (1849-1854) the vineyard rarely brought in much more than a hundred or so scudi a year, but (to anticipate a little) as a result of these measures the income shot up to 681 scudi in 1855 and had reached 1566 three years later; after that it rarely went below 1000 scudi⁵⁰. Fr Mullooly also turned his attention to the San Sisto complex of gardens and buildings. The great garden and five smaller gardens, all nestling under the Coelian Hill, had been leased, together with some outbuildings, to the Apostolic Camera by Fr Taylor in 1814, and when Fr Mullooly took over as bursar were yielding some 300 scudi a year. He first attempted to pry them loose from the Camera and, when that failed, negotiated a new contract with the municipality of Rome (the successors of the Camera) at an extra 100 scudi a year⁵¹.

Much of Fr Mullooly's success as an administrator was due to the fact that he kept his ledgers of the church, house and vineyard meticulously, that he seems to have paid all bills promptly, and that he did not part with money lightly. In December 1850, for example, he paid a bill of 57 scudi for the cleaning of the exterior of the church in 1846. It was, of course, long overdue, but he had refused to pay it until an order came from Fr Jandel to do so, on the ground that it was not the community of San Clemente that had commissioned the cleaning in 1846 but the Dominicans of the Minerva, and without a word to the Prior of the time. For four years, he wrote in his ledger, he had done everything possible to avoid paying this account, and was now doing so only because he had been ordered to. Then, switching from his usual Italian to English, he added, stubborn to the last, "But very unwillingly"⁵².

Not that he had any objection to cleaning the church. Far from it. Whenever he had some money in hand in these first years as superior he did all he could to refurbish, patch up and make secure the church and convent buildings at San Clemente and San Sisto. At San Sisto, as we shall see later, he worked hard to restore and embellish the Chapter Room. At San

⁵⁰ Ibid., 310 (income), 311 (expenses), 1849-1874.

⁵¹ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Hib. Dom. 1841-1894, p. 151.

⁵² SCAR 350, p. 24.

Clemente, to mention only a few things for the moment, the cloister was cleaned and its walls whitewashed in August 1851. In October the baldachino over the high altar was touched up with gold paint. A year later the roofs of the church and convent were cleared of vegetation and repaired. In January 1853, permission was received from the military authorities (French) to arm the convent against future disturbances, and guns were fetched from Castel Sant'Angelo⁵³.

By this time it must have been clear to Fr Jandel and to the hitherto sceptical generality of the Irish Province that Joseph Mullooly ("Giuseppe", as he was coming to be called) had taken San Clemente in hand and was really making the place work. When his term of office as superior came to an end, the chapter of the Irish Province recommended to Fr Jandel on 18 July 1854 that Fr Mullooly be appointed Prior of San Clemente (and not just Superior), a recommendation that Jandel acceded to "libenter"⁵⁴. Now that he had the backing of the Province at large and the seemingly unqualified approval of Fr Jandel of his administration, Fr Mullooly set out at once to put into effect his idea of forming a regular house of studies at San Clemente.

San Clemente, of course, had been a house of studies in the 18th century as part of the twin convents of San Clemente and San Sisto, and again from 1824 (after the return from La Pace) until 1840, when the Irish Province, with a view to relieving itself shortly of San Clemente, began lodging its students at the Minerva. It was revived briefly as a house of studies in 1844-1846, but was closed down in favour of the Minerva in 1846, just a few weeks before Fr Mullooly arrived at San Clemente.

What Fr Mullooly now proposed was not a return to the 1844-1846 and the pre-1840 situation, though he did not quite rule that out, but rather that there should be students at San Clemente once more, and that some of their scholastic instruction should take place there from resident professors. This plan had won the support of Fr Jandel, but with a difference. Where Mullooly thought always in terms of a house

⁵³ Ibid., 350, pp. 29, 32, 43; 25, 114.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 25, 128; 52, 85.

of studies which would be unmistakably an Irish and a "National" College, Jandel had not wholly abandoned his idea of a Missionary College at San Clemente and continued to think in international terms.

Fr Mullooly's plan also won the support of the Irish Province, and it was agreed all round that the first students should come into residence at San Clemente in the Autumn of 1856, with Fr Mullooly as Master of Students and professor of philosophy, and someone from Ireland, who later turned out to be Fr Bernard Goodman, Prior of Sligo, in charge of biblical and theological studies.

All that Autumn final preparations were being made for the arrival of the students. New furniture was provided, the old novitiate rooms were painted, eleven clocks and eleven shoe-horns were bought, as were copies of Goudin's *Philosophia* and the *Institutiones Biblicae* of Mellini, and six lemon trees were planted on the north side of the garden, at a distance, presumably from the chickens⁵⁵.

The six young men who arrived at San Clemente on 3 November were not fresh from Ireland. They had been seasoned at La Quercia and already had some years of regular observance and study behind them. Two, Pius Lynch and Thomas Healy, were just ordained and were to study exclusively at the Minerva. The four others, Albert Skelly, Thomas Deely, John Thomas Smyth and Dominio Fitzgibbon, were the San Clemente students as such and were still in simple vows⁵⁶.

Fr Mullooly was not at all at ease during his first days with these four students who were technically novices. As he wrote to Fr White, now the Provincial, in early December⁵⁷,

The young men for a few days after their arrival worried me out of my wits, and some of them took the liberty to criticize some acts of mine regarding certain dispensations from meagre diet which I conscientiously thought they required. This of course annoyed me not a little and extorted from me the censures I justly pronounced on them in my last letter. Since then I have succeeded in divesting them of many little prejudices

⁵⁵ Ibid., 340, pp. 85-6, 84.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 26, 2: draft of letter, undated, but clearly 1856.

and taught them not be too precipitate in criticising or censuring the acts or conduct of their superior... I believe I can say with truth that throughout the wide extent of the Order there is not a happier or more observant little community than that over which I at present preside.

Part of Fr Mullooly's seeming inability to cope with this quite new situation probably was due to a growing uncertainty of his own position. He was Prior, bursar, Master of Students, and had agreed to conduct classes in philosophy. This was indeed a heavy load. But what really worried him was the precise status as well as the quality of the man who as to come from Ireland to assist in the teaching.

Shortly after he had written on 20 July to congratulate Fr Robert White on his election as Provincial⁵⁸, Fr Mullooly, it seems, had written again expressing doubt about the advisability of sending Fr Goodman of Sligo to Rome to help in the teaching. Fr White, while he was delighted to hear that "our cherished project of reviving St Clement's as a house of studies is a *fait accompli*", took issue sharply with Fr Mullooly on the subject of Fr Goodman: "There is one passage in your last letter, he wrote in this letter of 21 November, for which I can find myself warranted in arraigning you and demanding some account". Fr Mullooly seemed to have forgotten, he went on, that "the idea of preserving the nationality of St Clement's" when it opened as a house of studies "was approved in both our minds when we discussed the plan for St Clement's". And since he was aware that Fr Jandel would never agree to the plan "unless there were a staff sufficient to form a nucleus (as he himself calls it) of a perfect and observant community", White had immediately thought of Goodman as a fine prospect for the staff. As for the objection that Fr Goodman was not qualified ("He has never studied St Thomas", Jandel had written)⁵⁹ and the suggestion that he should first receive some course of instruction at the Minerva before attempting to teach, White was emphatically of the opinion that Goodman was "fit to teach some of the men who have risen to high positions

⁵⁸ Ibid., 44, 5.

⁵⁹ AGOP XIII. 161.

in that illustrious seminary of learning". Fr Goodman, White informed Mullooly, was preparing for the road and would be ready to start out for San Clemente the following week, at considerable self-sacrifice.

But the real blow to Fr Mullooly came almost casually at the end of this long letter⁶⁰. Fr Goodman was not simply to be an addition to the strength of San Clemente. He was to succeed Mullooly as Prior when Mullooly's term of office ended in a year's time. "The General tells me, he wrote, that the two offices of Syndic and Prior [both of which Mullooly held at the time] are no longer compatible in the same hands. Fr Russel [Fr White's immediate predecessor as Provincial] has mentioned to me that your priorship will soon lapse. If the General does not wish to reappoint you, it is the unanimous desire of the Province that Fr Goodman should succeed you. However, that is up to the General to decide and I shall write to him accordingly".

Fr Mullooly was caught off guard. His shocked reaction may be sensed in a letter two or three weeks later. While he now acknowledged the wisdom of sending Fr Goodman to Rome, it was not because of his qualifications: "His presence here is indispensably necessary. Had he not consented to come out forthwith the General very probably would send us an Italian or a Frenchman, and that is what I could never bring myself to consent to; for I am convinced that whenever a stranger is sent among us, we may begin to date the downfall of this house as a National Establishment"⁶¹. The plan to make Fr Goodman Prior was, however, quite a different matter:

Very probably, he said, neither yourself or Fr Russell is aware that the Priorship of St Clement's lasts for three years and consequently nearly twelve months of my office remain unexpired. Nevertheless since it is your wish and that of the Province that Fr Goodman should be Prior, I do from this moment resign into your hands my office as Prior and shall look upon myself as Fr Goodman's vices gerens until his arrival.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 44, 6.

⁶¹ Ibid., 44, 5.

Adding that he would prepare the Prior's room for Fr Goodman and would inform the General of his decision, he assured Fr White that he had not "taken offence at finding myself necessitated to resign my office". Far from it. He had already decided some time ago to resign the Priorship as soon as was feasible.

For all these brave words, Fr Mullooly ends his letter in a fashion which suggests how perturbed he was:

Whether my connection with this House be long or short I cannot say. Whatever happens I ever and always shall remember it with filial affection.

Fr Goodman duly arrived on 20 December 1856 and Fr Jandel announced in January that he was to succeed to the Priorship as soon as Fr Mullooly's triennium ended⁶².

Goodman, however, did not really feel at home in San Clemente. By mid-Spring he had indicated that he wished to return to Sligo, and was, as Fr White put it in a letter to Fr Mullooly on 6 May, firmly of the opinion "that you should not be removed from your present position and... that you should be continued for the sake of San Clemente in the office which is about to terminate"⁶³.

But Fr Mullooly was not reappointed, nor was Goodman pressed by Fr Jandel to reverse his decision. Possibly the General was influenced in both decisions by Fr Thomas Burke, later the celebrated preacher, who after studies at Viterbo and Rome (where he had studied at the Minerva and lived at Santa Sabina) had been appointed novice master for the English Province at the age of 21 while still a deacon, and was now the novice master of the new Irish Novitiate at Tallaght, County Dublin⁶⁴.

The first postulants received the habit of the Dominican Order at Tallaght in February 1856, just as the plans of Fr Mullooly for a house of studies at San Clemente were about to come to fruition. A year later, when Fr Burke in Tallaght

⁶² Ibid., 44, 7 (9.2.1857).

⁶³ Ibid., 44, 8.

⁶⁴ On problems relating to the Tallaght novitiate, see SCAR 44, 2 (letters of White to Mullooly, 26.4.1855 and 20.5.1855).

was preparing his young men for their first profession and for studies at San Clemente the following Autumn, Fr Mullooly was still deep in trouble with the students at San Clemente.

From time to time he reported ruefully to Fr White on the attitude of the students. Fr White, who had written to Fr Jandel on 27 November 1956 that the students at San Clemente "are quite enthusiastic"⁶⁵, was no longer of that mind. He found the attitude of the students to Fr Mullooly "deplorable". He had, he wrote to Fr Mullooly in February 1857, great misgivings "in sending out the Tallaght novices to mix in a community in which there is such a dangerous element"⁶⁶. Fr Burke, too, had the same fears for the five young men who were about to complete their novitiate. But for him the trouble lay not with the students and San Clemente but with Fr Mullooly and the newly-arrived Fr Goodman. No one, he wrote to Fr Jandel on 13 January 1857, could question the decency of Fr Goodman, but he had "never embraced the common life" and in the view of many in the Province was the last man in the world who should have been sent to Rome. As for Fr Mullooly, from what Burke knew of him "he is no great friend of observance". The Provincial had suggested recently that he himself should go to Rome as master of students. Frankly, he said, he would be afraid of the job with two such excellent men as Mullooly and Goodman opposed to all he stood for. What one needs at San Clemente, he was sure, was two men "favourable to observance" such as Fr Folan of Galway or Fr O'Carroll of Limerick. Frs Mullooly and Goodman could be of use to the Province at home in Ireland.

The General, however, was already committed to Fr Goodman as Prior. When he replied to Burke he remarked drily that "the young men at San Clemente are good, and the Prior is adjusting nicely to the situation"⁶⁷. But Fr Burke's remarks cannot have done Mullooly all that much good. In spite of a very favourable and even flattering visitation of San Clemente on 27 July and the total refusal of Fr Goodman

⁶⁵ AGOP XIII. 161.

⁶⁶ SCAR 44, 77.

⁶⁷ AGOP XIII. 161 (Burke's letter and Jandel's minute).

to accept the appointment, Fr Mullooly was passed over again by Jandel, this time in favour of Fr Folan, Prior of Galway.

Fr White, who in June had congratulated Fr Mullooly on "bearing a little with P. Jandel"⁶⁸, wrote in August that at the moment he was "only guessing" what Jandel would do about the Priorship. He was about to leave for Paris to meet Jandel at the latter's request, and prayed God would "direct both the General and the Provincial in arranging what is right" for San Clemente⁶⁹.

This meeting with Fr Jandel introduced a new element into the San Clemente question. Not only did the General want someone from Ireland to replace Fr Goodman and take the Priorship, but he had, as White put it to Mullooly on 10 October 1857, "expressed a particular desire to have some of the students of the English Province admitted into St Clement's on paying a pension". What was more, if the English Provincial thought it proper to send them to Rome, there were to be accompanied by their master, the Italian Dominican Fr Borgogna, whom the General considered "well qualified to teach the second class of St Thomas".

The injection of these English students and their Italian professor into the life of San Clemente was, of course, a threat to the ideal of a "National Establishment" which Fr Mullooly had nurtured for some time. White reported, however, that in Ireland "no unkindly feeling is entertained on our side toward the Dominicans of England". He was not quite sure how the English Dominicans felt about the idea. He had heard a week before that the students and Fr Borgogna were about to start for Rome, but the English Provincial in his letter was, at best, enigmatic about where they were supposed to go: "I send them to the General", he had written to White, "who, I suppose, will place them in St Clement's". If this is so, White told Mullooly, the English Province will pay San Clemente a pension of 20 pounds a year for the students and 9 pounds for priests.

Given this new situation, Fr White stated that he had "now more than ever reason to regard Fr Goodman's retirement

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 44, 9.

from San Clemente at such a juncture as a disaster". With a notable insensitivity to Fr Mullooly's feelings he went on to explain that "It may require no small prudence to deal with the heterogeneous element that is to be imposed into the Irish Dominican establishment [in Rome], but certainly not more than was necessary in managing the people who formed the community last year". Fr Jandel, White admitted, did not share his enthusiasm for Fr Goodman; in fact he was "anything but sorry at Fr Goodman's determination to return to Ireland". But he had insisted on a replacement, and when Fr White had suggested Fr Thomas Folan of the West Convent, Galway, for the Priorship, the General had agreed, adding (and the italics are White's) that "he would be under the necessity of *appointing an Italian* in case Fr Folan declined to come"⁷⁰.

Fr Thomas Burke, of course, had thrown in Fr Folan's name in his letter of 17 January to the General. And when the General had written in late July asking for suggestions about the Priorship, Fr Burke had plumped squarely for Fr Folan. To the General's query about Fr Mullins, quondam Prior of San Clemente and now Prior of Tallaght, Burke replied that he was a most admirable man, but had not expressed an great enthusiasm at the idea of going back to Italy. Outside of Fr Mullins, there were only two men he could think of in the mould specified by the General, Fr Conway, Prior of Cork, and Fr Folan, Prior of Galway. In Burke's view, Fr Folan was just the man for San Clemente. He was well known in Italy, very observant, and as regular as clockwork.

Fr Jandel decided the matter very quickly. By 26 August, Fr Goodman, who was still at San Clemente, was able to inform Fr Mullooly, then at the Summer house in Tivoli, that Fr Jandel would not force him to take on the Priorship, that the General had written Fr Folan to invite him instead, and that Fr Mullooly was to stay on at San Clemente as bursar and to teach philosophy "to the young men from Tallaght"⁷².

Fr Folan did not decline when the invitation came. In fact he jumped at the opportunity. Fr White, in a letter of 10

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ AGOP XIII. 161.

⁷² SCAR 43, 198.

October to Fr Mullooly, was under no illusions about either Goodman's reluctance or Folan's alacrity to be Prior of San Clemente: "Fr Goodman's priorship of Sligo, he told Mullooly, has as much to do with his returning to Ireland as Fr Folan's priorship of the West Convent has to do with the latter's prompt acceptance of the office he is to hold as your successor"⁷³.

The English contingent (Frs Damiano Borgogna and Albert Buckler, Brothers Pius Kavanagh and Ambrose Williams) reached San Clemente on 12 October⁷⁴. Fr Burke's first fruits from Tallaght (Thomas Duffy, Pius Prendergast, Dominic Fulham, Raymund Hyland and Louis Hickey) arrived about three weeks later in the company of Fr Folan, having left Dublin on 11 October⁷⁵. By 9 November, Fr Mullooly reported to the Cardinal of San Clemente in a letter of greeting for the approaching feast of St Clement, the community consisted of twenty religious⁷⁶ — the six students from the previous year, the eight new arrivals from Ireland and England, three brothers, Frs Folan, Mullooly and Borgogna. Fr Borgogna was nominated Master of Students on 4 November, Fr Folan Prior on 6 November, Fr Mullooly (whose Priorship had ended on 25 September) Subprior and Bursar on 26 November⁷⁷.

Writing from Sligo to Fr Mullooly on 3 November, Fr Goodman showed a little more understanding of Fr Mullooly's position than Fr White had done. He expressed great anxiety about "the dangers that could result" from the presence of English novices "with their Italian professor" at San Clemente. But he had no worries about Fr Mullooly's relations with Fr Folan: "I sincerely hope — indeed I am sure — you will esteem him much, and that you will pull well and amiably together for the confirming of the great work which with so much labour and prudence you inaugurated in St Clement's"⁷⁸.

Fr Folan, as it turned out, lasted only ten months as Prior, but not through any fault of Fr. Mullooly, who, indeed, was able to write to Fr White in the following January that "Fr Folan and

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 52, 89.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 52, 90.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 43, 1.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 52, 80-91.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 44, 11.

myself are pulling right well together"⁷⁹. The real problems were the intransigence of Fr Borgogna vis-à-vis his students, and the abiding solicitude of Fr Jandel for San Clemente. There were, it seems, serious differences from the start between Fr Folan and Fr Borgogna over the handling of the students⁸⁰. Things came to a head finally when Fr Folan refused to punish the students for something or other at the order of the General. As a result of this he told the General on 10 July that he intended to resign⁸¹, a step he took on 15 September after spending the Summer holidays at Tivoli with the students⁸².

To Fr Goodman from his outpost in Sligo, there was nothing unexpected in Fr Folan's troubles with Fr Jandel: "I was not surprised to hear, he wrote Fr Mullooly on 25 May 1858, that the General has been crippling Fr Folan... What a pity it is that the General cannot allow the Prior to mould the house into form... »⁸³. Fr Folan, indeed, had scarcely arrived before he had to cope with one of Fr Jandel's schemes for San Clemente. The scheme, for which Fr Mullooly had collected 225 scudi by the beginning of January 1858⁸⁴, eventually came to nothing, but it is notable in that it occasioned a letter from Fr White to Fr Mullooly on 12 February 1858 in which he not only expressed his horror at the proposal of Fr Jandel to add to the novitiate wing at San Clemente, but, drawing on his memory of the return of the community from La Pace to San Clemente in 1825, allowed the old, submerged dislike of the place to surface:

While I bow before the wisdom of his Most Reverend Paternity in recommending the works in question..., I cannot but regard the undertaking as extremely injudicious... I at once declare that I would not be a party to any plan of improvement except that of taking down the whole concern. I am old enough to remember the restoration of that establishment, and I happened to be actually in Rome when the sum of sc. 5600 was expended

⁷⁹ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Letters 1857-1858.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Folan diary, *ibid.*, among letters of 1857-1868.

⁸² SCAR 52, 91.

⁸³ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁴ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Letters 1857-1858 (to Russell); see SCAR 44, 12: White to Mullooly, 28.5.1858.

on its repairs and improvement. The regret then felt and frequently expressed was that tho' the building was rendered habitable, it was in no respect improved either in point of comfort or salubrity; and had wise counsel then been listened to there can be no doubt that the prevailing desire would have been to see the novitiate corridor levelled to the ground, and a dormitory with sufficient elevation erected in its stead. The money voted by the Camera for compensation was actually squandered in propping up a delapidated and tottering edifice, and ever since we have had to deplore the ill ventilated and unsightly apartments which, together with the dank corridor, were the only benefits conferred by the flagrant blunders. ... Besides, what need is there of additional accomodation when the revenues of the house are barely adequate to the support of six or seven students?

In that same, devastating letter that recalled the monies that San Clemente had received in 1822 from the Apostolic Camera for losses during the first Roman Republic, Fr White made some sort of amend to Fr Mullooly for the letter the previous 10 October in which he had told him of his meeting with Jandel and the decision to send the English Dominican students and to appoint Fr Folan: "I asked the General, he now said, in the name of the Province to appoint you. He insisted on having you as Syndic exclusively . . . and on his fixed determination to appoint an Italian Father unless Fr Folan consented to accept the office".

Fr Mullooly, it seems fair to assume, had taken the appointment badly. The hurt he had endured at the news in Fr White's letter in November 1856 of the "unanimous desire of the Province" to appoint Fr Goodman was surely aggravated when, on Goodman's withdrawal, and with considerable lack of finesse, the selection of Fr Folan was communicated to him by the same Fr White in the following October.

Some of Fr Mullooly's misery in those months before and after his Priorship had ceased comes through in a letter to Fr Russell the ex-Provincial, on 19 January 1858: "During the last twelve months of my priorship, he noted, I had a great many prejudices, arising from various quarters, to contend

⁸⁵ Ibid.

against. But through God's merciful assistance I have succeeded in overcoming the latter and smoothing away the former"⁸⁶. Then he pushes self-pity to one side and launches into a proud summary (not his first nor last, by any measure) of what has been accomplished at San Clemente during his decade (1847-1857) as bursar and superior:

Only ten or eleven years ago, when I came to Rome, I found S. Clement immersed in debt, without a character, almost without a community and without means to support one. And now it contains within its venerable walls a highly responsible community composed of eleven students, a master of novices, the Prior and Subprior, the laybrothers, and a servant — in all 19... Moreover the convent does not owe a penny to anyone — and its income has been very considerably increased. In fact it is once more what it was destined to be, "*Collegium Hiberniae Dominicanae de Urbe*", a title which I have got inscribed, in large letters, in the door that leads from the cloister to the convent. With regard to the renovations, restorations, and additions, that have [been] made within the last few years, both inside and outside our Roman "*Alma Mater*", I shall merely say that more has been done than you can easily imagine, and for details I refer you to Fr Healy, and to the sketch of which he is the bearer.

The sketch, unfortunately, does not survive. If it did it might now help to understand just what Fr Mullooly meant by "more work has been done than you can easily imagine", or, better still, might provide some indication of what he was working on "inside and outside" in that Summer and early Autumn of shillyshallying and uncertainty before it became final that Fr Folan was to be Prior. For, as he claimed later, it was precisely in those months that he made the first discoveries that led to the great series of excavations under the church for which he was responsible over the next twelve years, 1858-1870. And it was precisely a few days after Fr Folan had been read in as Prior on 5 November 1857 that word of what he had discovered first came to the attention of scholars.

⁸⁶ Provincial Archives, Tallaght, Letters 1857-1858.

⁸⁷ Fr Healy, after his confession examination, set out for Ireland on 22 January: SCAR 52, 90.

Oddly, in the light of what happened there in 1857 by way of archeological discoveries, it was not the antiquities of San Clemente but the associations of San Sisto that engaged Fr Mullooly's attention when he first became superior of San Clemente in 1850. In its way, this is understandable. San Sisto, the old Winter home of the Irish Dominicans until 1798 and now totally neglected for over fifty years, save for the Lenten Station Day and the feast of San Sisto, was part and parcel of the earliest history of the Dominican Order's presence in Rome. St Dominic had lived there. It was there that miracles of his had taken place. The refectory and chapter room were the settings of many celebrated incidents in his *Vita* and in the canonization process. At a time when Dominican revival was in the air, when one of Fr Jandel's first acts as head of the Dominican Order was to move the residence of the General from the Minerva to Santa Sabina because it was Dominic's principal if second foundation in Rome, there was bound be pressure on the Dominicans of San Clemente to do something about Dominic's very first foundation of which Lacordaire had written so movingly in his *Saint Dominique* some nine years earlier: "Quand l'étranger, au retour du tombeau de Cécilia Métella et du bois de la nymphe Egérie, rentre à Rome par la voie Appienne, il découvre devant lui, sur sa droite, une sorte de mesure grande et triste, surmontée d'un de ces clochers aigus si rares dans les points de vue romains: il passe sans même demander le nom"⁸⁸.

It was the chapter room not the great refectory (he leased that whenever he could for storage and the like) that caused Fr Mullooly concern. The end wall was in a ruinous state, the frescoes all round faded and far gone. He was lucky in that San Sisto had an interested and receptive Cardinal Titular, Gaspare Pianetta, who held the church from 1840 to 1862 (when he was followed from 1862 to 1870 by Fr Mullooly's old friend and Dominican colleague, Cardinal Guidi of Bologna), and had been instrumental in saving the church and its contents during the recent revolution⁸⁹. With money provided by the Cardinal and donations from friends (Frs Goodman and Conway, for

⁸⁸ H. Lacordaire, *Saint Dominique* (Paris 1934), p. 63.

⁸⁹ SCAR 24, 213.

example, and Siena Convent, Drogheda, in 1854)⁹⁰, Fr Mullooly began work on the chapter room during the Holy year of 1850 and had the walls repaired and plastered by the end of 1851. Other work, as we shall see, continued until 1855, when a tablet commemorating the restorations was set into the end wall⁹¹. Meanwhile roofs were cleaned and secured, windows repaired, and the annual feast of San Sisto and the Lenten Station day were celebrated with proper solemnity and hospitality, coffee, biscuits and chocolate being laid on for those who took part in the ceremonies⁹².

Once the fabric of the chapter room had been renovated in 1851, the problem remained what to do with the walls, now devoid of the frescoes they once carried. It was then, late in 1851, that Fr Mullooly suggested to Fr Hyacinthe Besson, the Dominican artist who had been one of the French aspirants to the Order at San Clemente in 1841 and was now Prior of Santa Sabina, that he should decorate the walls with paintings of episodes in St Dominic's life that had taken place at San Sisto, and of other Dominican subjects⁹³.

In February 1852 plasterers began preparing the walls for Fr Besson, who was able to commence his work in May. By late 1852 Fr Mullooly had made habitable the two rooms at San Sisto which pope Benedict XIII had used as a retreat during the carnival⁹⁴, and in January 1853 Fr Besson, no longer Prior of Santa Sabina, moved into these with Fra Angelo and M. Cartier, his future biographer. There at San Sisto during May and June Fr Besson worked very long days, the only interruption normally being the arrival of lunch from San Clemente. The work was taken up again in October at the request of Pius IX, who was in the habit of dropping in at

⁹⁰ Ibid., 350, p. 50.

⁹¹ So much work was going on that on 30.8.1854, when thanking the cardinal for five scudi, Mullooly apologized to him for failing to clean the cloister, because of the work in the Chapter Room (SCAR 43, 62).

⁹² SCAR 350, *passim*. San Sisto was inhabited by someone from San Clemente from May to August 1852: see SCAR 333A for kitchen expenses there for this period.

⁹³ E. Cartier, *Le R. P. Hyacinthe Besson. Sa vie et ses lettres* (Paris 1865), says (p. 255) that the idea was Fr Besson's, but Fr Mullooly denies this in a pencilled note in the margin of the San Clemente copy of the book.

⁹⁴ SCAR 350, p. 35.

San Sisto to see how the work was progressing. It continued until June 1854, and was not resumed again until 1858 because Fr Besson was elected Prior of Santa Sabina once more in August 1854 and then, in 1856, was sent to the Dominican mission in Mosul. During his absence a painter was employed to sketch in certain subjects which Fr Besson had not had time to do before his departure; presumably the painter, whose work Besson approved of, was the M. Pillard to whom Fr Mullooly paid 60 scudi for "varie figure abbozzate" in September 1859⁹⁵. On Fr Besson's return he worked regularly on his own paintings from October 1858 (when Fr Mullooly bought painting materials for him for 25 scudi) until May 1859 (when he was paid 10 scudi for expenses)⁹⁶. Later in the year he left once more for Mosul, where he died on 4 May 1861.

The first positive indication of a like interest on the part of Fr Mullooly in San Clemente's past also occurs in the Holy Year of 1850 when in March, nine months before he became superior, he bought a copy of Rondinini's *De Basilica Sancti Clementis* (Rome 1727) for the library⁹⁷. Possibly he was stimulated to acquire Rondinini because of a report of the Commission of Fine Arts, Industry and Agriculture on 5 January 1849 which, in preparation for the coming Holy Year, ordered San Clemente to do certain repairs⁹⁸. If they were not done, the report threatened, the Commission would do the work itself and charge San Clemente for it. The only immediate response I can find is a petition of 13 January asking the Vicar of Rome, Cardinal Patrizi, for the first of several times over the next years, to help restore St Catherine's chapel, "where Cardinal Naro is buried and is guarded jealously by an iron screen"⁹⁹. If the Vicar proved unhelpful on this occasion, the Commission was as good as its threat. Within a week of the warning a painter named Ambrose Chatelain was sent to San Clemente

⁹⁵ Ibid., 350, p. 142. Some of these were removed by Raphael Taylor of San Clemente when he was restoring the frescoes in 1967.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 350, pp. 122, 134. The whole Chapter Room was "repainted", according to Fr Mullooly, in April-May 1859: *ibid.*, 133-4. Fr Besson's frescoes are reproduced in P. Berthier and P. Vallée, *L'oeuvre artistique du R. P. Besson* (Paris 1909).

⁹⁷ SCAR 350, p. 18.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 24, 202.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 24, 203b.

with a mandate to restore three paintings in the chapel of St Dominic¹⁰⁰.

Apart from the abiding humidity of St Catherine's chapel about which Cardinal Naro had tried to do something in 1825 with quite unhappy results, the church of San Clemente, unlike the San Sisto chapter room, probably was not in too bad a shape structurally.

For his first spell as superior, or at least for the years he was preoccupied with the work at San Sisto, Fr Mullooly seems to have been content to keep the church of San Clemente and its surrounds clean and unencumbered, and to enhance the dignity of its services in any way he could. In January 1852 he approached the Cardinal of San Clemente for vestments and was promised some¹⁰¹; in the following september he protested the raising of the level of the Via S. Giovanni on to which the side-door of the church gives; in May 1854 marble was purchased for repairing the floor¹⁰².

By mid-1854, and especially after his reappointment, he had become a little more venturesome. In June he successfully petitioned the Ministry of Public Works for assistance in the repair of the mosaic work of the Schola Cantorum¹⁰³, and in October Cardinal Patrizi, Vicar of Rome and President of the Belle Arti, for monies to restore the "Masaccio" frescoes and to counter the humidity in the chapel of St Catherine¹⁰⁴. But his most spectacular success was with a plea to the Municipality of Rome in 1856 to free the great gate to the courtyard from the earth which was blocking it at the level of the Piazza (as may be seen in some old prints), for the authorities not only freed the gate in 1857 but also provided wide and quite handsome steps from the Piazza to the gate.

The Provincial, Fr Robert White, congratulated him warmly from Dublin on 14 June: "What a battle you must have fought to obtain such a signal triumph as the grant of 4000 scudi from the Municipality for the repair of the Piazza and the chapel of

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 24, 203a.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 25, 81a.

¹⁰² Ibid., 350, pp. 98, 58.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 28, 74.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 25, 147.

Masaccio¹⁰⁵. Fr Mullooly, writing a few days after Fr Folan had replaced him as Prior, was mildly pompous about all that had been and was being done: "We have begun, he wrote the Cardinal of San Clemente on 9 November, various and necessary restorations in the basilica, especially the pavement and the mosaics of the amboni. There is nothing dearer to the heart of my community, which at present consists of 20 religious, than the preservation of this valuable monument of the primitive liturgy".

While all of this, and particularly the letter to the Cardinal, suggests that Fr Mullooly during his eleven years at San Clemente had taken more than a passing interest in the maintenance of the church and its furniture, there is no suggestion here of the passion for excavations and archeology which was to dominate the rest of his life. Above all, there is no hint of the sensational discovery which, by his own account, he had made over that Summer and Autumn of 1857. It was, indeed, just two days previous to the letter to the Cardinal that he had, according to Msgr Tizzani, a member of the Commission of Sacred Archeology (but a week later by Fr Mullooly's reckoning), spoken to Tizzani about some discoveries he had made under the sacristy and which (to quote his own version of events) he believed to be part of the original basilica of San Clemente.

What possibly could have prompted Fr Mullooly to poke about under the sacristy and, particularly, to conclude that what he had found there was proof that the current church was not the original one? In his own book on San Clemente published in 1869, he is egregiously vague about what really happened:

..., a particular study of the topography of this part of the city, as well as a minute inspection of the marbles in the choir, induced the writer of these pages to suspect, as far back as 1848, that the church spoken of by S. Jerome, Pope Leo the Great, Symmachus, and Gregory the Great, could not be that described by Ugonio, Panciroli, Rondinini, Nibby and others; and, therefore, that the former must be either beneath, or somewhere near

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 44, 8.

the latter. In process of time, what had been but conjectures ripened into convictions, and, in 1857, the researches were commenced by opening a passage through a chamber containing some remains of ancient walls; and hence through another, quadrangular and vaulted. Here, having made an aperture in the wall, and removed a quantity of rubbish to the depth of fourteen feet, we discovered three columns standing erect, *in situ*,...

"A minute examination of the marbles in the choir"? Even to Fr Mullooly's close friend Alexander Henry in the *Weerkly Register* of 9 October 1858, a bare year after the event, the process was not at all clear:

What led the Prior to imagine the existence of extensive remains beneath, whether the evident sinking of parts of the church, the singular fact that in one of the convent cellars the vaulting springs from an antique Corinthian capital, apparently resting upon the floor, but which he suspected to be standing upon a buried shaft, or other indications, I do not know. In the beginning of last year he set to work, and succeeded beyond hope. Beneath the sacristy, on a parallel line with the church above, he found one of the naves of the first basilica.

A correspondent for the *London Review* of 20 December 1862 had, apparently, rather more success in prising something more specific out of Fr Mullooly than had Mr Henry:

He observed that the whole of that part of Rome situate between the Coliseum and the Lateran, stands on a much higher level than it did at the time of Clement, hence the difficulty of reconciling the present position with the ancient level. His attention was, moreover, attracted by a capital built into the wall of the sacristy, close to the floor; apparently a mere fragment that had been used as building material. Examination proved it to be in its place, with its shaft standing erect and buried beneath it. Stimulated by this discovery, Father Mullooly at once commenced extensive operations. A cutting was made, the ancient pavement was reached at a depth of 14 feet, and after the removal of an immense quantity of rubbish, earth, broken bricks, and other

débris, what has proved to be one of the aisles of the original church of San Clemente was laid bare¹⁰⁶.

While not for a moment doubting that Fr Mullooly had his suspicions about the presence underneath or nearby of an older building "as far back as 1848" (but discounting the claim of the Roman Correspondent of the *Limerick Reporter* of 8 October 1858 that he "began his excavations in 1846"), the plain truth may be that he was on the alert around San Clemente in 1857 because of what had happened to his San Sisto artist Fr Besson in the previous year at Santa Sabina. In attempting, as a form of recreation, to make a garden out of the overgrown Tiber slope of the Aventine, Fr Besson and his community had stumbled upon a vast Roman complex that reached down below and under the church to the level of the Tiber. As they cleared away the vegetation beside the church, parts of the superstructure of the edifice were found embedded in the walls or stranded above ground¹⁰⁷.

It is not at all surprising, then, to find that a common denominator in the accounts in the *Weekly Register* and the *London Review* is a capital "(Corinthian) apparently resting on the floor" in one of the convent cellars (*Register*), "built into the wall of the sacristy close to the floor" (*Review*), which, in fact, turned out to be, respectively, "standing upon a buried shaft", "with its shaft standing erect and buried beneath it".

What seems probable is that, struck by what had happened at Santa Sabina, Fr Mullooly began to keep his eyes open. The two capitals that came to his attention, one Corinthian in a cellar of the house, the other (unspecified) in the sacristy, were in fact ones that he must have seen and passed hundreds of times. The Corinthian is still clearly visible today in the north parlour (then a cantina or cellar) of the house, "apparently resting on the floor", with its "shaft" in the boiler room below. The unspecified capital must have been visible at that time "close to the floor" in the inside wall of the sacristy (the floor level has been changed twice since), topping the fourth column

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁷ Cartier, *Besson*, pp. 276-78; F. Darsy, *Santa Sabina* (Rome 1961), pp. 43, 53.

in the north aisle of the lower church, exactly opposite where Fr Mullooly broke in through the north wall of the sacristy.

That capital in the sacristy clearly determined where Fr Mullooly decided to break in and why he chose that precise spot in the sacristy wall underneath. But since it was not possible for him to break in through the sacristy wall from the garden because of structures underneath in the angle formed by the house and the sacristy, his approach to the sacristy wall had to be a circuitous one, beginning from the boiler room where the "Corinthian" shaft is. From there he cut through the south wall to a vaulted room under the outer sacristy (just where the counter and his bust are today), then turning right he broke through the west wall of the room and the house into another vaulted room in the garden, turned left then, and after about twenty feet found the north wall of the sacristy. When he had made a hole in that wall, there was a large area inside exactly the width of the sacristy above, and half-filled with rubble. As may be seen today, the "shank" whose capital was visible "close to the floor" in the sacristy above is precisely opposite where Fr Mullooly entered the lower church and precisely where he expected to find it, just as he had found the "shank" of the Corinthian capital at a higher level below the north parlour (cantina).

All that Fr Mullooly himself says in his book is that his work was begun "by opening a passage through a chamber containing some remains of ancient walls; and hence through another, quadrangular and vaulted. Having made an aperture in the wall.... we discovered three columns standing erect, *in situ*...". But the reconstruction above of the route he took is nicely borne out by a description by Alexander Henry in the *Weekly Register* of a visit he made to the excavation in the Spring (1958) following the discovery:

By a staircase of no early date [that leading down at the back of the north parlour and the Corinthian capital to the boiler room], passing through a chamber which contains some remains of ancient walls [the boiler room], and hence through another, quadrangular and vaulted, the walls of which of large well made bricks, are evidently of the Roman epoch [the vault under the outer sacristy], you go down through a hole in the wall to a third chamber [the area now open in the

garden from the front door to the sacristy wall]. and then lower still through another hole [that in the wall of the sacristy] to the ancient church [north aisle].

Today the opening made by Fr Mullooly in 1857 is to be seen in the north aisle above but to the right of the niche containing the "Byzantine Madonna". The same opening is also visible from the garden, as is the breach in the wall under the outer sacristy, in the area once occupied by the "third chamber" through which Alexander Henry passed. That chamber was opened to the sky sometime before November 1858, so as to allow easier access to the excavation, since a writer in *The Tablet* of 18 December 1858 says that on St Clement's Day (23 November) various dignitaries visited the excavation, "now entered from the garden, and easily reached to their lowest level by ladders". Later (certainly by June 1863, as may be seen from a plan of the excavations in *The Ecclesiologist* of that month), the garden entrance was abandoned for a stairway down from the outer sacristy into the north aisle, more or less where Fr Mullooly's memorial slab is today. In 1866 the present staircase of twenty three steps in peperino stone from Albano was designed and constructed by Francesco Fontana, the architect of the Commission on Sacred Archeology and the overseer of the excavations from June 1858 until they ceased in 1870.

In his book of 1869 Fr Mullooly paid a deserved tribute to the architect Fontana and his part in "supporting the upper church on brick vaults and arches" as the lower was being excavated, and in making the excavated basilica "easy of access". But nowhere is there any mention of Fontana's connection with the Commission on Sacred Archeology nor for that matter of the Commission itself.

The problem was that relations between Fr Mullooly and the Commission were never easy and sometimes were more than strained. In Fr Mullooly's mind he was the discoverer and initial excavator of the original church of San Clemente which had been brought to light under the present one. In the repeated view of the Commission, the material discovery was Fr Mullooly's, but the recognition of what was under the sacristy, and hence the real discovery, was that of Msgr Tizzani, archbishop of Nisibi, who was a distinguished historian and a

member of the Commission. In other words, Fr Mullooly had indeed found something, but did not know what it was.

Fr Mullooly's find first came formally to the attention of the Commission on 29 November 1857, when it was voted to undertake the excavation of the site. On this point there seems to be complete agreement between Fr Mullooly and the minutes of Commission. The Commission, however, did not begin work at San Clemente until the beginning of June 1858, and only issued its first report — and the first public intimation that excavations were under way — on 14 August in the official *Giornale di Roma*. There the Commission gave credit to Msgr Tizzani for the discovery and, moreover, spoke of the excavation which the Commission had inspected before the vote of 29 November as though the Commission had been responsible for the digging.

Fr Mullooly was indignant that the Commission should have lumped together what he had excavated before the Commission had come on the scene and what had been excavated after the Commission had begun work in June. He sent a correction to the *Giornale*, and when the editor, for reasons of policy, declined to publish it, had it printed in the *Univers* of 29 December. In fact he seems to have embarked in these months on quite a "corrective" campaign, in particular by inspired articles from "Roman Correspondents" in French, Irish and English newspapers and journals. As a result, the *Giornale* of 8 January 1859 carried another statement from the Commission, repeating that of the previous August, as a counterblast to notices in various newspapers, specifically the *Univers* of 29 December.

Msgr Tizzani, too, was not adverse to publicity. He also took up the *Univers* article in his book *La celebre contesa fra Santo Stefano e San Cipriano* (Rome 1862). In a long footnote at pp. 7-8, he stated that he had made the discovery on 9 November 1857 (as was "correctly reported in the *Giornale* of 14 August 1858"). Of course, he went on, "I should not pass over the fact that the said Prior [Fr Mullooly] was the occasion of the discovery: he met me on 7 November 1857 and asked me to go to the cantina of the convent of San Clemente with him to look at a 'rocchio di colonna' which puzzled him". When Fr Mullooly copied this whole passage out on 29 August

1865 in preparation for his book on San Clemente, he was moved to pen a postill: "The above statement of discovery of the Basilica of S. Clement is in many respects incorrect, and in some respects absolutely false"¹⁰⁸.

The most informative moment in all this semantic juggling and jockeying for position comes in 1866, when an article in the *Correspondance de Rome* of 2 December 1866, occasioned a lengthy and valuable reply from the Commission over, as usual, the name of Canon Profili, Secretary the Commission, in the issue of 22 December. The *Correspondance*, summing up nine years of work under the basilica, had credited Fr Mullooly with the work and made little or no mention of the part played by the Commission. This was unfortunate, since the Commission had been in charge of and had footed the bills for the work from June 1858 and February 1860.

Noting in his letter that the Commission had ordered him to communicate certain details from the records of the Commission in order to clarify certain questions respecting the discovery and the excavation of the primitive basilica of San Clemente, the Secretary proceeded to give the procès-verbal of the meeting of the Commission on 12 November 1857, with Cardinal Patrizi, Vicar of Rome, presiding. According to that record Msgr Tizzani, archbishop of Nisibi, had spoken as follows:

On 7 November of the present year I chanced to meet by the column of Trajan the Reverend Father Mullooly, prior of the Dominican convent of San Clemente. He asked me if I would be so kind as to go to San Clemente to look at a fragment of a column in the basement of the convent, and to let him know the day and hour of my visit so that he should have the pleasure of being there to meet me.

On the morning of 9 November I called at San Clemente before I went on to my class in ecclesiastical history at the university. The prior had already gone out, so I asked a lay person to take a torch and accompany me to the basement. When I got in through an opening in the wall I stood on a pile of débris and was able to see the column in question. Leaving the lay person on the spot and asking him to beat on the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

roof with a long stick, I went back to the sacristy to see just where the basilica above corresponded to the site of the column. After this, I returned to the cave and began to examine things afresh. In spite of the poor light I discovered another column almost entirely enclosed by the wall, and on a side wall the bare traces of a fresco. The column to which Father Mullooly drew my attention is for me a definitive indication of the site of the primitive basilica of San Clemente of which St Jerome spoke, and I invite the Commission to look into this matter.

The verbal process, as reported by the secretary, concludes with an account of the one, brief question put to Tizzani by Professor Minardi of the Commission (Minardi: How possibly can you conclude all this from a fragment of a column?; Tizzani: *Ab ungue leonem*), and the decision of the Committee, after some discussion, to investigate the matter. The secretary, however, goes on to report, but without any detail, that as a result some members of the Commission (Bartolini, Fontana, Tizzani, Visconti and the secretary) made an official investigation of the site at San Clemente on 14 November, in the presence of Fr. Mullooly and Msgr Bonaparte. He further notes that when the Commission met on 29 November to hear the report of the visit, a decision was taken to begin excavations, but in secret so as not to compromise the Commission should what was under San Clemente turn out not to be the primitive basilica.

The second half of this long letter of the secretary of the Commission to the *Correspondance* points out that the Commission had spent 5000 scudi on the excavations from 1858 to 1860, that its own architect Fontana was the director of the works from the beginning and still was, and that the newspapers never gave either the Commission or Fontana any credit. It concluded with a tribute to the work done by Fr Mullooly since the Commission had pulled out in 1860, saying that "he had carried on with a tireless perseverance the work commenced by the Commission".

Fr Mullooly's version of the events of November 1857 differs in some respects from that furnished by archbishop Tizzani. It was written for but omitted from his *St Clement Pope and Martyr and his Basilica in Rome*, published at Rome

in 1869, and came to light only recently when the book as printed was collated against the original manuscript in the archives of San Clemente, where the passage in question occurs (pp. 132-134) at the end of what is the first paragraph on p. 187 of the edition of 1873, and carries a note "Omit" in Fr Mullooly's hand¹⁰⁹.

Although Fr Mullooly's book did not appear in print until 1869, these pages appear to have been written in 1865 or 1866 in relation to earlier statements of the Commission and particularly to Msgr Tizzani's long note in his *La celebre contesa* of 1862. They are pointed and sharp, rejecting the claim of Msgr Tizzani to have discovered the primitive church and that of the Commission to have made the first excavations. Possibly they were suppressed when the verbal process, which contradicts Fr Mullooly at some points, came to his attention in the issue of the *Correspondance* of 22 December 1866. But they are worth printing here because they are part of the history of the excavations and, as well, show Fr Mullooly with the knife out and at some removes from his usual measured, lofty prose:

[These discoveries removed all doubt, as to the site and existence of the primitive basilica].

The difficulty still remained how could it be explored. The convent of S. Clement being poor could not supply the means for so arduous and expensive an undertaking. I determined to bring the discovery under the notice of the Archeological Commission instituted by the Sovereign Pontiff, for the preservation of ancient monuments.

On Sunday the 16th November [7 November: Tizzani] of the same year while accompanying the late Monsignor Lippi to the Lateran Church, I met a distinguished member of the Commission [Tizzani] opposite the cemetery of St John's [Trajan's column: Tizzani], and invited him to come and see the discoveries just mentioned. He kindly consented, and said he would bring some of his colleagues.

In the afternoon of the 27th [29th: Minutes] of the same month (not on the 9th, as is stated in the *Giornale di Roma*) he did come with Monsignor Bartolini and Bonaparte, Canon Profili, Commendatori Visconti, Minardi and De Rossi [Fontana: Minutes]. The commis-

¹⁰⁹ SCAR 118; a rough draft is in SCAR 118A.

sioners having examined what had been brought to light, he (the distinguished member of the Commission just alluded to) gave it as his opinion that it was the ancient basilica of S. Clement, thus confirming what I had mentioned to him a fortnight before. No other member of the Commission expressed any opinion, although they all acknowledged the importance of the discovery.

In June 1858, the Commission at my request undertook the excavations. On the 14th August an anonymous article in the *Giornale di Roma* gave an account of their progress and claimed the discovery of the ancient basilica for the distinguished commissioner by name. By some singular infelicity he did not take the trouble to contradict it, and the editor of the journal refused to insert a few lines which I addressed to him in contradiction of the statements which were almost utterly untrue, on the plea that the contradiction might give offence to some members of the Commission. I had them, therefore, printed in the "London Weekly Register" of October [the article, presumably, by A. Henry] and in the "Univers" of December of the same year.

The article in the Roman print said that "the Prior of San Clemente invited Monsignore... to see a column that lay buried 'interrata' under the church of S. Clement, that Monsignore told the Commission he was of the opinion he had discovered the subterranean basilica of S. Clement, that the Commissioners had visited the discovery, and that Monsignore had induced them to undertake the excavations, in the progress of which up to the 14th of August 1858 four marble columns, standing erect, a portion of the old pavement, some frescoes, one of which represents S. Catherine of Alexandria Virgin and Martyr, had been brought to light".

Now, with the exception of the fourth column, all the others, as well as the frescoes of S. Catherine and the nineteen heads with the painting of the balance and the inscription, were discovered long before Monsignore, or any other member of the Archeological Commission set foot in the subterranean basilica of S. Clement, or had the least notion of its existence. On the 27th November 1857, when the Commissioners paid their visit, their Secretary, canon Profili, after examining the columns and the fresco of S. Catherine, made a pencil sketch, in their presence and mine, of the group of nineteen heads, before mentioned.

I regret that the Commissioners did not honour the article with a contradiction, nor the editor of the Roman

Journal insert mine, as it would have saved the masons of the Commission the trouble of writing the following certificate which is in my possession: "The undersigned, do hereby certify that I began, by orders of the Commission of Sacred Archeology, to excavate in the Subterranean basilica of S. Clement, in the beginning of June 1858, and that I then found a column of Numidian marble entirely uncovered — *'interamente scoperta'* — and two others partially uncovered: also a painting representing the martyrdom of S. Catherine and a group of nineteen heads. Rome August 20th 1858. Andrea Lelli. Master Mason".

This is also confirmed by a similar certificate of Angelo Pompili foreman to the above mentioned Andrea Lelli, dated August 29th 1858. And if these documents were not enough I could easily mention several Italian or English gentlemen who could confirm the truth of what I have stated above.

The Commission continued the excavations from June 1858 to February 1860, when they finally extinguished them, whether from want of funds, or through fear of injuring the upper church, or because they despaired of making other discoveries, I cannot say. During that time the whole of the northern aisle and a small part of the southern were cleared out, and some more columns and some fragments of paintings were brought to light. It was with considerable pain that I saw the work discontinued, and finding that there was no chance of their being resumed, by the Commission, I undertook them on my own responsibility in September 1861, feeling convinced that the general interest in archeological researches and the peculiar ecclesiastical character of the discoveries would themselves procure sufficient funds for their prosecution.

[It would be tedious to give a detailed account of the excavations year by year...]

It is hard to know what to make of all this. I suppose the least censorious thing to say is that Msgr Tizzani was drawing a long bow, that Fr Mullooly was not playing quite fair, and that the Commission initially was loyal to Tizzani, the archbishop, at the expense of Mullooly, the unknown.

To take Msgr Tizzani first, it is curious that he should have gone to so much trouble on his way to class and should have persisted in Fr Mullooly's absence in descending into the "cave" (presumably at the risk of soiling his ecclesiastical

garb), unless, as Fr Mullooly says, he had already been told by Mullooly (who would have known Jerome's testimony from his Rondinini) of his suspicions that the column represented part of the primitive basilica.

As for Fr Mullooly, though he is more straightforward in these suppressed pages than in his book, he does not make a clear distinction here (or in other communications) between what was visible when the Commission visited the site on 14 (27: Mullooly) November 1857 and what was already excavated by the time the Commission began its work in June 1858, any more than the article did which so offended him. As we shall suggest when dealing with the excavations as such, some work was done by Fr Mullooly between November 1857 and June 1858. From this point of view it was not quite fair to proffer affidavits from the Commission's mason and his foreman, since the point at issue was not how much work had been done by the time the Commission took over but how much work had been done by November 1857 when the Commission investigated the site. On some things Fr Mullooly's memory may have served him badly. It is unlikely, for example, that the Commission would not have included the architect Fontana in the official party (Fr Mullooly gives De Rossi for Fontana). As well, Fr Mullooly cites the dates of the affidavits of Lelli and Pompili, the mason and foreman, as 20 and 29 August, whereas the affidavits themselves, which turned up recently in an old account book of the excavations, are dated 23 June and 9 July, respectively. They are unlikely documents anyway. Since both men were illiterate (each affixes a manual cross to his affidavit), the writing of them was done by Fr Mullooly, who has Pompili, the foreman, testifying to the presence of a Latin inscription on one of the frescoes¹¹⁰.

The Commission, finally, made far too much of archbishop Tizzani's "discovery". Even if Tizzani had come to the conclusion on his own that the column under the sacristy indicated the presence of the primitive basilica, it was a play on words to call this a "discovery" when the plain truth was that he was the first to bring the San Clemente site to the official

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 41, 1 and 2.

attention of the Committee. Fr Mullooly was correct in reproving the Commission for not speaking up when the Tizzani article made its appearance on 14 August 1858. It is surely significant that when Domenico Bartolini, who was present at both the meeting of 12 November 1857 and the investigation two days later, published his *Memorie Storico-Critiche Archeologiche dei Santi Cirillo e Metodio* (Rome 1881), there is not one mention of his former colleague Tizzani (Bartolini was by now a cardinal) when he speaks (p. 64) of the discovery of the primitive church of San Clemente "through the work of Fr Giuseppe Mullooly of distinguished memory and of the Pontifical Commission on Archeology to which I had the honour to belong".

Five years later, however, and some six years after Fr. Mullooly's death, Tizzani himself returned to the whole affair in his *Della Commissione di Archeologia Sagra del Museo Cristiano-Pio e dell'antica basilica di San Clemente* (Rome 1886). Relying on a series of diaries which he had kept since 1826, Tizzani states that from 1837 onwards he was convinced that the level of the church was not quite right, but had never dared to present his views until after the chance encounter with Fr. Mullooly on 7 November 1857. His version of the conversation with Mullooly, drawn from vol. 19 of his diaries, and of the subsequent visit to San Clemente on Monday 9 November while Fr. Mullooly was out, does not differ substantially from that of 1866. But there are some new details about the aftermath. When the Commission began its work at San Clemente under Fontana, "a man as capable as he was unassuming", there was, Tizzani says, a display of jealousy about his "find" on the part of some members of the Commission. These began to congratulate Fr. Mullooly as though he had made the discovery, and gradually came to persuade him that indeed he had. There was no doubt, of course, that Mullooly was worthy of praise, for it was, Tizzani was willing to allow, "Fr. Mullooly who opened the way for me to discover the basilica by inviting me to visit the cellar".

The jealousy took another form, too, as Tizzani says he discovered in the Summer of 1858. At an interview with Pius IX in July of that year he was told by the pope that a Slav bishop had written asking that a search should be made at San Clemente for the remains of St. Cyril, and was then told by Pius that

something should be done about the bishop's request. But Pius, who dismissed Tizzani with the words, "Foreigners know more about what we have in Rome than you archeologists of Rome do", must have forgotten that the work was already in hand. For when Tizzani went for instructions to the Secretary of State, Cardinal Antonelli, he was informed that someone was engaged on the job of hunting for the remains of St. Cyril at San Clemente. That someone, as we shall see later, was De Rossi, who in fact had been working at San Clemente since the Spring of that year, and independently of the Commission. Tizzani, indeed, only discovered in August just what was going on when, some six weeks after the Commission had begun its own work at San Clemente, Fontana and Canon Profili told him on 12 August that they had just come from San Clemente where some work was going on behind the apse. Fontana was quite disturbed, Tizzani says, and stated bluntly that he was going to give up his own excavations, "since it is clear that Sig. X [De Rossi] will get all the credit and you, Monsignor, will receive nothing".

It was because of De Rossi's seemingly surreptitious work at San Clemente, Tizzani now revealed in 1886, that he and Profili issued the statement of 14 August 1858 in the official *Giornale di Roma* and tried to establish the role of the Commission as such and of Tizzani in particular in the discovery of the original basilica. That statement, then, was not directed against Mullooly but De Rossi, though in fact De Rossi never at any time claimed the discovery and was simply doing an *ad hoc* piece of work on behalf of the pope and the Secretariat of State. And it was only when Fr. Mullooly took the Commission's statement up in articles in October and December to put the matter right, as he saw it, that Tizzani and Profili trained their sights on him, first in January 1859 and then, with much more vigour, in 1866.

The controversy, at best, was a silly one. And it was all the sillier in 1866. By then Fr. Mullooly was no longer an unknown but a respected archeologist. And what had once been a "cave" into which Msgr. Tizzani had insinuated himself through a hole in a wall on 9 November 1857 was now a vast subterranean basilica, full of frescoes, and visited daily by scores of people from many lands, not least by pope Pius IX, and for his third time, too, on 23 November 1866, the feast of St. Clement.

VI

THE EXCAVATIONS

The finds that Fr Mullooly made under San Clemente in the late Summer and Autumn of 1857 were examined by the Commission on Sacred Archeology in mid-November of that year, and on 29 November the Commission voted to undertake excavations as soon as possible¹.

By its own account a year later, the Commission attempted to begin excavations in January 1858 under its architect Francesco Fontana, but was forced to give up almost at once, possibly, as we have seen, because Fr Mullooly felt that the Commission was acting high-handedly and as though it had made the initial discovery. Between January (about the time he sent his sketch of work done to Fr B. Russell in Dublin) and June (when the Commission took over definitively), Fr Mullooly appears to have pushed on with the work himself, probably, I suspect, in a dogged attempt to make sure that the discovery could not be claimed by anyone but that "National Establishment" for which he had worked so tirelessly for ten years and more, and which, he ventured to Fr Russell on 19 January, would soon, "with God's blessing...grow into one of the most respectable establishments in the Eternal City"².

In November 1857 when the Commission visited the site, all that was visible, so far as one can make out from Fr Mullooly's account and that of the Commission, was a part of the famous column under the wall of the sacristy, a section of a second column, traces of a fresco on the wall through

¹ *Correspondence de Rome* n. 436: 22.12.1866.

² Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Letters 1857-1858.

which he had broken in, and, through a hole which he had punched in a cross-wall supporting the sacristy floor, a fresco with "nineteen heads". Now, in what may be described as the pre-Commission phase of the excavations (November 1857 - June 1858), Fr Mullooly cleared the rubble from in front of the fluted column (the fourth from the east end of the north aisle) that had caused all the excitement, and at a depth of fourteen feet reached the then ground level of the north aisle, uncovering in the process two more columns to the left or east of the original column as well as the exterior of the rough rubble wall that supports the north wall of the present basilica. Some of the passionate haste with which he worked is well conveyed by the Roman correspondent of the *Limerick Reporter* on the following 8 October (and presumably he had obtained some of his bits of information from Fr Mullooly): "Aided only by his lay brother, the indefatigable Prior worked with his own hands (as his poverty did not admit of procuring labourers) day and night, cheered on by constant success". At all events, when G. B. Guidi and Fr Alexander Henry (of the *Weekly Register*) visited the vault in the Spring of 1858, much more seems to have been visible than had been noted in the report of the Commission in the previous November: the all-important column is now described as a "fluted column of cipollino marble"; another column of "white Greek marble" had been partially uncovered; the fresco was now indentifiable as that of the martyrdom of Catherine of Alexandria; an inscription *stateram modium iustum auget* was to be seen in the fresco of the "nineteen heads"³.

Meanwhile, but independently of Fr Mullooly, another researcher was at work in the church above, and for a different reason. This was the great archeologist (and helpful friend of Fr Mullooly) G. B. De Rossi, who, at the request of pope Pius IX, was looking for the burial place of St Cyril, the apostle of the Slavs, in preparation from the coming millenium in 1863 of the conversion of the Slavs. Because of what Fr Mullooly had discovered, and knowing that Cyril had been buried in 869 in San Clemente at the right side of the altar, De Rossi was engaged in the Spring of 1858 in an attempt to

³ SCAR 25, 179: declaration by Guidi, 27.4.1858.

locate the original apse of the basilica underneath and, he hoped, the tomb of St Cyril.

De Rossi first dug in the garden immediately behind the present apse, located the original apse-wall, and then penetrated further down to the level of the Mithraic temple (though he was unaware of this at the time), breaking through, as it happens, the handsome stuccoed vault of the Mithraic ante-chamber (the hole he made, now covered by a grill, is to be seen today in the vault of the ante-chamber, directly under the opening which he had made in the garden directly behind the present apse). He reports that he found "under the original apse two chambers of the pagan period in the vault of one of which [the one through which he broke] there were beautiful and splendidly preserved stucchi".

In the church above he was less successful. He took away the three steps at the right-hand (south) side of the high altar, but all he discovered, he says, was a long Greek inscription of a certain Eila Matrona, which was later taken to the Lateran Museum. Fr Henry of the *Weekly Register*, however, reports that when he saw De Rossi at work there in that Spring of 1858, "there as a loculus, made by four large tiles, in which were bones very carefully placed, but nothing else". De Rossi does not speak of these bones. Instead he remarks ruefully that if he had gone a few feet deeper at that particular point he would have arrived in the lower church near the so-called tomb of St Cyril which Fr Mullooly uncovered some two years later⁴.

De Rossi's discovery of the original apse-wall must have made Fr Mullooly realize that it was impossible for him to carry on on his own any longer. Though the Commission, too, must have been impressed with De Rossis's excursions between the two apses, it was not until 29 May 1858 that it formally requested permission from the Prior of San Clemente (Fr Folan) to begin work under the church⁵.

Progress was slow at first when the architect Francesco Fontana and the master masons Andrea Lelli and Angelo Pompili began the work on behalf of the Commission in early June

⁴ G. B. De Rossi, "Del sepolcro di S. Cirillo nella basilica di S. Clemente", *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, First series, I, n. 2 (1863) 12.

⁵ SCAR 25, 173.

1858. Much of the Summer was spent in what Fr Mullooly in a letter of 25 August to Fr Folan at Tivoli calls "the drafting away of the rubbish already excavated", in (to quote *The Tablet* of 18 December) removing "the old foundation walls on which rest the sacristy and part of the convent", and in supplying "a substructure of piers and arches, to secure the safety of the superincumbent buildings". But by 14 August about half of the north aisle had been excavated, and the area east to the present first column (verde antico) had been cleared⁶.

By November (when Fr Mullooly was superior once again following the resignation of Fr Folan) the removal of the cross-walls and the propping up of the floor above had progressed sufficiently to allow visitors to enter the excavations in some numbers and in safety. In describing the celebration of the feast of St Clement (23 November) *The Tablet* of 18 December reports that large crowds attended Vespers, "either from motives of curiosity or devotion", for it was now "generally known how important have been the results of the excavations under the actual level of St. Clement's". "On the day of the festival, *The Tablet* goes on, after the ceremonies of the morning were over, the Cardinals Villecourt and Barnado, with several other visitors, Ecclesiastic and laic, descended, under the guidance of the Reverend Prior, to inspect these excavations, now entered from the garden, and easily reached to their lowest level by ladders".

Mr C. J. Hemans, the distinguished writer on art and archeological topics, was the author of *The Tablet* report, and provides some fascinating details which are not, to my knowledge, available elsewhere. When describing the fresco of the group of "nineteen heads", Mr Hemans adds that beyond it is "another group of thirty-two heads, similar in design, and of almost the same type of features, the expression stern, the eyes dark and large, and those distinguished as females with the hair invariably parted, or braided in the same fashion. Near these last is a figure of a fish, probably the remnant of a picture illustrating the story of Jonas; and in the intervening spans are ornamental borders, designed and coloured in the style of severe simplicity that has much of the beautiful".

⁶ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, Letters 1857-1858.

Hemans was aware that the apse of the original basilica had been discovered (by De Rossi), but it was, he says, "no longer accessible, owing to the entrance of water from some deposit opened in the course of the works" (this is the water that flows from the south or Via S. Giovanni side and later caused the flooding of the Mithraic area until it was drained by the O'Connell tunnel in 1914). What is more interesting, and is not at all mentioned by Mullooly in his book, Hemans makes it clear that the excavators in the north aisle, like De Rossi between the apses, had penetrated beneath the floor of the original church to one of the rooms (Hemans calls it a well) of the large rectangular building of the first century, with its massive outer wall of tufo:

Here has been discovered also another fragment of antiquity, still earlier than the Basilica, in the form of a well, considerable in extent, built of enormous blocks of volcanic tufo, from four to five palms [32-40 inches] long, by two-and-a-half [20] high, and which the best authorities have attributed to a period so early as the later epoch of the Kings, or beginning of the Republicans. This may be seen by descending below the pavement of the subterranean church into a vaulted chamber, where the massive construction extends along one side, probably far beyond the limits visible, and to a depth greater than can at present be reached, owing to the entrance of water, which has interrupted the excavating works for a time, but may be drained off eventually.

The report of Canon Profili, secretary of the Commission, in the *Giornale di Roma* of 8 January 1859 is no less helpful for the first six months of the Commission's work. Most of the north aisle, he says, had been excavated by the end of the year. Three more columns to the west of the original (fourth) column had come to light. The work had been slowed down considerably, however, by the necessity of placing wooden or concrete pilasters in the walls of the aisle to support the sacristy and the other rooms above. It was in order to find foundations for these pilasters that the floor of the aisle had been pierced and the rooms and tufo walls discovered underneath, to which Hemans refers. Most important of all, because of the present state of the frescoes there, is the detail provided in Profili's

report of the discovery of the "Madonna and Child" niche in the north or outer wall of the aisle, to the immediate west of the Catherine of Alexandria fresco.

The niche was frescoed on the back, the sides and the vault, and at one time or another had been walled up with layers of tough cement which proved inordinately difficult to remove. On the vault there was a fresco of a beardless Saviour, with hair parted in the middle. The fresco on the left wall of the niche had an inscription above two female figures, but the painting had deteriorated so much that only the head of one of the women remained. The fresco on the right wall was better preserved and appeared to represent St Paul. The back wall of the niche proved to be of greater interest. Where Fr Mullooly says simply that the paintings there "were first concealed by others, much ruder, painted upon a coat of plaster which fell away"⁷, Canon Profili is more specific. The back wall in fact carried a fresco of the Madonna and Child. But it was in a very precarious state, and after a few days fell off the wall altogether — only to reveal the present enthroned Madonna and Child in an almosta perfect state of preservation. This was much more beautiful, Profil says, than the one that had fallen off, and was "easily datable" to the eighth or ninth century.

A little over a year after Canon Profili's report, the Commission withdrew from the work at San Clemente in February 1860 and the excavations were then suspended for some eighteen months. That year is sparsely documented, but what happened can be reconstructed to some extent from later accounts by Fr Mullooly and from articles in various journals. After the excitement and the journalistic coverage of the Autumn of 1858, public interest slackened and would not quicken again until late 1861, though it should not go unrecorded that Edward, Prince of Wales paid the first of several influential visits to the church and excavations on 23 February 1859, or that pope Pius IX made the first of his four visits on 18 April, when Canon Profili, on behalf of the Commission, showed him over the half-excavated north aisle⁸.

Between January 1858 and February 1860 the excavators pushed on to the west end of the north aisle, carefully shoring

⁷ *Saint Clement Pope and Martyr*, p. 206.

⁸ *Giornale di Roma*, n. 88: 19.4.1859.

up the structures as they went along. The large fresco of Our Lord in the last section of the outer wall of the aisle was uncovered, as was the nearby enigmatic inscription in square capitals, *Quisquis has mei nominis literas legeris, lector dic indigno Ioanni miserere amen*.

The floor which was found in this aisle was rough and ready, but the excavators scrupulously kept to its level and did not disturb it, except where they had to penetrate to one of the rooms underneath in search of foundations for their pilasters. However, as was discovered some four years ago, this was not the original floor of the second storey of the great Roman building whose site the basilica now occupies, but a new floor raised some 30 cms. above the original Roman floor. Had the excavators probed a little further, they would have discovered the plaster, in Pompeian red, of the north wall of the Roman second storey. What happened, it seems clear now, was that in the late fourth century when the length of the second storey became the aisle of the church, a new, raised floor was put in, accidentally preserving the old Roman plaster along the north wall, as may be seen today from one end of the aisle to the other at the base of the north wall and across the west end on what remains above ground (to the height of the "Christian" floor, now removed) of the original end wall of the Roman second storey. The plaster remaining above the level of the new floor was stripped off, leaving the wall bare until the present frescoes were painted in later centuries.

When the excavators reached the west end of the north aisle it was found that the lower part of the west wall, close to the floor, as of "infinitely superior workmanship to the upper" (this, in fact, was the upper part of the base of the west wall of the Roman second storey to which attention was drawn in the preceding paragraph). According to an account in the *London Review* of 20 December 1862 (written, I suspect from the presence of a galley of the article among his papers, by Fr Mullooly), a vertical cutting was made in the wall, revealing behind it at a distance of about 90 cms., "a wall of the finest brick of imperial times" (the east wall, as Fr Mullooly discovered some ten years later, of the Mithraic complex next door). What was also of interest was the fact that the west wall of the aisle itself was found to be resting on "massive blocks of travertine" running

exactly parallel to the fine brick wall. When the earth between the travertine and brick walls was removed to a depth of three metres, the travertine wall turned out to be standing "upon a still earlier wall, built of immense blocks of tufa, laid together without cement". As conjectured by Fr Mullooly, the report in the *London Review* goes on, the travertine and tufo walls "may have formed part of the Mint, which, it is known, was situated in this part of Rome".

Since the passage 90 cms wide which had been cleared to a depth of 3 m. continued across the west end for some 25 or 26 metres, the excavators eventually emerged in the south aisle of the subterranean church, the west (Roman brick) wall of which carried a fresco representing as it seemed, the crucifixion of St Peter, though nothing remained of it "but the two feet tied to the cross". In the angle formed by the west and south (Via S. Giovanni) walls there was "the figure, almost perfect, of a bishop in the act of baptizing by immersion", as well as "the remains of another council picture", among the figures in which our reporter was sure he recognized "the Emperor Constantine, wearing the imperial diadem". (All these frescoes are still extant in one way or another, but not, unfortunately, what the *London Review* describes as "a face of great loveliness, possibly representing St. John the Evangelist", which was to be found further on on the south wall, "with nothing left around it but the bare wall").

Working eastwards now (in the opposite direction, that is, to the course of the excavation of the north aisle), the excavators had arrived just beyond the first column in the north rubble wall in February 1863, when, as we know from Fr Mullooly in the *Osservatore Romano* of 10 October 1861, the excavations came to a halt. And when the work was resumed in October 1861, under the absolute control of Fr Mullooly, the excavation did not, as one might have expected, continue down the south aisle but branched off beyond the first column into the nave, leaving the rest of the south aisle untouched for years afterwards.

The pavement of that small part of the aisle which had been excavated by February 1860 was, in the words of the *London Review*, "exceedingly beautiful, having been formed of diamonds and squares of porphyry, and marbles of various colours, with borders of alternate lines of white and serpentine".

However, when the rest of the aisle was eventually cleared, only a few fragments of floor were found to match the rich tract at the west end - a tract, as it happens, that fronted the reputed tomb of St Cyril on the south (Via S. Giovanni) wall. In 1966, when the eastern stretch of the aisle was lowered to the level of the floor of the Roman second storey, the fragments of the "christian" floor were used to patch and extend a little the "exceedingly beautiful" tract of floor at the west end in front of the reputed tomb. Otherwise the "Christian" floor was not tampered with at this point, so as to preserve some of the floor level as such of the church.

The Commission on Sacred Archeology stopped work at San Clemente in February 1860. Later (1866) it stated that by then it had expended some 5000 scudi (1050 pounds sterling) on the work and that it had "ceased at that time to allot monies for the continuation of the excavations" because these monies had been "specifically assigned to the Commission for explorations in the catacombs" and not for general excavations⁹. No further explanation was ever given, as Fr Mullooly noted in the suppressed part of his book (p. 135) in the same year (1866): "The Commission continued the excavations from June 1858 to February 1860, when they finally relinquished them, whether from want of funds, or through fear of injuring the upper church, or because they despaired of making further discoveries, I cannot say".

That Fr Mullooly was able to take the work up again some eighteen months later, and without the technical or material help of the Commission, was due to a decision of his in the Spring of 1860 to "procure sufficient funds" on his own for the continuation of the excavations. Within three months of the departure of the Commission, Fr Mullooly had obtained permission from Cardinal Patrizi, President of the Commission and Vicar of Rome, to collect money for the work, and on 20 May 1860 he began to send out printed circulars in Latin, English, Italian and French to prospective donors, those in Latin (to the cardinals) beginning sonorously with the words, "Sacris vetustisque monumentis vitam, et mores, necnon liturgiam et artes primorum Christicolarum referentibus quantopere nostra delec-

⁹ *Correspondence de Rome* n. 436: 22.12.1866.

¹⁰ SCAR 42, 2.

tetur aetas nemo sane non ignorat"¹⁰. Shortly afterwards, but with what success I do not know, he petitioned the pope for a papal blessing for all who contributed to the excavation fund¹¹.

Although there is no record of subscriptions before 1862, when a subscription book was opened, it appears that there was enough money to hand by September 1861 to reopen the excavations on a limited scale. What was really needed to make the appeal for funds more telling was proof that the continuation of the excavations was a worthwhile venture¹². Fr Mullooly, as luck would have it, found the proof almost at once, and after the sensation caused by the new discoveries of September-October 1861, money began to come in with some regularity.

The excavations, it will be remembered, had stopped in February 1860 just beyond the first column from the west in the south aisle of the church. Had the Commission ventured into the nave at this point, I doubt if it would have abandoned the work quite so casually. For when Fr Mullooly began the new series of excavations in September 1861, he chanced on one of the most celebrated of all the San Clemente frescoes almost at once.

Instead of clearing the south aisle eastwards, as one might have expected him to do, Fr Mullooly, for reasons of his own, decided to plunge into the nave at the point where the Commission had given up the work (see plan). To do that, of course, he had to cut through the rubble wall upon which rested the south line of columns in the upper church, but he succeeded in doing so without disturbing the columns above, and cleared a space of about 5 m. square to the left of the entry. As he announced in the *Osservatore Romano* of 10 October, what was visible at once on the inside of the rubble wall was a "bellissimo affresco", that of Clement and Sisinnius.

The fresco, measuring some 5 x 3 m., stretched from the floor of the nave to the pavement of the church above, and was intact save for the upper compartment where the figures of

¹¹ Ibid., 42, 3bis.

¹² "It was with considerable pain that I saw the work discontinued, and finding that there was no chance of their being resumed by the Commission, I undertook them on my own responsibility in September 1861, feeling convinced that the general interest in archeological researches and the peculiar ecclesiastical character of the discoveries would themselves procure sufficient funds for their prosecution": suppressed pages of Fr Mullooly's book, p. 135.

popes Linus, Peter, Clement and Cletus had been shorn of their heads when the pavement of the church above had been laid in the early 12th century. What was most interesting, in the light of later discoveries, was the presence of the names of donors: *Ego Beno de Rapiza cum Maria uxor mea pro amore dei et beati Clementis*. Fr Mullooly dated the fresco to the 5th or 6th century, asserting that "it would be difficult to find, even in Rome, a painting of so early a date... But it is also of the greatest importance for ecclesiastical history and sacred liturgy, presenting us with the series of the first pontiffs, the form of the Pontifical sacred vestments and furniture during that century, and the fashion of civil dresses. It affords besides an additional argument against heretics, to show them how already in the fifth and sixth centuries the rites, vestments, and ceremonies now used by the Catholic Church were already in use then".

If the dating is out by some five or six centuries and the apologetic a little contrived, the discovery nevertheless caused a sensation. The local Italian papers latched on to it at once. The *Weekly Register* of 19 October picked up Fr Mullooly's notice in the *Osservatore*. Fr Mullooly himself (but anonymously) described the fresco briefly in the *Sligo Champion* of 7 December, noting that it was "a discovery due to the exploration of the worthy Prior". An article in the same *Champion* a week later (but dated 7 November), and again by Fr Mullooly, repeated the account in the *Osservatore* but added that "The whole antiquarian world, and all who are interested in the history of liturgy and the arts, must feel indebted to the excellent clergyman who has hitherto 'prospected' so successfully in these 'diggings'". A long letter to the *London Times* on 10 January 1862 stated in its preamble that "The excavations under the Basilica of St. Clement's at Rome are just now exciting a sufficient amount of interest to warrant one in forwarding you some of the results of personal inspection and inquiry made on the spot only a fortnight ago, in the hope that they may not prove uninteresting to many of your ecclesiastical and archeological readers". After a detailed description of his visit (he remarked, for example, on the water lodged in the passage from the north to the south aisle under the west end of the church) and of the beauties of the new fresco (the colour

of which was "as fresh as if laid on only yesterday"), the writer ends by "testifying to the very frank and obliging manner in which the Prior of the Dominican Monastery of St. Clement furnished me with nearly all the details I have been able to collect".

Official reaction was a little mixed. When the Minister of Commerce and Public Works presented a report on the discovery to Pius IX on 6 November, the pope expressed great satisfaction at the discovery, and ordered that the fresco was not to be moved¹³. The President of the Commission on Sacred Archeology, Cardinal Patrizi, was not quite as enthusiastic, largely because he had only learnt of the new find from the local newspapers. In a letter of 30 November to Fr Mullooly, he said, reprovingly, that he had seen in public newspapers ("foglietti") that some paintings had been found "which may be of some importance" in those parts of the subterranean basilica "which had been brought to light by the care, toil and money of the Commission". Since it belonged to his competence to recognize officially the discovery of which he had heard so casually, he informed Fr Mullooly that he and his Commission would present themselves at San Clemente at 3 p. m. on 2 December to inspect the new fresco¹⁴.

The visit appears not to have been a success, probably because the Commission was worried about the safety of the the upper church, and, furthermore, was a little irked at Fr Mullooly carrying out excavations on his own account without, at least, the Commission's blessing. At all events no further work took place at San Clemente until the following April (1862), by which time an agreement had been reached with the Commission. In all likelihood Fr Mullooly's September excavation was a sort of trial balloon to get things moving once again. But although it had been a spectacular success, it probably had exhausted whatever funds he had put together over the previous eighteen months. And it had, for the moment, alienated the Commission once more.

Luckily the disaffection of the Commission proved not to be lasting. On 21 March 1862 Fr Mullooly appealed to Cardinal

¹³ SCAR 25, 201: letter of Minister to Mullooly, 19 November.

¹⁴ Ibid., 25, 200.

Patrizi for money to continue the excavations¹⁵. Probably as a result of Patrizi's intervention the Commission on 6 April informed Fr Mullooly that it had no objection to his resuming the work, although it would be happier if the excavations were to be done under the supervision of its architect Francesco Fontana, who had been in charge of the original work of the Commission from 1858 to 1860¹⁶. Fr Mullooly, for his part, was, as he put it, only too delighted to have such an "eminent artist" in charge. The morning after the note from the Commission, Fr Mullooly communicated his happiness to Cardinal Patrizi - and asked him for financial help "not only as President of the Commission but also as Protector of the Dominican Order"¹⁷.

Within a few days the work was under way again, and would not be interrupted until 1870. The master mason Andrea Lelli - the same Lelli who had made the deposition at Fr Mullooly's request in the Summer of 1858 - received his first payment on 12 April¹⁸. On 30 April the city authorities complained to Fr Mullooly about a mound of rubble from the excavations which was blocking the Via S. Giovanni¹⁹. The first record of cartage of this rubble comes two weeks later when 54,12 scudi were paid for 525 cartloads. By 27 May another 140 cartloads had been removed, and 233 more by 30 June²⁰.

This is not bad going for less than three months' work, when one remembers that the rubble had to be "carried up in baskets on the shoulders", to quote Fr Mullooly in his *St. Clement Pope and Martyr* of 1869 (p. 187), by which time Fr Mullooly says that one hundred and fifty thousand cartloads had been dumped (possibly he meant baskets of rubble rather than cartloads, since I have been unable to find a record of more than six or seven thousand cartloads in the account book of the excavation). Most of the rubble was carted to dumps outside the city, but some of it was taken for their own uses by local people, and at about one-quarter of the regular cartage rate. One Girolamo Ciotti, for example, took 188 cartloads for his

¹⁵ Ibid., 42, 4.

¹⁶ Ibid., 25, 204.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 41, 3, p. 112.

¹⁹ Ibid., 30B, 8.

²⁰ Ibid., 41, 3, p. 1.

vineyard, for the cartage of which Fr Mullooly paid 3.50 scudi on 2 November 1862, and another 500 cartloads on 26 January 1863, this time for his garden at Via Labicana 31. Towards the end of the excavations, some of the rubble was used to raise the level of the garden of San Clemente; possibly in order to save some money.

Money, of course, was an abiding problem. The expenditure was high. In all from April 1862 (when the account books begin) until December 1873 (three years after the excavations proper had ended), 17359 scudi (about 3700 pounds sterling) were paid out to the successive master masons (A. Lelli, 1862-3; F. Guidi 1862-73). Cartage and incidentals (copies of frescoes, for example) came to about 8500 scudi (roughly 1850 pounds sterling or Lit. 46000)²¹. What, if any, was the fee of the architect Fontana I have been unable to ascertain.

All of this money appears to have come from donations. As far as I can make out, the revenues of San Clemente itself were never drawn upon. Yet there must have been some anxious moments. A new appeal which Fr Mullooly began to send out in October 1861 after his discovery of the St Clement fresco did not produce any notable immediate results. But soon his availability to visitors and his lack of reluctance to talk at length with special correspondents began to stand him in good stead. The editor of Murray's popular *Handbook of Rome*, for example, wrote a letter to the *Athenaeum* of 8 March 1862 in which he said that the discoveries at San Clemente "had caused some sensation in the Roman archeological world" and cited the whole of the text of Fr Mullooly's appeal. A long article on San Clemente in the *Dublin Morning News* of 28 August noted that "no attempt has been made in this country to collect subscriptions" and added that "if any cannot forward them to the Rev. J. Mullooly, Convento di S. Clemente, Roma, we doubt not that the Dominicans in Dublin, or even his Grace the Archbishop, would not refuse to take charge of them". The issue of the influential *The Ecclesiologist* of February 1863 also printed the appeal and suggested that "If it is preferred, the subscriptions may be paid directly to R. W. Grey, Esq., 47, Belgrave Square, who has undertaken to transmit them".

²¹ Ibid., 41, 3: accounts of masons, cartage and incidentals, 1862-1879.

There was not much available, it appears, by way of public funds. A request by Fr Mullooly to the Ministry of Public Works was favourably received, though the Ministry declined to commit itself until it had seen an estimate from the architect Fontana. This was supplied by Fr Mullooly on 3 May, but nothing more came of the request²². On 23 August a rather desperate appeal to Senator the Marchese Matteo Antici-Mattei and the Comune of Rome said that the excavations were entirely dependent upon gifts and that the expenses were running far above the donations "of many Protestants and Catholics"²³.

Without the donations, indeed, the work in this second phase of the excavations would never have got off the ground, so to speak. A book of subscriptions²⁴ was opened in March 1862 and it tells a very interesting tale. The statistics below are probably correct only to the nearest 100 scudi, largely because three coinages are recorded in the book: scudi and sterling from 1862 to 1867, scudi, sterling and francs in 1868, and francs and lire from 1869. In the book the conversion rate is given only for sterling (4.68 scudi to the pound), but from other sources it is known that the scudo was equal to 5.37 francs and, when the lira was introduced in 1868, to the same amount of lire.

The subscription list began slowly. In 1862 (March to December) 1112 scudi were subscribed — not all that much when one remembers that Lelli, the master mason, was paid 2339 scudi for the year April 1862 to March 1863²⁵. The year 1863 was the best of all the nine years (1862-1871) covered by the subscription book. It opened with a flourish: 800 scudi from pope Pius IX on 1 January; 420 from the archbishop of Olomouc (Moravia) in May (the millenium of SS. Cyril and Methodius being the spur, presumably); 350 in September from the Abbacy of San Clemente "at the order of the pope", being part of the revenues of the Commendatory Abbacy of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio which had been set up after the suppression of the Ambrosians of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio in 1644. In all, 3430 scudi were subscribed in 1863. Though the

²² Ibid., 41, 4.

²³ Ibid., 42, 5: draft.

²⁴ Ibid., 40A.

²⁵ Ibid., 41.3, p. 89.

pope contributed 700 scudi in 1864, 1000 in 1865, 500 in 1866 and 1000 again in 1867, the totals for these four years (1864-1867), when visitors were flocking to San Clemente, never reached the record of 1863: 2310 scudi in 1864, 2388 in 1865, 1089 in 1866, and 1860 in 1867.

Taking these six years 1862-1867 during which a comparison is possible between subscriptions and expenditure (though, I repeat, the comparison is quite rough), the donations amounted to 12200 scudi, and the expenditure on masons' wages, cartage and incidentals to 12939. While this suggests that Fr Mullooly broke even over these six years, it must be pointed out that the expenditure given here cannot represent the total expenditure, since it does not take account of whatever the architect's fees were (the workmen, of course, were covered by the payments to the two successive master masons).

However, since there never was any suggestion that the community of San Clemente had at any point to shoulder any of the costs of the excavations, the figures given above may not be far off the mark. And although the subscriptions fell off considerably after 1867 (in spite of 500 scudi each year from the pope in 1868, 1869, 1870), Fr Mullooly seems to have had enough money at his disposal to continue the main work until 1870, and to do occasional work (including some large excavations in the garden of the convent) between then and 1873.

Because of the political upheavals of the period, the subscription book tapers off in 1870-1871. But during those years (1862-1867) when the subscriptions were fairly steady and the excavations at their most exciting, this rough little copy-book is an eloquent testimony to the generosity of visitors from many lands and to the cumulative force of the mite. Of the 12200 scudi subscribed during those six years, a little less than half (5900) came from the large subscribers (the pope: 4200; the abbacy: 1050; the archbishop of Olomouc: 500; the cardinal of San Clemente, Bonnechese: 150). The larger part (6300) was due to well-wishers who in person or from a distance (through Mr Grey in London, for example) contributed to the fund. Some, of course, made largish contributions: Lady William Russell and family, for example (125 scudi), the Dowager Queen of Prussia, the Duke of Northumberland and the Duke

of Buccleuch (100 each), Fr Alexander Henry, the author of the *Weekly Register* article quoted above (67), the Dominican Cardinal Guidi of Bologna and the Duchess of Lucca (50 each), the Royal Society of Antiquaries and the Prince of Wales (45 each, with other monies from the Prince after 1867), Philip, Count of Flanders (37).

But the bulk of the subscriptions (about 1200 in all from 1862-1867) was composed of small donations that range from 25 or 20 scudi (Prince Doria, Cardinal Antonelli, St Mary's Priory, Cork, Dr Leahy, the Dominican bishop of Dromore, Fr B. Russell, the Irish Dominican Provincial, the O'Connor Don) to 15 scudi from Patrick O'Donovan of Tralee, 14 from Siena Convent, Drogheda, 10 each from Fr Mullooly's Irish Dominican colleagues, Frs White and Goodman, 5 from Aubrey De Vere, William Ewart Gladstone, Henry Edward Manning, the Hon. Henry Walpole (once a year and more for many years), Fra Serafino Guidotti (whose painting had so offended Fr White in 1850), Dean R. A. Stanley of Oxford, Thomas Darcy McGee, Charles Gavan Duffy of Melbourne, and, finally, one scudo each from Lord Ulick Brown, W. B. Lecky and Count Tolstoy, and from hundreds of others of lesser note such as "Patrick Boyle and family", "Mr Anstey and daughter", "Mr Hawkins and party", "Miss Couper and friends", "A Pilgrim", "Ten Protestants".

Most of the ordinary contributors (excluding, that is, many Irish, English, American and Australian bishops) were from England. But there were many Irish, too, some Americans, a handful of French, Germans, Hungarians and Austrians, and a skim of Australians and Italians. At a time when, as *The Ecclesiologist* of February 1863 has it, "about 15s. or £ a day is spent on the excavations", every scudo (about 4s.) went a fair way to meeting a days expenses (4 or 5 scudi). *The Ecclesiologist* itself, indeed, played no small part in the support that Fr Mullooly received from England, and in April 1863 it was "happy to state" that the appeal "which we made to the liberality of our archeologists in our number of February, has been responded to, and that the Society of Antiquaries has also voted a contribution to the S. Clemente fund. From time to time remittances have been made to Rome by Mr Gray, and they have been gratefully acknowledged by Fr Mullooly. We trust that the ways and means may still flow in, and that the

pages of the subscription book at Mr. Masters', 78, New Bond Street, will soon show a goodly array of figures, worthy of the ecclesiologists of England".

Fr Mullooly himself, of course, kept the pot boiling all the while. Tirelessly, almost shamelessly on occasion, he never let an opportunity slip of soliciting funds. On 29 June 1863 a circular letter was sent to the bishops of Slav countries reminding them, in this year of the millenium of the conversion of the Slav peoples, of the connection of SS. Cyril and Methodius with San Clemente²⁶. The visit of King Ludwig of Bavaria on 12 September 1862 was followed up with a present of photographs of one of the frescoes, with the result that when the king's chamberlain sent thanks in the king's behalf on 11 October he enclosed "a small amount of money... with which to defray the cost of the photographs, since the king does not like to accept gifts"²⁷. Shortly afterwards a new circular was prepared by Fr Mullooly, and the interest taken in the excavations by Pius IX, the Prince of Wales, and, needless to say, Ludwig King of Bavaria, was adduced in order to stimulate subscriptions. Two hundred copies in English and Latin were printed on 2 July 1863, and another 350 in English and French on 24 October 1864²⁸.

With some money coming in and his many friends rallying to the cause, Fr Mullooly was able to press on uninterruptedly with the excavations from April 1862 until 1870.

During the Spring, Summer and Winter of 1862 the excavators moved eastwards in the nave along the rubble wall supporting the columns of the present church, from the St Clement fresco discovered in September 1861 to the east end. In the process some 3000 cartloads of rubble were removed, while still leaving most of the nave unexplored²⁹.

By 12 July Fr Mullooly could report the uncovering of the fresco of St Antoninus and that of Daniel and the lions on the east side-wall of the St Clement fresco³⁰. But some of his attention had been diverted to the upper church where, as he reports in the same issue of the *Osservatore Romano*, some work

²⁶ Ibid., 25, 206.

²⁷ Ibid., 42, 7.

²⁸ Ibid., 41.3, pp. 7, 13.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 1-4.

³⁰ *Osservatore Romano*, 12.7.1862.

on the high altar in June had resulted in finding a leaden urn (88 x 58 cms) with the inscription *Corpus Flavii Clementis M. ex Consulis*³¹, while in the foundations of one of the walls of the Schola cantorum a part of the old altar of the original church had come to light bearing an inscription *Altare tibi Deus salbo Hormisda papa Mercurius Presbyter cum sociis offert.*

On 12 August 1862 the *Osservatore* proudly announced another fine discovery in the lower church: that of the fresco of St Alexis on a pier in the rubble wall about 3.50 m. east of the St Clement fresco. It was much the same size as that by now celebrated fresco, and again the floor of the church above had lopped off its top and with it the heads of SS. Michael, Gabriel and Nicholas in the upper compartment. Two weeks later (28 August) the Dublin *Evening News* gave a glowing account of this new discovery "by our esteemed countryman, the Rev. Mr. Mullooly", and provided a translation of the *Osservatore* notice.

In its issue of 17 September, which also reported the visit of Ludwig of Bavaria, the *Osservatore* mentioned that the fresco of SS. Giles and Blaise had been found on the east side-wall of the Alexis fresco, and that various epigraphs were discovered in the floor opposite the Alexis fresco, notably the "reversible slab" now mounted in the narthex of the basilica. When it was found, the pagan inscription in square capitals (*D. M. M. Aur. Sabinus cui fuit et signum vagulus...*) was upwards, and the Christian inscription in rustic capitals (*Suro in pace quesquenti Euticianus frater fecit*) was buried underneath (obviously the slab had no local reference and was simply a useful "filler" for the pavement, as far as those who laid the pavement in the fifth or sixth century were concerned). The report in the *Osservatore* ended with a hope that "the precious remains" of St Cyril, "whose solemn millenium the Slav nation is to celebrate in 1863", would soon be located.

A translation (probably by Fr Mullooly himself) of the *Osservatore* article duly appeared in the *Sligo Champion* of 4 October, together with the news that pope Pius IX had "subscribed out of the limited means left to him by the spoliating King of Piedmont, the large sum of 800 crowns to these works",

³¹ There is a full account in SCAR 42, 6.

and that Fr Mullooly had presented to the pope "a beautiful copy of the celebrated fresco lately discovered by him". The copy presented to the pope was in fact one of two copies of the Alexis fresco for which Fr Mullooly paid 14.20 scudi (about 70s.) on 21 September³². Probably it was the work of William Ewing, an English painter resident in Rome whom Fr Mullooly was to employ exclusively from April 1863 for copying the frescoes discovered in the lower church³³.

Fr Mullooly and his small team of excavators under Francesco Fontana reached the east corner and end wall of the nave at the end of November 1862 and there discovered the paintings of the Two Marys at the Tomb, Limbo, and the Wedding at Cana, in the corner, and beside these a fresco of the Crucifixion. But, as Fr Mullooly wrote in the *Osservatore* of 3 January 1863, the really great find was on the end wall itself (or rather on the artificial wall built between two of the columns that separated the nave from the narthex), where there was uncovered the fresco of the Assumption (or, if you will, Ascension) with its portrait and dedicatory inscription of the donor pope Leo IV (847-855). The *Dublin Morning News* of 20 January, which was "glad to see that our indefatigable fellow-countryman, Father Mullooly, is prosecuting his discoveries with good success", gave a translation (by Fr Mullooly) of the *Osservatore* piece, but added nothing of note.

The *London Review*, which published the excellent article by Mr Hemans on 20 December 1862 of which I already have made extensive use, followed this on 7 March 1863 with a long and judicious summary by the same writer of the latest excavations. Discussing the St Clement fresco, and the paintings of SS. Giles and Blaise on its side-wall, the author says that opinion was still divided about the date of the fresco, some holding for the 5th or 6th century, others, "relying on the half-Italian sentences", for the 10th or 11th. Hemans is one of the first writers to print *Fili delle pute traite*, "the coarse objurgation addressed by the master architect to his workmen", but does not make much of it, "since we scarcely know the exact period at which the change of language took place among the Roman

³² Ibid., 41.3, p. 1.

³³ Ibid., pp. 6, 12, etc.

plebs, after the northern barbarians came in". Even Fr Mullooly in 1869 was not swayed by the impossibility of these half-Italian inscriptions being much before c. 1100, and still placed the St Clement fresco about two centuries too early, in the ninth century³⁴.

The writer in the *London Review* (who hoped "that the money will not be denied which is needful for our countryman to complete his disinterested task") concluded by stating that "cuttings are now being commenced towards opening up the nave". But in fact Fr Mullooly did not proceed at once with the clearing of the nave as a whole. Shortly after the Assumption/Ascension fresco had been discovered in late November 1862, he removed all the rubble across the width of the nave at the east end (discovering incidentally a portion of the rough wall upon which the north line of columns in the upper church rested), and then cutting through the end wall of the nave went behind the Assumption/Ascension fresco into "the probable site of the narthex", as the author of an article in *The Ecclesiologist* of June 1863 termed it.

That article, written from Rome on 21 March by "an enthusiastic ecclesiologist, a member of the Church of Rome, and one who, during his residence in the eternal city, has anxiously watched the exhumation of the old Basilica by the worthy Prior of the Irish Dominicans", is remarkable for its detail and especially for its "ground-plans of the ancient and modern churches" which show exactly where the excavations had reached by the end of February 1863, and what still remained to be explored³⁵.

From the writer in *The Ecclesiologist* it seems probable that it was in the middle of January 1863 that Fr Mullooly, having cleared a small portion of rubble from the narthex, had come upon, back-to-back with the Assumption/Ascension fresco, the great painting of what appeared to be the transfer of the remains of St Cyril, Apostle of the Slavs, from the Vatican to San Clemente in 869. At the time he was writing, "a few weeks" after its discovery, the writer in *The Ecclesiologist* was

³⁴ *Saint Clement Pope and Martyr*, p. 256.

³⁵ *The Ecclesiologist*, Third Series, 156 (1863) 137-144.

not in a position to say very much about it, "as this picture is not as yet entirely disencumbered from the rubbish".

In the year of the millenium of the conversion of the Slav peoples by the brothers Cyril and Methodius, this new and seemingly providential discovery caused intense excitement - an excitement which was heightened a bare month after the fresco had come to light by a brilliant article of G. B. De Rossi in the second (February 1863) number of his new periodical *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*.

De Rossi, who in the Spring of 1858 had searched in vain for the tomb of St Cyril, went to work on the fresco as soon as it had been discovered and on the whole problem of just where St Cyril had been buried in San Clemente in 869. Even though the new fresco was only "uncovered in part" at the time he threw his article together, enough was visible, De Rossi says, "to indicate the subject of the fresco, to measure it, and to read the historic inscription on the lower band: *Huc a Vaticano fertur Papa Nicholao innis divinis (que?) aromatibus sepelivit*.

To De Rossi the body which was "translated" from the Vatican to San Clemente could only be that of Cyril who, on his death in February 869, was to have been buried in the Vatican but at the request of Methodius, his brother, was buried instead in San Clemente. He admitted, however, but only just, that the body in the fresco could be that of St Clement, whose reputed remains the brothers had brought to Rome and then placed in San Clemente in late 868 during the pontificate of Adrian II (the successor of Nicholas I from whom the brothers had had an invitation to journey from Moravia to Rome to report on their apostolate).

The confusion of the two popes, Nicholas and Adrian, was no great difficulty, De Rossi held, since some medieval sources generally attributed the solemn translation of the relics of St Cyril to Nicholas. Nor did it really matter, he argued, which body, that of Clement or that of Cyril, was the subject of the "Translation" scene in the fresco. What was important, he said, was that the fresco "was a monument to St Cyril's arrival at and sojourn in Rome".

What, then, of the tomb of St Cyril? Should not one expect to find it somewhere near this fresco? Perhaps, De Rossi conceded, but provided that there was proof that there had been a

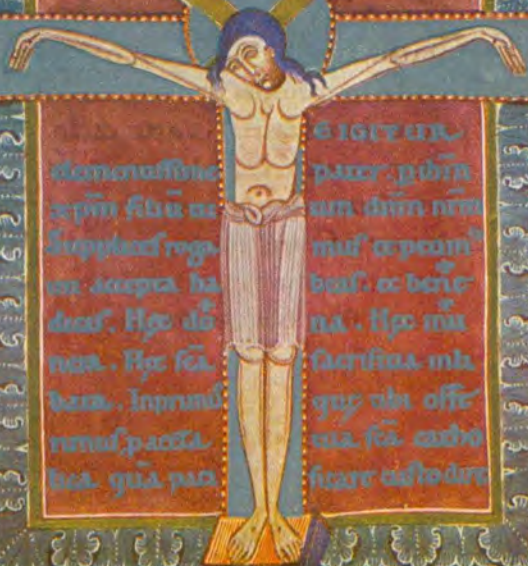
transfer at some point or other from the original burial place in San Clemente to the site of the fresco. For De Rossi the original tomb could only be where the sources placed it, at the right of the altar. And he went on to show, again brilliantly, that the original burial place was precisely at the west end of the south aisle almost opposite where Fr Mullooly had broken through the rubble wall in September 1861 to discover the fresco of St Clement. There was, he argued, an empty tomb there; it was at the right-hand side of the main altar of the church; to the right of it on the wall were frescoes, one of which bore the name CIRIL³⁶. This last, all-important detail had escaped De Rossi earlier, but, he noted, Fr Mullooly had pointed out to him a few days before the article went to press that there was some writing next to a figure in these frescoes, and, with splendid results, had given him permission to wash the part of the frescoes where the writing was. (Earlier, though De Rossi does not mention it, Fr Mullooly, at De Rossi's suggestion, had on 24 December 1862 an opening made in the south or Via S. Giovanni wall just behind the tomb to see if by any chance there were traces of a fresco of Cyril, but to no purpose)³⁷.

De Rossi's reasoning was not accepted universally, but it was received with acclaim by the Slavonic world, and particularly by the great Slav pilgrimage of 1881 which caused an inscription to be erected there and occasioned the building of the chapel of St Cyril in the upper church. Since then this angle of the south aisle has been a place very sacred to all who owe their Christianity —and in some cases their culture also— to Cyril and Methodius. One of the most recent additions to the area has been a splendid modern mosaic of the two brothers done by two young professors at the School of Art in the University of Sofia in May 1975. On 27 June 1975, after a long journey by road from Sofia, this was placed on a vacant part of the rubble wall opposite the tomb which De Rossi had so strikingly identified in early 1863.

After the discovery of the "Translation" fresco in early 1863 the work slowed down a little, probably because of the mounting

³⁶ *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* 1, n. 2 (1863) 9-14.

³⁷ SCAR 43.1, p. 3.



demeruisse
xp̄m filiū
Supplicat roga
on scripta ha
deat. Hic dō
nata. Hic scā
bata. Inprimū
remus p̄ccata
lica quā p̄cc

IGITUR
pater. p̄b̄m
am dñm nrm
mus et p̄cam
beas. et benē
na. Hic mū
sacrificia m̄b̄
que tibi offe
ria scā catho
ficare custodire

DA, QUAESUMUS, OMNIPOTENS PATER, IN
HUNC FAMULUM TUUM, PRESBYTERII DIGNI-
TATEM; INNOVA IN VISCERIBUS EIUS SPIRI-
TUM SANCTITATIS, UT ACCEPTUM A TE, DEUS,
SECUNDI MERITI MUNUS OBTINEAT, CENSU-
RAMQUE MORUM EXEMPLO SUAE CONVER-
SATIONIS INSINUET.

PONTIFICALE ROMANUM

POMPEJUS DE MESA FRANCIÆ

ORDINIS PRAEDICATORUM

SACERDOS

1 JULII 1962

ROMAE

expense of which several correspondents speak³⁸. The fresco of the "Miracle of St. Clement" nearby was not uncovered until late in that year³⁹, when a writer in the London *Tablet* (issue of 2 January 1864) was moved to pen a spade-by-spade account of the discovery: "...The removal, he wrote, of a few more spadefuls showed the top of an anchor leaning against the marble edifice: and Fr. Mullooly's face was bright with joy as he exclaimed, 'This must be the finding of St. Clement's body in the little temple in the sea of Chersonese'".

The new fresco was in excellent condition and, what was more, was clearly the gift of the same De Rapiza family which had donated the Sisinnius fresco in the nave. That of the "Translation", however, turned out to have two large and unseemly holes in the main, upper panel. These holes (scaffolding holes, as it happens, from the building of the present church a decade or so after the fresco was painted) offended Fr. Mullooly, who paid 60 scudi to the painter Ewing to have the fresco "restored"⁴⁰. Ewing's restoration was so successful, indeed, that it endured as part of the fresco until 1960, when X-ray photographs betrayed it.

When Fr. Mullooly had cleared the narthex with its two striking frescoes, he began to work on the south (Via S. Giovanni) aisle from the narthex or east end (the west end had been excavated five years before, when the presumed burial place of St. Cyril had come to light). Because the floor of St. Catherine's chapel, which stands just over the entrance to that aisle, was some three steps higher than the pavement of the upper church, he had to remove it, discovering in the process two frescoes on the wall over the entrance to the aisle, just under the floor. These two frescoes of "Prosperius" and "Libertinus", the latter

³⁸ *L'année dominicaine* of September 1863 states that 50000 francs had been expended by the time of writing, and in its issue of March 1864 again stresses the lack of money. A long article with an appeal for funds appeared in the *Church Times* of 12.12.1864, and the *Correspondence de Rome* of 2.12.1866 reports that expenses had by now reached 75000 francs (about 3000 pounds sterling).

³⁹ *Osservatore romano*, 18.12.1863; *Weekly Review*, 20.2.1864.

⁴⁰ SCAR 41. 3, p. 13 (payment of 28.9.1864; see SCAR 42, 28 for Fr Mullooly's petition to the Cardinal Prefect of Public Works and Fine Art for permission to restore the fresco).

of which Ewing "restored"⁴¹, are no longer visible, but again they caused some excitement when they were uncovered⁴².

For a while it was possible to enter the excavations through this opening in St. Catherine's chapel, but the floor was replaced in the Summer of 1867 at a cost of 555 scudi⁴³. Over the next few years the two aisles of the present church were completely redone, and in order to make the new pavement of the two aisles conform to the Cosmatesque pavement of the nave of the church, Fr. Mullooly asked Cardinal Antonelli, the papal Secretary of State, for "the hexagonal and triangular pieces of coloured stone" which were "lying around" the basilica of St. Paul Without the Walls and had not been used when that church was rebuilt after the disastrous fire of 1823⁴⁴. Altogether some 4000 scudi were spent in redoing the two aisles in "mosaico tessellato" and in various other repairs to pavements between 1868 and 1870⁴⁵.

How much, then, of the celebrated Cosmatesque pavement of the present church is genuine? Probably only that in the nave and choir (though there is evidence of repairs in these stretches too). The aisles certainly were redone in toto, as was the area around the high altar. The latter is well-documented, since the floor there had to be removed because of particularly delicate excavations in the fourth-century church below.

For in the Spring of 1865, and just after he had excavated the east end of the S. Giovanni aisle, Fr. Mullooly turned his attention to the one part of the nave that was still unexcavated—the west end beyond the St. Clement-Sisinnius fresco of September 1861 and just below the high altar, apse and great mosaic of the present church. Here, as in the case of St. Catherine's

⁴¹ SCAR 41, 20 (payment of 25.8.1866). When not restoring frescoes, Ewing worked prodigiously on copies of the various frescoes. As reported by the *Osservatore* of 25.1.1865, all of these were on display in the sacristy by that date. Later, on 18.2.1869, Fr Mullooly contracted with Ewing for a fresh copy of each of ten frescoes at a total cost of 480 scudi, which was paid on 18 August: SCAR 25, 227.

⁴² *Osservatore romano*, 15.5.1865; *Tablet*, 17.6.1865.

⁴³ SCAR 25, 216.

⁴⁴ SCAR 42, 22.

⁴⁵ Apart from the 555 scudi for St Catherine's chapel, there were payments of 387 scudi for the pavement of the Rosary chapel, 500 for the stretch from the Rosary chapel to St Catherine's (11.12.1867), 483 in September 1868 and 500 in March 1869 for sundry repairs to pavements, 526 in August 1869 for work in the other aisle, and some 2020 scudi for unspecified pavements in December 1870: SCAR 41.3, pp. 25, 29-31, 33.

chapel and the Via S. Giovanni aisle underneath it, Fr. Mullooly decided to work downwards from the church above rather than from the ground level below, this time because of the bulk of the high altar and the importance of the *Confessio* beneath it. So the pavement of the presbiterium was taken up in that Spring, the high altar was dismantled, and the old *Confessio* and the steps leading down to it in front of the choir were removed.

When the workmen had cleared the area below in the fourth-century church, Fr. Mullooly erected an altar directly underneath the site of the high altar of the present church. Four slender columns in saravezza (breccio) marble supported a baldachino over the new altar, one of the purposes of which was to carry the weight of the high altar above when it had been reassembled. When preparing the foundations of this new altar, a large vault filled with "a wall of stones" was found under the ground. The vault, which goes down to the level of the Mithraic temple and to the ground-level of the Roman courtyard on which the nave stands, was cleared by Fr. Mullooly and its surrounds strengthened. For a brief period the vault was used as a burial-place for the San Clemente community, but from the 1870s the place was largely abandoned until 1970, when Fr. Mullooly's own remains were placed there. The rubble from the vault provided some of the foundation of the large staircase from the sacristy which was completed towards the end of the Spring of 1866⁴⁶.

In the medieval *Confessio* that nestled in the rubble under the high altar above, the reputed relics of St. Clement (but as "Flavius Clemens Martyr") and St. Ignatius of Antioch had been found in a leaden casket in the autumn of 1866⁴⁷. When the high altar had been re-erected in its old position, these relics were placed in a copper urn under it with much ceremony on 1 February 1868, the feast of St. Ignatius. After a well-attended *Triduum*, a great procession went from San Clemente to the Colosseum and back, and three panegyrics (one each on St. Clement, St. Ignatius, and Martyrs in general) were preached by the Dominicans Giacinto de' Ferrari, Pio Capri (of the San Clemente community), and Cardinal Guidi of Bologna⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ *Il Divino Salvatore* of 24.11.1866, pp. 124-5; SCAR 41.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Osservatore romano*, 6.2.1868.

Various remains which had been found during the excavations and were judged to be those of unidentified martyrs were also placed in urns under the high altar on that day. These, together with the relics of St. Clement and St. Ignatius, had been kept for some time in a cupboard in the sacristy. The Cardinal Vicar of Rome had sealed the cupboard with papal seals, and there was a penalty of excommunication for tampering with them. When Pius IX visited the church a year earlier for that same feast of St. Ignatius, he had gone to see the sacristy, which had just been refurbished, and had looked with great interest at the sealed press. One of the Dominicans (perhaps Fr. Tom Burke, who was then prior) had suggested that surely the pope at least could open a press sealed with papal seals. After some hesitation, the pope broke the seals and kissed the relics. As he was leaving the church, *Le Monde* of Paris nicely notes, Pius said several times to the crowd in response to their "Viva il papa", "Eviva il nostro padre Mullooly. Bravo! Bravo! il padre Mullooly"⁴⁹.

This pronounced enthusiasm was not unwarranted. By the beginning of 1867 Fr. Mullooly not only had brought an early Christian basilica to light in less than ten years but also had managed to penetrate beneath that fourth-century church to an even earlier level, to one, it seemed at the time, that reached back to the opening years of the second century if not to the very time of St. Clement himself at the end of the first.

When clearing the area under the high altar in 1865, the excavators soon found the support-apse which had been put up around 1100 for the apse of the new church above, and behind that the great wall of the original apse of the late fourth or early fifth century. Above them, and in between the two apses, there was the hole which De Rossi had made from the garden behind the present apse when searching for the remains of St. Cyril in the Spring of 1858; at their feet on the fourth-century level there was the opening he had made when, continuing on down, he had broken through the vault of a stuccoed room underneath.

Fr. Mullooly now took over where De Rossi had backed out after his unfortunate sortie into what we now call the Mithraic

⁴⁹ *Le Monde*, 4.2.1867.

"Antechamber". In the Summer of 1866 he cleared the room of rubble through De Rossi's opening, and also freed a half-filled roomlet or vestibule beside it. For the moment he did not go any further. He was utterly convinced that this room directly under the apse could mean only one thing: the original place where Clement and his Christian flock had gathered together for worship around the year 100. At once he dubbed the deep, stuccoed room "Dominicum Clementis" or "Oratory of St. Clement"⁵⁰, and later felt confirmed in this when a statue, taken to be one of St. Peter or, perhaps, the "Good Shepherd", but probably a common classical representation of a shepherd with a sheep on his shoulders, came to light in the loose rubble. Since the east wall of the room was the wall of the "corridor" which had been discovered running north to south under the level of the west end of the fourth-century church some seven years earlier, Fr. Mullooly now had a cutting made in this wall into the roomlet beside the "Oratory". A short flight of marble steps (later balanced by another at the south end in the Via S. Giovanni aisle) was put in at the north end of the corridor, so that visitors could reach the "Dominicum Clementis" without any great hardship⁵¹.

Although the "Dominicum Clementis" theory persisted for a very long time (and still is repeated today in some guidebooks), there were solid indications from the outset of the discovery that the vaulted room and its narrow annex were not quite what Fr. Mullooly had taken them to be. For one thing, the exquisitely stuccoed ceiling (the centre of which had been destroyed by De Rossi in his abortive excavation) carried nothing but classical scenes, notably, as De Rossi had observed in 1858, of Phaedra and Hippolytus⁵². For another thing, an unmistakably Mithraic altar, also noted by De Rossi in 1858, was lying on top of the rubble⁵³.

However, the full relationship of the "Dominicum Clementis" to the cult of Mithras was not suspected for some three years more. Then, in 1869, and in an effort to duplicate De Rossi's

⁵⁰ *Correspondence de Rome*, 4.8.1866.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 28.11.1868; *Giornale di Roma*, 30.11.1868.

⁵² G. B. DE ROSSI, "I monumenti scoperti sotto la basilica di S. Clemente", *Bollettino di archeologia cristiana*, 2nd series, 1 (1870) 129-68 at 131, 154.

⁵³ *Il Divino Salvatore*, 9.2.1867.

excavation of 1858 on the north side of the apse in the garden behind it, Fr. Mullooly sank a shaft on the south side towards the Via S. Giovanni, where soundings had suggested a vault or a series of rooms immediately underneath. Here, at a depth of a few feet, the excavators broke through a sturdy vault that sprang from the west wall of the underground church and rested on a parallel rough wall of rubble. The space underneath, partially filled with rubble, enclosed the deep wide staircase, probably of the second century, that leads from the doorway in the west wall (reopened in 1870) by the supposed tomb of St. Cyril to the Mithraic area. The flight of steps was intact, but some two-thirds of the way down the steps as they are today, a wall had been built across the width of the area, probably in support of the apse of 1100 which curves just above⁵⁴.

The wall itself, which sealed off the area, rested on a floor that later turned out to cover the last five or six steps of the stairs. When the wall had been removed, it was precisely at the level of this floor that Fr. Mullooly cleared a path to his "Dominicum Clementis" a short distance away. And it was not until nearly forty years later that the full extent of the staircase appeared in the light, when Fr. Louis Nolan, in excavating the floor from the steps to the "Dominicum", uncovered the buried steps and reached the true level of the Mithraic area with its fine stretch of "herring-bone" floor at the base of the staircase.

This staircase, I may suggest here in passing, probably belongs to the period in the late second, third and early fourth centuries when Mithraic worship was in full flower at San Clemente. And it seems to have provided access to the Mithraeum from the second storey of the great rectangular building next door in the period before it became a place of Christian worship at the end of the fourth century, when pope Siricius dedicated it between 384 and 389 to the memory of pope Clement.

This large rectangular building of the late first century, the proper east end of which has yet to be discovered, embraced in its known or "west" part a large open courtyard (roughly the space occupied now by the nave of the fourth-century church), around which on at least three sides there were rooms and open spaces on two levels.

⁵⁴ SCAR 52.

The levels differed considerably. Where the rooms giving on to the courtyard at ground level (those running under the north and south aisles today) were plain and functional, though with good "herring-bone" floors, the open areas on the second level (more or less the present north and south aisles) were more gracious and had stuccoed walls in Pompeian red, parts of which are still to be seen just above the floor level in the north aisle.

Opinions vary on the nature of this rectangular building in its pre-Christian days. A mint was suggested at the time that Fr. Mullooly uncovered it. A "supermarket" of one kind or another has had advocates in recent years. What seems beyond doubt is that it was a public place⁵⁵. The only trace of habitation at either level is in an area bridging both levels in the north eastern corner, where, among other things, the remains of a staircase were found in 1949, and what may be a bathroom was excavated in 1970.

This inhabited area possibly provides a hitherto unnoticed clue not only to the function of the building as a whole but also to the religious persuasion of the caretaker who presumably was the occupant of this lone apartment. For in the brick wall in this NE corner, just above the tufo and its travertine coping, there is *in situ* a tablet in square capitals dedicated to the god Silvanus: SILVANO DEO SANCTO EX VISO.

Silvanus was the Roman god of uncultivated land whom it was wise to propitiate when extending one's tillage⁵⁶. A "woody", rural god, he rarely had devotees in city settings such as that of San Clemente. Of course, the presence of a tablet here may mean simply that the owners of the building or the caretaker were for personal reasons devoted to Silvanus, but given that the tablet is *in situ*, is a part of the structure, it is possible that the building as a whole had some connection with tillage and crops. In fact the idea of a grain-mart which some scholars have advanced to explain the building may not be wide of the mark. It would at least account for the series of severe, barrel-vaulted rooms on the ground level, each of which is totally enclosed on

⁵⁵ See M. E. BLAKE, *Roman construction in Italy from Tiberius through the Flavians* (Washington 1959), pp. 28-9.

⁵⁶ See *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertums-wissenschaft*, ed. G. Wissowa, v. 50 (Stuttgart 1927), cols. 117-27.

all sides, as though for storage, and possesses only a narrow door for access from the courtyard and a splayed window under the arch of the courtyard-wall for light. In that case the upper storey, with its painted walls and open spaces (and, possibly, an arcade on the south or Via S. Giovanni side), was the place, the "exchange", where business was conducted and deals were made.

What is of greater importance for the present aside is that Silvanus, as a god of cultivation, was often invoked in Mithraic circles, as may be noted in the following dedication from a Mithraic priest of the third or fourth century: "Saluis augustis inuictis sancto Siluano sacrum T. Aelius Tryfon sacerdos solis inuicti ex uiso fecit"⁵⁷. For this suggests that the inscription "Siluano deo sancto ex viso" in a building next door to a Mithraic temple was hardly there by chance. And if one takes that inscription in the NE corner with the staircase in the SW leading to the Mithraic area, then it seems likely that the Mithraic house next door, though at one time physically separated from the "Exchange" by a post-Neronian mandatory fire-corridor (the present north-south passage under the apse) and by an unbroken wall of thick tufa from Anzio topped by travertine blocks, in the heyday of Mithraic worship was simply its annex. In other words, the whole complex of San Clemente as we know it today, and not just the temple building, was a centre of Mithraic cult in the Coelian region of Rome in the two or three centuries before the complex became a Christian preserve in the latter part of the fourth century.

What happened, probably, was that the "Exchange" and the building next door came into the hands of followers of Mithras (members of the military, probably) in the mid-second or early third century. While the "Exchange" continued to function as a place of business, the smaller building (a two-storey *insula* or apartment-building for military personnel) was remodelled to house a Mithraic temple. The temple itself was set up in the courtyard of the *insula*, and the rooms in the south east were modified to allow access from the second storey of the "Exchange" up above. Accordingly, a doorway (the original arch of

⁵⁷ M. J. VERMASEREN, *Corpus inscriptionum et monumentorum religionis Mithriacae* I (The Hague 1956), n. 502 (an inscription found in Rome in 1740).

which is to be seen above the present lintel) was opened in the wall of the west end of the upper level of the "Exchange", just where the door is today, and the stairway which Fr. Mullooly discovered in 1869 was constructed outside the west wall through the now-vacant rooms of the *insula* to the level of the temple.

Probably this was the only entrance to the temple. No other has been found. And it was located at the second storey level rather than at ground level because of the symbolic possibilities of a staircase, and of a covered one at that. For although the temple was screened on all sides by the *insula* and had been designed to resemble a cavern, as the cult demanded, it was, all the same, on the level of the ground and therefore lacked a true, underground flavour. A steep staircase, enclosed and windowless, solved the problem. By the time the worshipper reached the base of the stairs he would have had the impression that he had indeed descended into the ground.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that at the foot of the staircase, on the right, there is *in situ*, a fair-sized lavabo from which a lead drain pipe runs across the stairs and along through the wall to an underground channel in front of the temple. Clearly the small rectangular basin had other uses too, but after the steep descent in the dark, it was just the place on the first level ground to wash sticky hands before rounding the corner to the temple and the mysteries.

Fr. Mullooly, of course, was unaware of the lavabo, the drain pipe and the two brick tombs nearby in which many bones of swine and fowl were later found by Fr. Nolan. For they were under the high floor which the Christians of the late fourth or early fifth century put in when the "Exchange" had become a church and supports were being erected in the Mithraic area for the apse that they slung out from the west wall of the "Exchange" over the fire-lane and the Mithraic ante-chamber ("Dominicum Clementis").

From then until 1100, when the original church was filled in, it is likely that the staircase continued in use and that the "Dominicum" served as an undercroft or perhaps as storage space until the end of the 11th century. De Rossi, who was present when the door at the top of the stairs was reopened in 1870, was sure that the doorway had been blocked off before the tenth century because of "the frescoes of the life of St. Cyril" which

were painted on the west wall in this angle some time after his death in 869⁵⁸, but there may be evidence to the contrary. For one thing, the Mithraic area, or at least the "Dominicum", could well be "the certain cave next to the church of San Clemente" in which Otto III, in the company of the bishop of Worms, passed fourteen days in prayer and fasting in June 999, possibly for a blessing on his Slavonic policies⁵⁹. For another, there is the undoubted fact that a wall was built across the stairs about 1100 to support the apse of the new church.

The Mithraic temple itself, however, seems to have been sealed off as soon as the Christians took over the complex. But there was no destruction of its contents as happened in other similar situations (and notoriously at Santa Prisca on the Aventine)⁶⁰. When Fr. Mullooly reached the "Dominicum" from the stairway in the Summer of 1870, he found a bricked-up doorway opposite it, and behind the doorway a temple of Mithras in an almost perfect state of preservation.

There is nothing, unfortunately, from Fr. Mullooly on the discovery of the temple as such, although the second edition of his book in 1873 devotes some twenty five pages to the temple and to the Mithraic cult. What we know of the discovery depends on a brief article by De Rossi shortly afterwards, and on stray remarks elsewhere.

Perhaps Fr. Mullooly was convinced that his work was done, now that his book on San Clemente had appeared in November 1869. He had begun the volume in April 1866 when it seemed

⁵⁸ G.B. DE ROSSI, art. cit., n. 52 above, p. 153, who thought (p. 167) that the Mithraic building originally was a Christian centre of worship which was taken over by followers of Mithas during the persecutions of the third century.

⁵⁹ "Eodem tempore imperator et praedictus episcopus induti cilicii, pedibus penitus denudatis, quandam speluncam iuxta sancti Clementis ecclesiam ciam cunctis intraverunt, ibique in orationibus et ieiuniis necnon in vigiliis quatuordecim dies latuerunt. Ferunt quidam visioinbus et allocutionibus divinis eos crebro hoc loco fuisse consolatos": *Vita Burchardi episcopi Wormatiensis III*, ed. G. Waitz, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores IV* (Hanover 1841), 833-4; see also B. Hamilton, "The Monastery of S. Alessio and the Religious and Intellectual Renaissance in Tenth-Century Rome", in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, II (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), 263-310 at 298.

⁶⁰ See M. J. VERMASEREN and C. C. VAN ESSEN, "The Aventine Mithraeum adjoining the church of St. Prisca", in *Antiquity and Survival*, I (The Hague 1955) 3-36.

that little remained to be uncovered in the fourth-century church, though in fact the "Dominicum" was found a few weeks later, and the "Limbo" fresco in the Spring of 1868 at the end of the narrow corridor flanking the north aisle⁶¹. These unexpected discoveries aside, Fr. Mullooly acted in these years while he was preparing his book for the press as though he had no further excavations of any great moment in mind. His book was finished in June 1867 (Fr. Burke gave his *Nihil obstat* on 8 July), and Fr. Mullooly devoted much of his attention from then on to cleaning up the two churches, and to odds and ends such as commissioning a gesso copy of the Mithraic altar in the "Dominicum", or establishing a "museo" of stray fragments in the narthex of the underground basilica, where the slab with the pagan inscription on one side and a Christian ("Suro in pace") on the other was set up on rollers in 1867⁶².

Much of his time was taken up with soundings here and there. In 1869, in the Via S. Giovanni aisle in the lower church, he broke through the great vault under the floor beside the presumed tomb of St. Cyril, and cleared out much of the room underneath, down to the pavement, but closed up the excavation shortly afterwards because of the water which was pouring into the room, as it does today, through the stout tufo wall along the Via S. Giovanni. At the far end of the aisle he dug a hole in the floor to a depth of about three feet, then filled it up again. He made an excavation in the convent garden by the present Via Labicana gate in that same year, uncovering, as the inscription which he placed there says, "Neronian arches, mosaic pavements, portions, perhaps, of the Porta Querquetulana" (of the Servian wall) at a depth of seventeen feet. For a while he shifted his attention to San Sisto, where he had arranged with G. B. Guidi, of the San Clemente excavations, to excavate in the courtyard there. Permission for this was obtained on 29 April 1869, but no work was done, and a further permission was negotiated in September⁶³.

Because of all this hit-and-miss activity, the discovery of the

⁶¹ See "The last fresco of St. Clemente", *The Tablet*, 30.6.1868.

⁶² SCAR 41.3, p. 3; *Giornale di Roma*, 30.11.1868.

⁶³ See SCAR 64; SCAR 109; SCAR 41; and X. BARBIER DE MONTAULT, "Découverte nouvelle dans la basilique de S. Clément de Rome", *Bulletin monumental* 35 (1869) 917-919.

staircase to the Mithraeum in mid-1869, and of the Mithraeum itself a year later, has all the appearance of an afterthought, perhaps the result of some gentle prodding by De Rossi.

How much Fr. Mullooly owed in general to De Rossi is far from clear, but there is no doubt that the two worked closely and harmoniously together, and that Fr. Mullooly depended greatly on the learning and archeological expertise of De Rossi. Trained in philosophy and law, Giovanni Battista De Rossi (1822-1894) became interested in archeology in 1841, and long before his death was widely recognized as the "Father" of sacred archeology. As a practical archeologist, he was one of the first in his field to sift rubble and to bring a minute, scientific approach to bear on all materials connected with a site (the catacombs in his case), no matter what their age. As a scholar with experience as a Scrittore of the Vatican Library at his back, he recognized, as none of his predecessors had the value of a thorough knowledge of literary sources, patristic particularly, for the interpretation of archeological data⁶⁴.

From the very beginning of the work at San Clemente in 1857-58, De Rossi was Fr. Mullooly's friend and collaborator. Though never officially engaged in the excavations, he was always in and out. He may have made an inauspicious start to his association with the place when he ploughed through a superb stuccoed ceiling in the Spring of 1858, but in the long run he did San Clemente proud. The glory of the discovery and the excavations rightly was Fr. Mullooly's, and his rather bland volume on San Clemente in 1869 may have had a deserved and resounding success, but the scientific study of the San Clemente complex and of the results of the excavations owes almost everything to patient, well-documented articles and notes of De Rossi in his *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana* between 1863 and 1889.

There is hardly an aspect of the art and archeology of San Clemente which was not touched on by De Rossi, from the great mosaic in the apse of the present church to the Mithraeum two levels below⁶⁵. Much of what he reported in his *Bullettino* was

⁶⁴ See O. MARUCCHI, *Giovanni Battista de Rossi. Cenni biografici* (Rome 1903).

⁶⁵ *Mosaici cristiani e saggi dei pavimenti delle chiese di Roma* (Rome 1899), fascs XXIV, XXIX, etc. This volume consists of fascicules (27) published from time to time from June 1872 to December 1896.

the result of brilliant detective work. By combing the collections of inscriptions made by antiquarians of the 17th and 18th centuries he was able, for example, to establish the role of cardinal Anastasius in the construction of the present church at the beginning of the 12th century, and to provide, however mistakenly, a *terminus ante quem* for many of the frescoes in the old church, particularly those given by the De Rapiza family. Suspecting that the *Schola Cantorum* in the twelfth-century church really belonged to that of the fourth, he was able to show that the monogram on the wall of the *Schola* was that of pope John II (533-35), and that the lintel of an altar in the foundation-wall of the enclosure of the *Schola* was the gift of John when, as "Mercurius presbyter", he was "cardinal" of San Clemente.

De Rossi's most spectacular feat, however, was the reconstruction of the original dedication inscription in the time of pope Siricius (384-99) from fragments scattered all over the two churches: SALVO SIRICIO EPISCOPO ECCLESIAE SANCTAE GAUDENTIUS (?) PRAESBYTER SANCTO MARTYRI CLEMENTI HOC VOLVIT DEDICATUM (?). The fragment S was found in the lower church; the pieces SIR and ISC were in the pavement of the present church, ECCL was a part of the *Schola*, GA and MARTYR were in the marble chair in the apse, PRAESBYTER was on one of the slabs that roofed the canopy over the high altar, OC VOLVIT was in the church portico. All these fragments and whole words were of the same size and cut in the same square capital script with reddish or Damasan colouring. When filled out they form an inscription which is strikingly similar to another dedication of the time of Siricius at the church of S. Pudenziana.

All of these points (to some of which he returned in later years) appeared in a masterly article in September 1870, a year after Fr. Mullooly's more general book⁶⁶. In this, as in various other writings on San Clemente, De Rossi is scrupulous to give credit to Fr. Mullooly where credit was due: it was Fr. Mullooly who first noted the altar-lintel in the *Schola*; against all others it was Fr. Mullooly who first had suggested that the monogram

⁶⁶ "I monumenti scoperti sotto la basilica di S. Clemente studiati nella loro successione stratigrafica e cronologica", *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, 2nd ser., 1 (1870) 129-68, with twelve plates.

on the wall of *Schola* was Iohannes not Nicholas. As is clear from the eulogy of Fr. Mullooly and his book at the beginning of the article, De Rossi revered Fr. Mullooly for his determination and persistence, and, above all, for his sure archeological touch. There are times, indeed, when De Rossi seems simply to document Fr. Mullooly's hunches.

By the time this article and a brief, useful note on the new Mithraeum appeared in late 1870, Fr. Mullooly was preoccupied with other things. For some time he had been dismayed at what was taking place on the Italian political scene, as one may see from a short pamphlet which he drafted but never published on the statue of "Peter the Good Shepherd" which had been found in the rubble outside the "Dominicum" in the previous Summer of 1869. There is a perfunctory attempt to illustrate the Shepherd theme from patristic sources, but the tract on the whole is a plaidoyer for papal power⁶⁷. This is hardly to be wondered at. His devotion to the papacy is evident in his book on St. Clement and in his many unsigned newspaper articles. As well, he had been active in the affairs of the Irish Brigade of 1860 in the papal service, and was abreast of the doings of the large Irish contingent among the papal Zouaves, a photograph of a bivouac of a company of which was presented to him by a Captain Mullins in 1868 or 1869⁶⁸.

On 12 September 1870, just as the forces of the Risorgimento were brushing aside the token resistance of the Zouaves at the approaches to Rome, Fr. Mullooly made his first report ever to the papal Commission on archeology—a succinct and uninformative note to Pietro Ercole Visconti, the Commissioner, on his excavations during the Summer and his discovery of the Mithraeum at the beginning of September. On 29 October Ewing was paid for his painting of this last find. The final cartloads of rubble were removed to the dumping ground on 3 December. Although there are stray expenses until May 1879 for the illumination of the excavations and the like in the remaining pages of the slender "Scavi" account-book, and for an unsuccessful attempt in 1871 to stem the water that was seeping steadily into

⁶⁷ SCAR 42, 6.

⁶⁸ See SCAR 115 for many letters to Marshal Nugent and to Count McDonnell in 1859, etc.

the temple area, this, effectively, was the end of Fr. Mullooly's great excavations under San Clemente⁶⁹. There was a small excavation in the garden bordering on the Piazza San Clemente in the Spring of 1871, for which the new "Soprintendenza" of excavations and monuments gave permission on 17 February. He discovered, as an inscription on the wall states, the remains of various walls, some, perhaps, dating to the time of the Kings of Rome. When, on 16 May 1872, Pietro Rosa, the Superintendent, thanked Fr. Mullooly for some photographs of the work at San Clemente which he had sent him, he also asked for a report on recent work. Fr. Mullooly replied that all he had to report was summed up in the inscription he had set up, for he had given up the excavation at forty five palms (fifteen feet) because of water. Thanking him for the offer to recommend his work to the Ministry of Public Instruction for funds, Fr. Mullooly said that he hoped to do further work in the same place in the coming Winter⁷⁰.

There is no indication that he ever resumed this excavation or essayed any other in the remaining eight years of his life. After the hurly-burly of the excavation years, the last decade in fact of Fr. Mullooly's life is on the whole muted and grey. There was little or no time anyway for archeological work. All the money had been used up, his health was indifferent, and the political climate was depressing. For much of the decade, above all, he was occupied in the delicate task of saving San Clemente once more for the Irish Dominican province, this time, however, not against feckless "brigands", as in 1849, but the full legislative weight of a united Italy.

On 12 October 1870, three weeks after Rome had been taken in the name of Victor Emmanuel, Fr. Mullooly drafted the first of many memoranda to Italian and other authorities on the rights and legal status of the Irish Dominican community of SS. Sisto and Clemente.

⁶⁹ SCAR 42, 25; 41, 3, pp. 25, 32, 33.

⁷⁰ SCAR 42, 26.

VII

FR. MULLOOLY, FR. BURKE, AND SAN CLEMENTE, 1858 - 1874

During all the exciting years of excavations from 1857 to 1870, the convent and community of San Clemente did not fall apart or become neglected. Rather they in their own way prospered too.

Fr. Folan, who had arrived as Prior just as Fr. Mullooly was first making his discoveries known to the Commission on Sacred Archeology, resigned on 15 September 1858 and left for Ireland¹. The community, which was depleted a little by the departure of Fr. Borgogna and the three English Dominican students for La Quercia on 5 November², recouped some of the loss towards the end of the month when three young professed novices (Michael Hughes, Hyacinth Condon and Thomas A. O'Callaghan) arrived from Tallaght, fresh from the hands of Fr. Burke³. A month later, and without, so far as I can ascertain, any great fuss, Fr. Mullooly was appointed Prior once more by Fr. Jandel⁴, and would remain in office for the next six years. Apart for a short interval from November 1859 to May 1860 when Fr. James Brady held the post, Fr. Mullooly was also bursar for those years and, indeed, continued as bursar until two years before his death in 1880.

What with the excavations, the appeals for funds, the commissions on behalf of many bishops, religious and friends, the

¹ SCAR 52, p. 91.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 91-2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

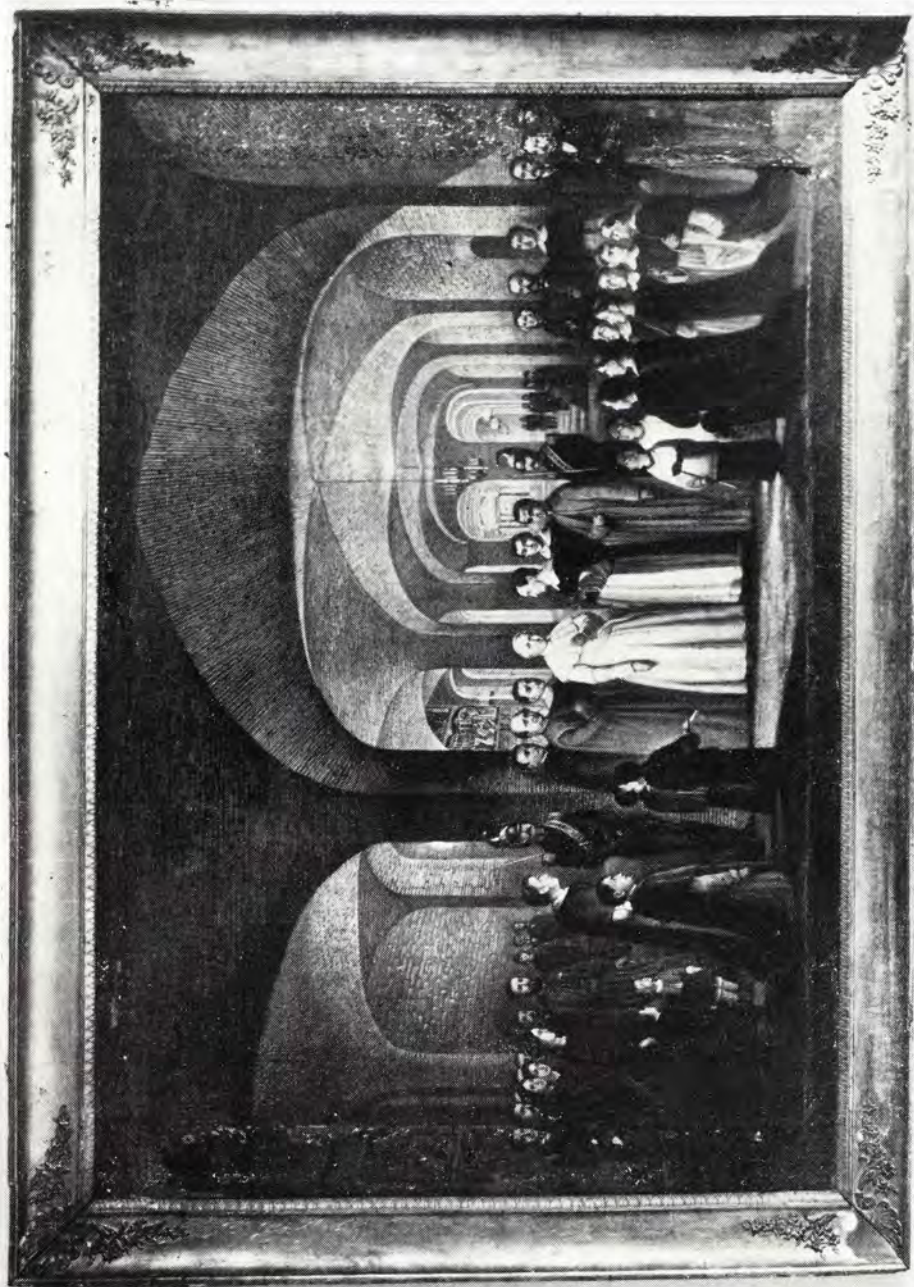
⁴ AGOP XIII, p. 145.

keeping of the various account books (and he kept all there were), the ceremonies, the visitors and the articles for the *Sligo Champion*, the *Morning News* of Dublin and sundry other publications, these six years from 1858 to 1864 were hectic ones for Fr. Mullooly. But he seems to have thrived on his multifarious activities as prior, bursar, archeologist, journalist, host. With the one regrettable exception of the day-to-day progress of the excavations, for which no diary or report is extant, everything Fr. Mullooly did was done and recorded with meticulous attention to detail, whether it was (to take the years 1859) paying for an inscription, done in 1857, to commemorate Benedict XIII's overnight stay in the bursar's (now prior's) room in 1722, or putting new tables in the refectory, or getting habits made for the new students, or keeping Fr. Hyacinth Besson, who was then completing the frescoes in the chapter room at S. Sisto, regularly supplied with wads of tobacco⁵.

These splendid paintings of Fr. Besson, which caused such a stir in Rome at the time, did not entail any more outlay on the part of San Clemente than a dozen or so plugs of tobacco, some soap and assorted painting materials: at the most, a hundred scudi. In fact S. Sisto as a whole, thanks to Fr. Mullooly's management, some of which was chronicled earlier in this work, was no strain whatever on the purse of San Clemente. The contract of 1852 with the municipality of Rome had brought in a steady 400 scudi a year from the five gardens and various storage areas. A new contract in 1859, while releasing some of these areas to San Clemente, guaranteed the same amount for the gardens and the remaining storage places⁶. As a result, San Clemente was free to let certain buildings or parts of buildings which had hitherto been part of the lease to the municipality: the defunct *cartiera* or paper-mill, for example, which the Apostolic Camera had set up in 1835, was leased on occasion for as much as 120 scudi a year; the great and hallowed refectory of St. Dominic (later used, to some Dominican scandal, by the municipality as a stable for its horse-transport, and now, since 1935, happily restored by public subscription to some of its original

⁵ SCAR 340, pp. 131, 132, 129, etc.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 27, 62.



Drawing by Eving, Photo by Toni Nicolini.

Plate 1 - Pope Pius IX in Lower Basilica (see p. 219).

dignity) was let from time to time for storage and other purposes, in 1860, for instance, when Fr. Mullooly rented it out for a month at the goodly sum of 70 scudi⁷.

With the revenue from S. Sisto, rents from Tivoli and other properties, and returns from the vineyard and sundry investments, the community of San Clemente may have been too poor, as Fr. Mullooly often repeated, to have undertaken the excavation of the church, but it was not for all that wholly penurious. From 1854, when Fr. Mullooly had been complimented by Fr. Jandel for putting San Clemente on a solid financial basis, until 1864, when he was succeeded as prior for three years by Fr. Burke, there was a steady surplus each year (with the exception of 1856 and 1857, when there were abnormal expenses due to the arrival of the students), rising from just over 1000 scudi in 1854 to 1394 in 1861, 1264 in 1862, 1369 in 1863, 1884 in 1864 (curiously, the income barely covered expenses in 1865, 1866, 1867, and did not recover again until 1868).

This is not a bad state of affairs when one remembers that the students from Ireland were lodged free of charge (a plan introduced in 1852 which continued until the 1930s)⁸, though, of course, the house could count on reimbursement from Dublin for abnormal expenses such as clothing, medicine or travel⁹. There were occasional levies, too, to be taken care of as the house grew more prosperous, such as an annual sum (378 scudi each for 1862, 1863, 1864) for the upkeep of the students at Esker in Galway¹⁰ or 600 scudi in 1864 for the maintenance of four Irish students at Saint Maximin near Toulouse¹¹.

San Clemente, in fact, was so financially respectable by 1860 that, by a nice twist of fate, the Irish Province, which in 1841 and 1851 would have been more than happy to unload it to the first Dominican comer, turned to San Clemente for financial buttressing when its economy was threatened by the debt on the new house at Tallaght and various other liabilities. On 8 February 1861 a rescript (citing a papal faculty of 8 October 1860) was sent to Fr. Mullooly by Jandel, allowing San Clemente to pledge

⁷ *Ibid.*, 350 (no pagination).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 44: letter of White, 28.5.1858.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 350, pp. 77, 92, etc.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 350, p. 189.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, no pagination.

its possessions for 30000 scudi (roughly 5500 pounds sterling), as petitioned by the provincial chapter in Ireland¹². In the following June permission was further received from Jandel to donate 476 scudi to the provincial Fr. B. Russell (thereby reducing the surplus for that year to 898 scudi)¹³. Ten years later, as we shall see, when Tallaght had not yet shaken itself free of debt, San Clemente would again come to the rescue, this time to wipe out the debt entirely.

Fr. Mullooly's stock had risen higher, too. On 8 October 1861 the provincial council, given the uncertain temper of the times, authorized him to take any steps he should think fit to safeguard the goods of San Clemente, for example, by obtaining a papal rescript to hold the goods in his own name just as Fr. Joseph Taylor "had held them and saved them" during the Roman Republic some sixty years earlier¹⁴. (The petition, a draft of which is extant¹⁵, came to nothing, but a similar rescript was granted in 1868 to Fr. Mullooly, Fr. Michael Costello and Fr. Vincent Doherty¹⁶).

There were, all the same, some criticisms of Fr. Mullooly, for he was, it must be admitted, a shade too immersed for everyone's comfort in the whole business of the excavations. As the Dominican bishop of Demarara in British Guiana, John Hynes, wrote him from London on 1 August 1860, "What on earth has become of you? Are you burrowing in the subterranea of S. Clemente undermining the foundations of the venerable basilica? Or have you gone to chaplain the Irish Brigade at Spoleto or Ancona?"¹⁷.

Dr. Hynes, of course, was merely being playful, and a year later showed his affection for Fr. Mullooly and San Clemente (though his stay in Rome had not been at San Clemente but at La Pace in 1819-1821, under O'Finan) by presenting the church with an organ ("remarkable, even in Rome, for its tone and power", Mullooly wrote in the *Sligo Champion* of 7 December 1861) which was placed in the balcony over the door from the

¹² SCAR 28, 96.

¹³ Ibid., 350, p. 169.

¹⁴ Ibid., 25, 199.

¹⁵ Ibid., 30A, 27.

¹⁶ Ibid., 25, 109.

¹⁷ Ibid., 23.

courtyard¹⁸. Fr. Jandel, however, was somewhat less amused by Fr. Mullooly's preoccupations, and, for that matter, by the whole way of life at San Clemente. Neither Mullooly nor San Clemente had quite fulfilled his expectations, apparently.

Writing to Fr. Goodman, then provincial, on 5 September 1861 (a week or two in fact before Fr. Mullooly made the great discovery of the St. Clement fresco), Fr. Jandel expressed some unease about a report that many students were being sent from Ireland to San Clemente that year. If this is true, he said, then "you should also take care to send two or three priests as well and Frs. Mullins or Burke as Master of Novices". Otherwise, he concluded, there is a danger of ruining the piety, the concentration and perhaps the health of these youngsters at San Clemente¹⁹.

At Jandel's suggestion, indeed, four students who were destined for San Clemente were sent instead to Saint Maximin (where the two who persisted, Dominic Slattery and Vincent Prendergast, joined with the other students in signing a letter of thanks to Fr. Mullooly on 29 May 1864 for photographs which he had sent of the frescoes)²⁰. And in the year following, when the question of where to send the Tallaght students came up again, Fr. Jandel suggested on 6 August 1864 to the provincial (now Fr. B. Russell) that it would be sufficient, if the two remaining students at Saint Maximin were diverted to Rome, to send one student to San Clemente from Ireland; he should be accompanied by Fr. Burke who, "as we agreed last year, will give the afternoon classes and, if you wish, could also be prior". Failing the transfer of the students at Saint Maximin, then he allowed that all the students at Tallaght could be assigned to San Clemente. But, he warned Fr. Russell, San Clemente would not be in a "perfect state" for these students unless a prior were appointed such as Fr. Burke or, "if his health keeps up and he can be pried loose from Cork", Fr. Patrick Conway²¹.

Needless to say, what was worrying Fr. Jandel once more was the question of the priorship of San Clemente. Fr. Mull-

¹⁸ The organ was built by Priori, the builder of the organs at St Peter's and St John Latern's. The total cost was 577 scudi, of which bishop Hynes contributed 250, promising to give something more later on: SCAR 350, p. 190.

¹⁹ AGOP XIII, 161.

²⁰ SCAR 42, 12.

²¹ AGOP IV, 282, p. 315.

ooly's term of office was coming to an end in the Autumn of 1864, and Jandel really did not feel that it would be for the good of San Clemente and the spiritual wellbeing of the students to continue him in office.

A handy way out of the difficulty seemed to present itself in that Summer of 1864 when Fr. Mullooly was unexpectedly and unanimously elected provincial of the province of St. Joseph in America. As soon as he received notice of it on 2 August, Fr. Jandel confirmed the election at once ("confirmare festinavimus")²². In spite of the gratifying unanimity of the vote, Fr. Mullooly, with his church half-excavated, was not to be enticed. As Fr. Jandel wrote confidentially to Fr. Russell on 10 August, Fr. Mullooly flatly and formally declined the position. Instead he suggested Fr. Goodman, a suggestion which was not at all to Fr. Jandel's liking, his own preferences, he said to Fr. Russell, running to Frs. White, Conway, Carbery or Thomas Smith²³.

If Fr. Mullooly's refusal of the American provincialate was of no help to Fr. Jandel in solving the San Clemente problem, it may have hardened him in his resolve not to reappoint Fr. Mullooly to the priorship. Fr. Conway of Cork still remained the General's first choice, but when he found Fr. Conway unwilling to accept the office on his arrival in Rome with Fr. Burke and the students at the beginning of September, he choose Fr. Burke as prior on 5 October, making Fr. Mullooly subprior and bursar, with Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan as sub-master of students²⁴. Since in the original scheme of things Fr. Burke was to have taught the afternoon class in theology, an Italian Dominican, Pio Capri, was assigned later in the month to San Clemente to take this burden off the new prior (who was also master of novices).

The idea of a spell in Rome or out of Ireland for the new prior, Thomas (Tom) Burke, had been in the air for some years. By 1860, when he was not yet thirty years of age, Fr. Burke was so overworked and ill that the then provincial (Fr. Goodman) expressed fears for his health and Fr. Jandel seriously thought of inviting him to Rome in order to get him away from all the

²² SCAR 28, 211; AGOP IV, 271, p. 195.

²³ AGOP IV, 282, pp. 219-220.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 232.

demands on his time and the endless invitations to preach²⁵. Three years later, and to Fr. Burke's evident pleasure, Fr. Jandel again suggested to Fr. Burke the possibility of "working outside Ireland for a few years", but it was not until 17 August 1864 that Fr. Burke learned for sure that these years were to be spent in Rome as professor of theology and master of students at San Clemente²⁶.

Fr. Burke, with Fr. Conway of Cork, Fr. Michael Lynch of Tralee and four students (Vincent Flood, Augustine Wheeler, Dominic Molloy and Vincent Kenny) arrived in Rome in early September 1864, and was soon joined by Dominic Slattery and Vincent Prendergast from Saint Maximin. He got "his patents", as he put it, on 6 October, and was read in as prior at once. Although he was prior, he reported to Fr. Russell a few days later, he was living at Fr. Jandel's request in the novitiate. Noting in passing that the total cost of the journey from Dublin to Rome for himself and his six companions was £90.16s.2d, he jotted down for the provincial the house horarium which he had drawn up and which allowed, he said, "some five to six hours for study"²⁷:

4.00 a.m.	Matins
6.30	Prime, followed by 25 mins. mental prayer and the Conventual Mass
9.00	School at the Minerva until 10.00
11.45	Lauds, Terce and Sext
12.00 p.m.	Dinner, with recreation until 1.30
1.30	None and Vespers, after which study until 4.00
4.00	Class in theology at San Clemente
5.00	Walk until 6.15
6.15	Study until 7.00
7.00	Rosary, meditation
7.30	Supper, followed by recreation until 8.15
9.00	Compline and bed.

²⁵ Ibid., XIII, 161.

²⁶ Ibid., XIII, 162.

²⁷ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome", undated, but within the month of October, since he uses "inst." for the date of his "patents".

Fr. Burke, in this letter to Fr. Russell, conveyed the news that Fr. Mullooly was "most kind and considerate in everything"; he was sure "that Fr. Mullooly and I will pull together". They did, more or less. W. J. Fitzpatrick, in his egregious life of Fr. Burke (1885), pictures Fr. Burke as poking a lot of fun at Fr. Mullooly and often guying him. Probably this is not far from the truth. Canon Brownlow, one of Fitzpatrick's oral sources, who had been a close friend of Mullooly's and who later, as bishop of Clifton in England, wrote an excellent little book on *The Basilica of San Clemente in Rome* (London 1900), described Fr. Mullooly to Fitzpatrick as "very matter of fact" and rather slow to see the point of a joke (particularly of the more serpentine kind which Fr. Burke sometimes indulged in). On one occasion, Dr. Brownlow relates, Fr. Mullooly, who was not exactly handsome, was inordinately pleased when Fr. Burke murmured one day that a bust of Adonis which had recently been found looked like him, and afterwards could be heard informing visitors who (often primed by Fr. Burke) asked him what the bust was: "Adonis - I am told it bears a striking resemblance to me"²⁸.

For all that Fitzpatrick, in his pages on Burke at San Clemente, leaves the impression of a rollicking, gregarious three years, full of parties and carousals and general larking about. Fr. Burke was an extremely serious and sensitive man at base, and was much in demand in Rome as a preacher and spiritual director. To say that he was happy in Rome would be an exaggeration. There were clearly times when he was miserable: "I assure you in confidence, he wrote to the provincial in May 1866, I have a somewhat difficult card to play at times between the General on one side and Giuseppe [Mullooly] on the other"²⁹. Fr. Jandel certainly had not been pleased with Fr. Mullooly's refusal of the American election, particularly since it had turned out to be very difficult to find someone suitable to take his place³⁰. He was probably less pleased still when, with the assistance of an old Dominican friend, Cardinal Guidi, who presented the supplication, Fr. Mullooly petitioned pope Pius IX six months

²⁸ W. J. FITZPATRICK, *The Life of The Very Reverend Thomas Nicholas Burke O.P.*, 2 vv. (London 1885), I, pp. 245-304: "Fr Burke at San Clemente", p. 258.

²⁹ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome", 7.5.1866.

³⁰ See letter of 18.11.1864: AGOP IV, 282, p. 232.

later (December 1864) for perpetual incorporation in San Clemente, and was readily granted a papal chirograph to that effect on 22 December³¹. Now that he was irremovably a part of San Clemente, Fr. Mullooly began to air some of his ideas for San Clemente to a not too receptive Fr. Burke. One of his proposals was to run "the Fathers' corridor out as far as the road... about 30 feet" (to the Piazza S. Clemente, that is). It occasioned a terse comment from Fr. Burke. Such a scheme, he wrote to the provincial on 3 July 1865, was "wholly unnecessary and altogether foolish". But, he added gently, "in order not to offend him I hold my tongue, particularly as the General will not hear of it and so I need not enter at all"³².

All in all, that first year at San Clemente was not, by any measure, an easy one for Fr. Burke. For one thing, as he wrote in that same letter, "the expenses for the past six months have been 1000 scudi in excess of receipts" (but not, he hastened to add, through any fault of Fr. Mullooly), with the result that he was unable to send two young priests back to Ireland until some money had come from there for their journey. For another, the health problem had recurred which would bring him to an early death at the age of 52 in 1883, as is all too clear from a letter of his to the provincial in the Spring of 1865. "The General was speaking to me some days hence", he wrote, "about myself and St. Clement's. It is a long story". The provincial should know, first of all, that he had done rather well since coming to Rome, and that he had "endeavoured to keep things together and to have everything right". But he should also know that his health had deteriorated after Passion Sunday with inflammation of the bowels, and that he had not had "an hour's health since". What he really dreaded, he said, was "the summer heats". He hoped he would be able to go to Ireland sometime towards the end of June when Frs. Power, Slattery and Prendergast (who would be ordained at Pentecost) had taken their lectorate examination.

On top of all this there was San Clemente itself. The more he saw of it and its way of life, the more embedded he became in his old conviction that it was no place for young students.

³¹ SCAR 25, 213: papal chirograph, with attestation of Guidi of 22.8.1873. Guidi had been one of Mullooly's teachers at the Minerva.

³² Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome", 3.7.1865.

San Clemente, he went on in this letter, "is not favourable to an observant community", first of all because seven or eight persons are not enough to keep observance up (and San Clemente cannot support any more than that), second, the young people are distracted there, "running after music and sights", third, there was "no tradition and no mechanism of observance", finally, there was the whole question of the influx of visitors, not to speak of the "petty nationalism" arising from isolation, and so on. Perhaps the best thing to do would be to shift the present students out of San Clemente to Ireland, but, he warned the provincial, "If you call them home from St. Clement's they will have neither knowledge, love or experience of the observances of the Order". He himself would prefer to see them sent to Santa Sabina: "If they go home after a year at Sta. Sabina they will have seen and tasted the beauty and glories of a perfect and established observance and they will have had a strict spiritual life for that year"³³.

He returned to the subject in a letter of 29 April: "If I go home in the Summer, he wrote the provincial, we must have more than a long talk about St. Clement's and its prospects". Although he allowed that the house and the province had "a faithful son in Fr. Mullooly", yet he doubted whether San Clemente was "an advantage to us". It was so easy to fritter time away there fulfilling commissions, being gracious to bearers of letters of introduction, shepherding the crowds that the excavations "have drawn upon us". Tallaght, he felt, was the answer, "our best and our only hope"; but a Tallaght properly furnished and "thoroughly officered and governed"³⁴.

Fr. Burke did not go to Ireland that Summer of 1865, as he had hoped. Most of the time was spent with the students in the summer residence at Tivoli (6 July - 10 October, at a cost of 512 scudi). On the return to Rome in October, preparations were already under way for the visit (his third) of Pius IX on St. Clement's day, a baroque eye-witness account of which may be found in Fr. Nolan's book³⁵.

The more sober report in the *Osservatore Romano* two days later (25 November 1865) says that the pope was received by

³³ Ibid., undated letter, but shortly after Passion Sunday (2 Apr.).

³⁴ Ibid., 29.4.1865.

³⁵ *The Irish Dominicans in Rome*, pp. 136-140.

Fr. Mullooly. Fr. Burke, surprisingly, is not mentioned, but he is plainly to be seen in the large painting of the pope's visit to the lower church done by Ewing³⁶. The setting is the nave, now beautifully vaulted, lighted and spruce where a bare four years before it had been a dank, rubble-filled unknown. The St. Alexis fresco and a few fragments are visible on the left wall. The new high altar can be seen in the background but not the entrance to the burial vault in front of it where Fr. Mullooly now lies. The focus of the picture is the pope, relaxed and smiling, with Fr. Mullooly to his left, hand outstretched, doing the cicerone. Fr. Burke, withdrawn and a little out of it all, stands just behind him, while Fr. Capri, completing the "staff" of San Clemente, is on the pope's immediate right. Two papal chamberlains, monsignor Talbot and Borromeo (later cardinal), are also in this central group, with two Noble Guards on the flanks.

The rest of the community of San Clemente is in the foreground. Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan (later Mullooly's immediate successor as prior of San Clemente in 1880; d. 1916 as bishop of Cork), the submaster of novices, stands apart, slightly hunched, to the front left of the scene. Beside him, but kneeling, is either Fra Antonino or Fra Giacinto, both of whom were members of the community from 1860 and would continue to be for some years afterwards (Fra Fredian Giurlani, after some forty years at San Clemente, had died the previous April). In the right foreground are the six students (though which is which I do not know): Fr. Hyacinth Power (d. Australia 1869), Brothers Henry Owens (d. Toulouse 1867), Antoninus Wheeler (d. 1889), Augustine Coveney (d. 1900), Vincent Flood (later prior of San Clemente; d. 1907 as archbishop of Port of Spain, Trinidad), and the longest-lived of all, Pius Kenny (d. 1933), from whom Fitzpatrick obtained some of his information about Fr. Burke at San Clemente. To the right of this group, against an appropriate backdrop of the 12th-century rubble wall that supports the north line of columns in the present church, are the two mainstays of Fr. Mullooly's archeological endeavour over the years: Giovanni Battista De Rossi and Francesco Fontana. Further down on their left is the Dominican historian and archeologist Tommaso Masetti, with the Signora De Rossi at the end of the line.

³⁶ See Plate 1.

The Summer following, that of 1866, was one of the most bizarre ones of these years at San Clemente. From Easter (1 April) to October or November Fr. Mullooly was around San Clemente very little, though one would not suspect this from the immaculate and punctually-kept account books of the house, the sacristy and the vineyard. In fact he was at the Torrione vineyard all this while trying to put together a book on St. Clement, the basilica and the excavations (it eventually appeared three years later). Fr. Burke commented on all of this in a letter of 7 May to the provincial: "We scarcely ever see Fr. Mullooly nowadays. He has been for the last month living at the vineyard. He is engaged on a history of St. Clement—a work that requires great labour and study. He read some parts of it for me—but it is hard to judge of a book from one or two extracts. I don't think it will take ("*entre nous*")"³⁷. As we shall see, Fr. Burke was even more pessimistic when the book was placed on sale in 1869, but, again, was quite wide of the mark. Fr. Mullooly's volume would be a resounding success, as were his anonymous translation of E. Cartier's life in French of Fra Angelico (*Life of Beato Angelico de Fiesole of the Order of Friars Preachers*, translated by a Member of the same Order from the French, London: John Philip, 1865), and his slender and not very informative *Brevi notizie delle antiche pitture scoperte nella basilica sotteranea di San Clemente*, which was published in Italian, French and English in Rome in the year he began his *opus magnum* and was, as the wrapper states, "Sold for the benefit of the excavations".

During his labours at the vineyard, Fr. Mullooly, apparently, was ill for a while, and received a nice note from Fr. Jandel on 22 September, hoping that "he would get well more quickly than myself"³⁸. Fr. Burke, too, was away for most of the Summer and Autumn, as were his three remaining students, Flood, Kenny and Wheeler. Henry Owens left for La Quercia on 29 June and thence for Belgium on 11 September. Frs. O'Callaghan and Coveney departed for Ireland on 20 July. The day previous the students Flood, Kenney and Wheeler went with Fr. Hyacinth Power to La Quercia and only came back on 21 November (all

³⁷ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome".

³⁸ SCAR 25, 215.

for a modest cost, all found, of 90 scudi)³⁹. San Clemente, in fact, was deserted, save for Fr. Capri, the brothers Antonino and Giacinto, and the new arrival Fra Niccola.

Fr. Burke had left for Ireland on 5 June to attend the provincial chapter in Cork on 23 June as an emissary of the General, and did not return again to Rome until the middle of November. In fact there was some doubt, not least in his own mind, whether he would return at all, for the chapter had formally requested the General that he should be released from the priorship of San Clemente and assigned to Tallaght⁴⁰. In a long letter of 2 July to Fr. Jandel, Fr. Burke expressed his pleasure with this petition. Tallaght, he said, had a debt of 700 pounds sterling, and he felt that if he were in Tallaght, he and Fr. Mullins could clear the debt between them in eight or nine months. With respect to the students at San Clemente, he had it all worked out, and proffered a list of suggestions about where they should be sent, in the event that he and Fr. O'Callaghan should remain in Ireland, as the chapter had hoped. The only student he would leave in Rome was Antoninus Wheeler, who, in any case, was near to ordination⁴¹.

Fr. Jandel, however, was not favourable to the chapter's request, and gave many reasons to Fr. Russell, who was provincial again, why Fr. Burke should return to Rome in the Autumn. But when the Autumn came, Fr. Burke had taken on so many commitments (to Cardinal Cullen, for example, as he explained in a letter of 8 October to the General from Dublin)⁴² that he did not reach Rome until 8 November, more than a month after the time he was expected. He travelled back via Woodchester in England, where he was very ill for some days with the usual inflammation of the bowels, and Paris, where on 4 November he found a stinging letter of 16 October awaiting him from Fr. Jandel. To Fr. Jandel the delay, of which he had no warning, was outrageous. The work (some translations from Italian) for Cardinal Cullen, he said, could have been done in Rome. The English Dominican Fr. Peter Paul Mackey could have been in

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ AGOP XIII, 162.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

Rome long ago for his studies had he not had to wait for Fr. Burke at Woodchester. And what about the San Clemente students at La Quercia who were fretting to return home "after four months of dissipation"? With Fr. Mullooly at the vineyard and no knowledge of when their prior was to return, it was not possible, Fr. Jandel said, to recall them, even though Fr. Capri was quite ready to begin teaching at once had they been recalled⁴³.

Fr. Burke, duly chastened, returned in November to the smallest community of his three years as prior. There were no students that Autumn, nor would there be for another eleven years, when Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan went back to Rome with five young students on 3 November 1877⁴⁴. And when Fr. Burke departed finally on 7 July 1867, as his term of office was drawing to a close, only Antoninus Wheeler remained of the Irish students of the previous three years. Fr. Wheeler himself left San Clemente in May 1868, Brother Antonio Dante of the province of Lombardy in October (after a year at San Clemente, where he was solemnly professed in September 1867), and, after four years of service as professor of theology, Fr. Pio Capri in November.

For the next ten years the community consisted of six or seven men: Fr. Mullooly, Fr. Vincent Doherty (from 1867 until his death in 1875), Fr. Michael Costello, the distinguished antiquarian (who arrived in July 1867⁴⁵ suffering from deafness, and remained there until his death in 1906 at the age of 82), and four (sometimes five) brothers, notably Fra Giacinto, Fra Antonino and Fra Natale.

Fr. Mullooly became prior of San Clemente once more after Fr. Burke's departure, but not at once. For some eighteen months afterwards he was simply subprior and superior, filling a gap until a decision should be reached about the priorship. Fr. Jandel, in a letter to Fr. White (who was provincial once more) on 7 November 1868, allowed that he had been remiss in not making an appointment at once, but, as Fr. Burke could explain, San Clemente was "a very special problem", and he would prefer not to move without hearing the view of Fr. White⁴⁶.

⁴³ AGOP IV. 283.

⁴⁴ SCAR 54, p. 100.

⁴⁵ SCAR 223.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

With no students to be looked after at San Clemente, Fr. White was presumably less hesitant about Fr. Mullooly than he had been twelve years earlier, so Fr. Mullooly was duly appointed prior once more on 30 December 1868, and in fact did not cease to be prior until his death in 1880.

Fr. Tom Burke returned to Rome twice within two years of his departure, first at the request of Jandel as a member of the commission for the reform of the Dominican constitutions in early 1869⁴⁷, then, later in the same year, as theologian to Dr. Leahy of Dromore during the First Vatican Council.

His first stay in Rome in 1869 was from 7 January to 16 April⁴⁸. Among other things he had instructions from the provincial to try to touch Fr. Mullooly, now that the finances of San Clemente were known to be sound once more, for some money to help pay off the debt on Tallaght. In a letter of 13 January to the provincial Fr. Burke describes the reaction, measured as usual, of Fr. Mullooly ("Giuseppe"): "When I went on to speak of the money question for Tallaght, the General told me he did not wish to interfere nor to ask Giuseppe for money and that he left it to myself. Accordingly I spoke and Giuseppe bids me to say that he will write to you within this week. Of course he made the usual poor mouth, and I believe the vintage was very poor everywhere this year. Still he will do all he can. He offered to give me money I gave to the General for Kenny, but I declined as he hinted that perhaps you would be satisfied with that and not ask any more"⁴⁹.

Here as elsewhere Fr. Burke underestimated Fr. Mullooly.

Actually San Clemente had had a surplus in 1868 of 2488 lire (= Lit.), and Fr. Mullooly, for all his canniness, was able to produce some money just as he had done some years earlier for the provincial, the Esker students and those at Toulouse. He sent a first instalment of Lit. 1292.50 (£ 50) on 20 January 1869, ten days after Fr. Burke had broached the matter, and a further Lit. 1970.50 (£ 79) on 12 June, and wound up the year with a debit of Lit. 745.

By the end of 1869 Fr. Burke was back in Rome once more,

⁴⁷ AGOP IV, 286: letters of 17.10. and 7.11.1868.

⁴⁸ SCAR 351; AGOP IV, 281.

⁴⁹ Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome": 13.1.1869.

this time for the Vatican Council. Consequently, in view of this deficit, he was far from cheerful about further money from San Clemente for Tallaght when he wrote the provincial on 18 February 1870: "Fr. Mullooly, he said, has not sold the wine as yet and to my personal knowledge he has not a penny as he is, of course, spending on the vineyard which is being dug, etc. He certainly treats the bishops in fine style"⁵⁰.

Fr. Mullooly was, indeed, short of ready money. But it was early in the year when Fr. Burke voiced his doubts, and, as well, he seems to have been unaware that the bishops who were housed with him at San Clemente (Errington of Trepizond, coadjutor of Westminster, Leahy of Dromore, Moriarty of Kerry and O'Connell of Grass Valley, California) were paying for their keep, however modestly. As it happens, Fr. Mullooly sold the wine later in the year, the bishops faithfully paid up for the six months' keep (Lit. 3750 all told, for December-January to June), and Fr. Mullooly not only ended the year with a surplus of Lit. 7661.50 but also sent Tallaght a gift of Lit. 3357.50 (£ 135), which was more or less what the bishops had paid for their treatment in "fine style".

This was not the end of the gifts to Tallaght. More followed in 1871, 1872 and 1873. In all Fr. Mullooly and San Clemente contributed Lit. 17573 over the five years 1869-1873, thus (at the then rate of 25 lire to the pound sterling) clearing the total Tallaght debt of £ 700 of which Fr. Burke had spoken to the General after the provincial chapter in Cork in June 1866. But generosity has its own reward. San Clemente was not at all impoverished as a result. It had a surplus of Lit. 3255 in 1874, 6535 in 1875, 16547 in 1876, and was able to buy a new vineyard in 1877 for Lit. 32200⁵¹.

On this, his second visit to Rome in 1869, Fr. Burke arrived on 11 November and stayed with Fr. Mullooly and the four bishops at San Clemente until 5 June 1870. While making a ten-day retreat at Santa Sabina after his arrival he was presented with a copy, hot from the press, of *St. Clement Pope and Martyr and his Basilica in Rome*, which he had last heard of some three

⁵⁰ Ibid., 18.2.1870.

⁵¹ The figures for these years are drawn from SCAR 351, the Master Ledger for 1868-1898.

years earlier when Fr. Mullooly was sweating over it in the Torrione vineyard. He had thought then that the book would not "take". Now he was sure of it: "I was astonished, and indeed horrified, he wrote to the provincial Fr. White from his retreat at Santa Sabina, to find that Fr. Mullooly had printed that queer foolish book of his about St. Clement's. He has stuck my unfortunate name on to it. It will be a queer production. If it be let into the hands of a reviewer, Mullooly is ruined forever"⁵².

For all its reticences and longueurs, Fr. Mullooly's book, on the contrary, was a distinct success, and a second edition was called for within four years. And whatever Fr. Burke may have thought of it in private, he surely made amends by buying twelve copies for presentation or resale on 5 June 1870, just as he was leaving for Ireland, at what, I suspect, was a goodly discount price: 3.50 lire each (about eleven shillings)⁵³.

Although the two were far apart in outlook, it does seem that Fr. Burke in fact had developed a deep affection for the older man. He wrote him time and again, and while on his famous preaching tour of North America in the 1870s regularly sent him the lengthy newspaper reports of his preaching engagements and of his celebrated public lectures against Dr. Froude. On 27 February 1871, in a delightful letter, he told Fr. Mullooly that he had managed to sell some of the copies of *St. Clement*. Congratulating Fr. Mullooly on his "escape from Ardagh" (he had been offered the bishopric of his native diocese), Fr. Burke signed himself "Gratefully and affectionately yours". Four months later he would journey to London on Fr. Mullooly's behalf to present a petition of his to the British Foreign Minister, Lord Granville.

Fr. Mullooly and Fr. Burke probably were the two outstanding products of the Irish Dominican province in the 19th century, and it is somehow fitting to find that they were bracketed together in 1873 when the Irish Province petitioned the Dominican Order to give them the honorary degree of Master in Theology, an award granted to them both on 12 January 1874⁵⁴.

More than three years had now passed since the end of the excavations and the change of government in Rome. They had

⁵² Tallaght, Provincial Archives, "Burke-Rome".

⁵³ SCAR 352 (Day Book 1862-1869), Fr Burke's account.

⁵⁴ AGOP IV, 271, p. 241.

not been easy ones for Fr. Mullooly and his small community. Just as the Vatican Council was putting the final touches to the constitution on papal infallibility, the France-Prussian war had broken out on 15 July 1870, and since Napoleon III had need of every man he could muster, the French garrison which had protected Rome and Pius IX since 1849 began to leave by ship for France from Civitavecchia on 4 August. The French defeat at Sedan on 2 September meant that Rome and the papal states in general were at the mercy of Victor Emmanuel and the advocates of the unification of Italy. Because, as he said, the danger of revolutionary disturbances had become greater now that the French had departed, Victor Emmanuel proposed to the pope that his troops should occupy all the important places within the Patrimony of St. Peter. When the pope rejected the proposal, the Piedmontese moved on Rome, which, after a token resistance by the papal Zouaves under General Kanzler, was taken in the name of Victor Emmanuel on 20 September 1870.

Naturally, Fr. Mullooly and the heads of the various Irish, English and Scottish institutions in Rome feared at once that there would be an extension now to Rome of the law of 7 July 1866 which declared that "Orders, corporations, regular and secular congregations, and all other entities which practise a common life and have an ecclesiastical character, are no longer recognized in the state. All houses and properties pertaining to all such orders, corporations and congregations are suppressed"⁵⁵.

As early as August 1870 Fr. Mullooly had written Mr. Clarke Jervoise, the British Chargé d'Affaires in Rome, asking if the British Government would take any steps to protect British ecclesiastical property in Rome should the Piedmontese forces occupy it⁵⁶. Jervoise had replied on 1 September that on three occasions in recent times Her Majesty's Government had instructed its agent in Rome to protect such British interests: in 1849, 1866, and on 22 August of the present year. In the latter instance Earl Granville, the Foreign Minister, had stated plainly to Jervoise,

⁵⁵ *Regio Decreto per la soppressione degli Ordini e Corporazioni religiose*, 7 Luglio 1866.

⁵⁶ SCAR 62: an unnumbered series of letters and documents relative to the suppression, from which, with some exceptions, most of the details which follow are taken.

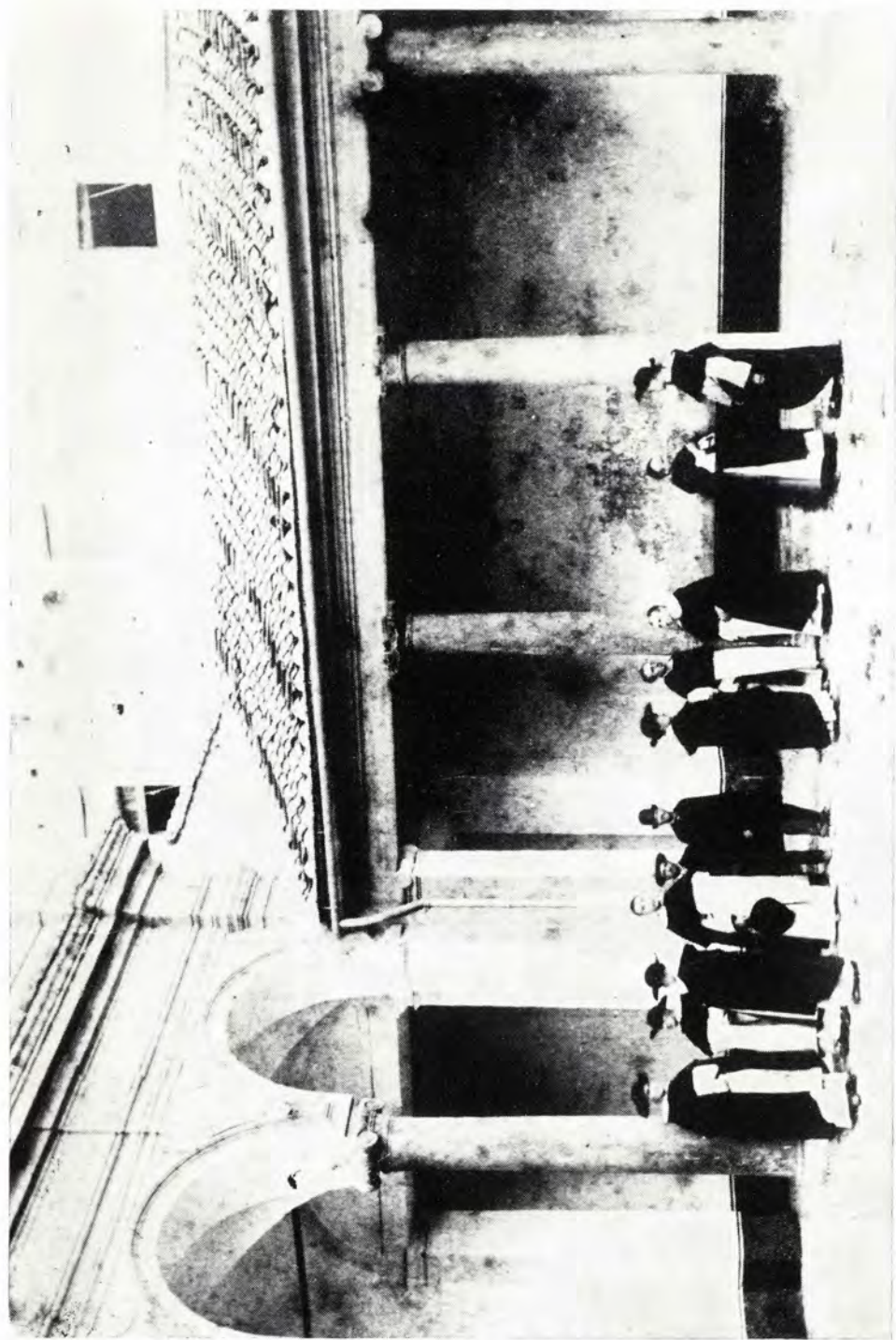


Plate 2 - Group taken in Cortile in 1878 (see p. 237).

"You will find, in the archives under your charge, a despatch from Viscount Palmerston to Sir George Hamilton, of the 9th of January, 1849, and another from Lord Stanley to Mr. [Odo] Russell of the 19th of November, 1866, having reference to the protection of British ecclesiastical property at Rome, in the event of its being exposed to danger in case of disturbances; ... I have to state to you that you will consider the instructions to which I have referred as applicable equally to the present time, and, the case arising, use your best exertions for the protection of British Roman Catholic ecclesiastics and their property, as well as for that of any other British subjects and their property. A British ship of war has been ordered to go to Civita Vecchia, for the protection, if necessary, of British subjects"⁵⁷.

Fr. Mullooly soon put these assurances to the test. The Torrione vineyard had been damaged by Italian engineers on 19-21 September, and a week later he asked Jervoise to do something about recovering damages⁵⁸. Jervoise kept his trust. On 3 October he forwarded a claim of 1524 lire to General Cardona, the officer commanding Rome. In spite of various appeals, the claim went unheeded for some time. Finally, after Fr. Mullooly had gone to Sir Augustus Paget, the British Minister in Florence, on 17 August 1871, the sum of 1500 lire (about £ 50) was obtained for Fr. Mullooly as damages on 26 August⁵⁹.

This small success came at a time when Fr. Mullooly, in company with the superiors of the houses of the Irish Franciscans and Augustinians, was deep in a more important problem, that of survival. On 25 October 1870 Paget had reported that he had received "a most emphatic assurance" from Visconti Venosta, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, "that all property belonging to British subjects would be respected by the Italian Government", and a request by Venosta for a list of the British religious houses in Rome was honoured by these establishments on 26 October. A further request for details of the possessions of these establishments was similarly respected, though this time with

⁵⁷ [The "Blue Book"]: *Rome. No. 1* (1871). *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Rome 1870-71. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty* (London 1971. C-247).

⁵⁸ SCAR 62; *Blue Book*, pp. 50-52, n. 45.

⁵⁹ *Blue Book*, p. 76, n. 70.

reluctance, in the middle of January 1871⁶⁰. But it was not until 29 April 1871, when the *Gazzetta Ufficiale* announced the appointment of a commission to enquire into the legal status of foreign religious institutes in Rome, that the Irish Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans began to become thoroughly worried.

Fr. Mullooly took steps at once with respect to San Clemente. He drew up a memorandum for Granville, the Foreign Minister, on 27 May, protesting the commission of inquiry as "a first step towards confiscation", and stressing the facts that he had spent about £ 5000 on excavations at San Clemente and that the Prince of Wales "and other noblemen" had always regarded San Clemente as a "National" (i.e. British) establishment.

However, he did not send the memorandum directly to Granville but to the Provincial, Fr. White, in Dublin. White at once commissioned the Prior and Subprior of the Dublin house, Frs. J. T. Towers and Tom Burke, to go to London, where a friend of Fr. Burke's, Mansell, the Postmaster General, arranged an audience with Granville on 14 June. Granville, Burke reported to Mullooly next day, was friendly, but cautious. He would do all in his power to help, and was of the private opinion that "your title is as good as if you had held San Clemente for a thousand years". Burke himself was just as encouraging. He was convinced, he said, that Mullooly would "save St. Clement's through the interest felt in your excavations"⁶¹.

There were doubts, it appears, about the mind of Paget, the British Minister in Italy. According to a letter of Fr. White, Burke had learned confidentially from a friend in London that Paget was in fact favourable to the suppression laws of the Italian government, and indeed had sent a negative sort of dispatch to Granville which had drawn forth a letter of protest from Fr. Burke. Others were suspicious of Paget, too. Dr. Grant, the Rector of the Scots' College, sent a barbed letter to Paget on 14 September 1872 in which he noted, "I trust that British subjects in Rome are not in a worse condition than the subjects of other foreign nations, and that we shall receive the same attention and

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 92, n. 87. See pp. 143-146, n. 126 for a detailed statement of all the holdings of British religious and secular establishments in Rome.

⁶¹ SCAR 62.

protection which other colleges receive from their respective governments" ⁶².

Though Paget reacted in a hurt fashion on 24 September, he seems to have taken the innuendo (which, of course, Grant disclaimed in reply) to heart. After this it seems fair to say that Paget threw much of his weight behind the efforts of the various British establishments to resist any encroachment by the Italian authorities.

The committee which had been set up on 29 April 1871 was, of course, simply one of inquiry. The real battle over the British religious establishments only began on 20 November 1872 when De Falco, the Minister of Grace and Justice, introduced a bill in parliament which extended the 1866 law of suppression of religious corporations to the province of Rome. By this law all religious orders were suppressed and their goods confiscated to the Italian treasury. The landed property of all religious corporations, whether suppressed or preserved, were to be converted, that is, all the real estate had to be sold, and the proceeds invested in public funds. Religious institutions in Rome for the benefit of foreigners were given special treatment (embodied in articles 23 and 24 of the later law). They were not as such suppressed. Two years were allowed them to set up new foundations, and so to change themselves into institutions (e.g. educational) which were recognized by the laws of Italy. They could effect this conversion through their own administrators, and could invest the proceeds of the sale of their real estate in British or any other stocks or investments, if they cared to do so ⁶³.

The English, Irish and Scots' colleges, being educational institutions by nature, were therefore exempt from the law of suppression, and in fact did not appear on the list of suppressed establishments. It was another matter with the houses of the Irish Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans. They were regarded as religious foundations and accordingly were listed

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Sessione 1871-1872. Seconda della XI legislazione. Camera dei Deputati. Progetto di Legge... nella tornata del 20 Novembre 1872. Per la estensione alla provincia di Roma delle leggi sulle Corporazioni religiose, e sulla conversione dei beni immobili degli enti morali ecclesiastici* [Rome 1872].

among the suppressed houses, San Sisto and San Clemente being nn. 79 and 80.

A little over a month after the bill was introduced, Fr. Mullooly, preparing for the worst, obtained permission from the pope to transfer the goods of SS. Sisto and Clemente, should the need arise, and after an urgent telegram to Dublin, was appointed the legal representative of the Irish Province with respect to the two convents and all their rights, goods and possessions. What is more interesting, he wrote two letters to Paget, one on 17 December 1872, the other on 4 January 1873, in which he explained (from research done by Fr. Michael Costello)⁶⁴ how San Clemente had come into the possession of the Irish Dominicans, and argued for its collegiate character. San Sisto and San Clemente, he said, were granted to the Irish Dominicans for the purpose of educating Irish priests. Generally these were Irish Dominicans for the mission in Ireland, but not necessarily so. By a bull *Pretiosus* of 26 May 1727, pope Benedict XIII had empowered the studium of SS. Sisto and Clemente to grant to secular students the degrees of Licentiate, Bachelor and Doctor of Theology, and with all the force of degrees conferred by the Roman University (the Sapienza), Salamanca or Paris: "pari apostolica auctoritate, motu, et scientia, idem valere ac acceptari debere, perinde ac si conferrentur in Academia Romana, Salamantina, aut Parisiensi, vel alia quacumque insigniori, ..." ⁶⁵.

Paget duly presented these claims to Visconti Venosta, and he in turn to De Falco. On 1 February 1873 De Falco wrote Venosta that the documents presented by San Clemente and the Irish Augustinians and Franciscans simply confirmed his previous view that the three places, although founded for the benefit of foreigners, were basically religious institutions within the meaning of the law of suppression of 1866 and of the proposed extension of the law to Rome. A week later Visconti Venosta wrote Paget to make much the same point. To him the three houses

⁶⁴ SCAR 29.

⁶⁵ For Costello's notes see SCAR 62; see also a long article, by Fr Mullooly, I expect, in *The Tablet* of 23.5.1874, pp. 647-648. Strictly speaking the bull *Pretiosus* of Benedict XIII (*Bullarium Ordinis Praedicatorum* VI, Rome 1735, 622-623, par. 42) was speaking of *Studia generalia* of the Dominican Order as such, not of SS. Sisto and Clemente.

effectively had the character of religious houses ("hanno effettivo carattere di case Religiose"). As such they were subject to the law of suppression. But each could escape suppression if it could show that it was an institute for foreigners as specified in articles 23 and 24, and would then have two years from the time of the passing of the bill of extension to "convert" itself into an educational establishment which met the requirements of Italian law⁶⁶.

The extension of the 1866 law did pass, as expected, on 19 June 1873, and went into effect on 7 July⁶⁷. But instead of doing as Visconti Venosta had suggested (which, in effect, would have meant putting the whole of SS. Sisto and Clemente up for sale and attempting to buy it back again), Fr. Mullooly grasped at what seemed to be an ambiguity in the law, and set out to prove that far from being "effectively a religious entity", SS. Sisto and Clemente was by nature an educational establishment, and therefore was not subject *in any way* to the law of suppression. When the forms arrived from the Giunta Liquidatrice for completion within three months, Fr. Mullooly first began to fill them out (they are now SCAR 381), then decided to ignore them, arguing to the Giunta, the three-man board charged with executing the law, that he regarded SS. Clemente and Sisto as an educational entity independently of any religious affiliation it might have, and that therefore he was not bound to fill in the forms (if he were to do so, he wrote to Paget, he would be giving the Giunta a dangerous inch)⁶⁸. In other words, Fr. Mullooly wanted SS. Sisto and Clemente as such to stand as a legal entity, as an educational establishment *origine* before the Italian law, and not simply as a religious establishment for foreigners which was capable, in virtue of articles 23 and 24, of turning itself into an educational establishment and thus qualifying itself for recognition by Italian law.

This was a risky move on Mullooly's part, and one that troubled his able lawyer, Benedetto Giovenale. It surprised Paget, too, occasioning the dry comment of 3 December 1873, "I am not

⁶⁶ SCAR 29.

⁶⁷ *Legge e Decreto sulla soppressione delle Corporazioni religiose nella Provincia di Roma, coll'aggiunto di tutte le leggi ivi richiamate* (Roma-Firenze 1973).

⁶⁸ SCAR 29.

able to say whether the Italian Government will consider S. Sixtus and Clement an educational establishment until I receive a reply to the note which I have addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on this subject; but I have no doubt that you are entitled to claim in its behalf the rights and privileges conceded to religious establishments founded for the benefit of foreigners, by articles 23 and 24 of the law of the 19th of June 1873".

There was no immediate reply from the Giunta, and Fr. Mullooly began to look into what would happen if he had to create a new, educational entity out of San Sisto and San Clemente. Would the two places have to be put up for sale, he asked Paget on 2 March 1874, and if so, would he be allowed to buy them back? A letter of Paget to Visconti Venosta on these points produced a letter of apology for the delay from Venosta. The Giunta, he said, had taken some time to evaluate Fr. Mullooly's submission, but he was now able to report that the Giunta had not changed its opinion of a year earlier: SS. Sisto and Clemente was, in the Giunta's view, "a true religious house destined by reason of foundation for the benefit of foreigners, and was therefore subject to the law of conversion as set out in articles 23 and 24 if it was to survive".

Fr. Mullooly was not impressed. In a brief comment of 29 April to the British Agent in Rome, he pointed out that "Signor Visconti Venosta seems to forget what he already acknowledged in the letter to Sir A. Paget, Feb. 3rd, 1873", namely, that San Clemente was an educational entity. It was evident, Mullooly went on, "that the legal position of this house as an educational establishment is precisely the same as that of the English, Irish, and Scots College".

He stuck resolutely to this view over the next six months while the Giunta debated his case afresh. To Giovenale, after the usual fruitless visit to the British Legation to find out if there was any news from the Giunta, Fr. Mullooly wrote on 18 December 1874 that he was not to desist in his efforts to save integrally "the cradle of the Dominican Order" and "the existence of this College". Giovenale, he said, knew very well what type of person he was dealing with on the Giunta: a type that promises the sun and the moon and the stars one day and indulges in subterfuges the next.

Giovenale, as it happens, had been far from idle. Since *de facto* SS. Sisto and Clemente was run by religious, he thought it unlikely that the Giunta would exempt it *tout court* from the law of suppression. But he was sure that a *via media* could be found between total suppression as a religious house and total conversion as a religious house for the benefit of foreigners. Taking up Fr. Mullooly's arguments to Paget of December 1872 and January 1873, Giovenale produced a brilliant brief which argued a. that SS. Sisto and Clemente was an educational establishment *ab origine* and therefore should not be suppressed, and, b. that given its nature as an educational entity, articles 23 and 24 could only be applied to it as a "foreign foundation" and not as "a religious corporation founded for the benefit of foreigners". In other words, the only part of the law of suppression that was applicable to SS. Sisto and Clemente was that which required the conversion of any real estate not deemed essential to the maintenance of the twin educational establishment, the Torriane vineyard, in this case⁶⁹.

Giovenale's brief was finished on 26 October 1874, and Fr. Mullooly presented it to the British Agent for transmission to the Giunta three days later. "Herewith, he addressed the Agent, I enclose a *Paper* drawn up by the lawyer of this House, proving that SS. Sisto and Clemente is a College founded more than 200 years ago for the education of British subjects that, correctly speaking, never possessed a religious character as has been asserted by Signor De Falco, Minister of Grace and Justice, —and that, according to the law of June 19th, 1873, its superior has a perfect right to "convert" the immovable property belonging to it either by private sale, or any other way he may think fit, without the interference or intervention of any member of the Giunta Liquidatrice".

This brief, with its adroit bow to the Law of Suppression, was much more acceptable to the Giunta Liquidatrice than Fr. Mullooly's stark claim to complete exemption. A little over two months later the Giunta reached a decision and communicated it to Visconti Venosta. On 13 January 1875 Venosta informed Paget that the Giunta had decided that

⁶⁹ *Sul collegio irlandese di SS. Sisto e Clemente. Voto legale e Decisione del Governo Italiano* [Rome 1975], pp. 39.

"1. The Irish Institute of SS. Sisto and Clemente is a College or Seminary independently of the religious corporation that lives there, and consequently is not a suppressed entity and is legally represented by its own rector to the exclusion of any action on the part of the superior of the religious family there.

2. This Institute, in virtue of the fact that it is a foundation destined at present in Rome for the benefit of foreigners, is subject to the conversion of its immovable goods according to article 23, n. 3 of the law of 19 June 1873"⁷⁰.

While Giovenale was delighted with the result and proceeded to print a hundred copies of his "Voto legale" and Venosta's letter to Paget (the only official communication there ever was from the Giunta), Fr. Mullooly was not wholly satisfied. The Giunta decision meant that the immovable goods of SS. Sisto and Clemente had to be put up for sale and the proceeds invested in public funds. Although the only goods of SS. Sisto and Clemente that came under this heading was the Torrione vineyard, Fr. Mullooly still felt that as an educational institution the place should not have to convert any of its real estate. The Giunta, of course, had taken the middle road offered by Giovenale. As Paget, summarizing Visconti Venosta's rejection of Mullooly's further plea for total exemption, put it in a letter of 16 January, "It appears... that the Italian Government recognizes the independent existence of the institution of which you are rector as a College or Seminary not suppressed by law, but does not admit your claim for the exemption of the real estate of the College for conversion pursuant to the 23rd article of the law of June 19, 1873"⁷¹.

Fr. Mullooly, however, would not give in. He explored another angle in a letter to the Giunta of 2 February 1875. He was glad to learn, he wrote, of the Giunta's decision on 13 January, but since the only real estate subject to article 23 was the Torrione vineyard (valued at 1762.33 scudi or 9472.92 lire), he asked permission to let the vineyard out emphatically⁷². (This, it

⁷⁰ SCAR 62, *Voto legale*, pp. 38-39. The cases of the Irish Franciscans and Augustinians were also decided favourably on the same day, though on somewhat different terms: see SCAR 29.

⁷¹ SCAR 25, n. 263; cf. 264.

⁷² SCAR 29.

hardly need be said, would circumvent the conversion clause, and, in effect, would mean the exemption of SS. Sisto and Clemente from article 23, since no sale would be involved in any way).

There was no reply from the Giunta until 11 May, when Paget informed Fr. Mullooly that the decision of the Italian Government on 13 January "must be considered final"⁷³. The vineyard must be sold by public auction, as stipulated, and the proceeds invested. The Giunta itself repeated the point to Fr. Mullooly two weeks later⁷⁴.

But to Fr. Mullooly, it appears, there was something sacred about the Torrione vineyard, for it had belonged to SS. Sisto and Clemente from the very first days of the Irish Dominicans as a corporate entity in Rome in 1677. As a result, he very nearly ruined his position. Suspecting that the Giunta intended to conduct the sale itself and thus deprive him of an essential right as rector under article 23, he expressed his fears to Paget who, upon examining various letters of the Giunta to Mullooly, agreed with him. Giovenale understandably was furious. The vineyard must be sold, he told Mullooly bluntly on 10 June. There was no point in creating a diplomatic incident and jeopardising all that had been achieved. He knew what he was doing. When it came to Italian law and procedures the British Minister was a rank amateur⁷⁵.

Fr. Mullooly, suitably contrite, placed himself in the lawyer's hands (11 June). On 26 July the vineyard was advertised for sale at a reserve or "upset" price of 32,000 lire, more than three times the estimated value. At the sale in Giovenale's office on 11 August three friends of Fr. Mullooly were present to comply with a law that there could not be a legal sale where there were not at least three bidders. One of these was a Signor Pasquali. He bought the vineyard back for SS. Sisto and Clemente with 32,200 lire which Fr. Mullooly had handed to him just before the sale began⁷⁶.

⁷³ SCAR 25, n. 271.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 25, n. 268.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 25, nn. 272, 74.

⁷⁶ SCAR 29; according to Fr Costello in a letter to Fr Russell in Dublin on 9.1.1876, "the lot was knocked down at a few hundred francs in advance of the upset price".

There remained a problem, of course: would the Giunta tolerate this juggling with the law? In fact it took the Giunta some six or seven months to decide, and there were times when, to Giovenale's dismay, Fr. Mullooly grew impatient, not knowing when or where to invest the money from the "sale" of the vineyard. In November 1875 he instructed Giovenale to ask the Giunta if he could invest the 32,000 lire in English Consols. The Giunta took the hint, ordered Fr. Mullooly to invest the money in the Italian Public Debt in January 1876, and, finally, approved of the sale as such two months later. The money remained in the Public Debt until 1937, when the shares were sold to pay for a new *Villeggiatura* at Romeno in the Alto Adige.

All in all, when one compares it with other Dominican centres such as the Minerva or Santa Sabina, which suffered huge losses in buildings and properties, the community of SS. Sisto and Clemente came off lightly at the hands of the Giunta Liquidatrice. The twin convents of San Sisto and San Clemente, and their gardens and buildings, were untouched, the Torrione vineyard was intact. Benedetto Giovenale, whose fee came to a modest 1200 lire (£45), rightly was elated. Fr. Mullooly, with SS. Sisto and Clemente firmly established before the law of Italy as a Collegium, began at once to plan for the future.

Three months after the long negotiations with the Giunta had ended, he bought for 31,750 lire (roughly £1250) a palazzo on the Via S. Giovanni, nos. 38-42, just behind the apse of the church and over part of the Mithraic area, in order to ensure further excavations. Oddly, the ground on which the palazzo stood, and the garden which went with it, running from the Via S. Giovanni to the Via Labicana, originally belonged to the church of San Clemente and had become part of the Abbacy of SS. Clemente and Pancrazio in 1645. As a result, San Clemente now found itself obliged to pay an annual tribute of 53.75 lire for the palazzo to an Abbacy from which it was receiving 275 lire (50 scudi) a year as a donation⁷⁷.

Now that San Clemente had escaped suppression because it was a Collegium or educational establishment distinct from the religious community that served it, it was essential to have some students on the premises. So in that same Summer of 1876 Fr.

⁷⁷ SCAR 110: "Palazzo" file.

Mullooly suggested to the Irish Province that it should consider sending students to Rome once more. Fifteen months later, on 3 November 1877, the first students for some ten years arrived at San Clemente from Ireland (from St. Mary of the Isles, Cork, in fact). Reginald Walsh, Henry Fitzgerald, Humbert Donegan, Gabriel O'Farrell, and Bernard Cranfield, with Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan as Master. A photograph of all five students, with Frs. Mullooly, Costello and O'Callaghan, and a brother, possibly Domenico Moriconi, was taken in the cortile of the church sometime in the following year, and is reproduced in Plate n. 2. Walsh and Fitzgerald were sent for higher studies to the Minerva, but the other three remained at San Clemente to study under O'Callaghan. A year later Michael Moore and John Roche arrived to join them, and Dominic Barry, Ambrose Coleman and Sebastian Twomey in November 1879. When Fr. O'Callaghan returned to Ireland on 29 December 1879 to become Master of Novices at Tallaght, Fr. Reginald Walsh, who had been appointed to teach Scripture at the Minerva on 25 September, took over as Master, Lector and Bursar at San Clemente, and became Subprior on 25 May 1880, a month before Fr. Mullooly's death⁷⁸.

Fr. Mullooly was only sixty eight at the time of his death in 1880, but he had not been in the best of health for some time. A bout of malaria in the Summer of 1873 had weakened him considerably. After the successful conclusion of the Giunta affair in the Spring of 1876, there seems to have been little strength left for new ventures or any new excavations, apart from a brief flicker in April 1880, when some digging was done in a part of the inner (East) garden.

Shortly afterwards Fr. Mullooly contracted pleurisy, but it seems not to have been taken as anything serious until 20 June when, after he had said Mass in the Novitiate chapel, he collapsed. He died five days later in his room at San Clemente, and was buried in the plot he had bought in 1876 in the Campo Verano cemetery at San Lorenzo⁷⁹. In 1912 his remains were returned to San Clemente and placed under an inscribed slab at the East end of the South aisle of the church he had laboured so selflessly

⁷⁸ SCAR 54, pp. 100, 102-106.

⁷⁹ A. Henry as reported in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 3rd series, 12 (1891) 1113-1114.

and single-mindedly to excavate, not far from the hole in the wall through which he had first caught sight of an underground column in 1857 or earlier. Today, and just as fittingly, they rest in the great funeral vault that reaches down in front of his High Altar of 1866 to the level of the "Dominicum Clementis" of the late first century.

Sir Augustus Paget, whom Fr. Mullooly had badgered on so many occasions between 1870 and 1876, wrote on 29 June 1880 that he "always entertained the very highest regard and esteem for that most worthy and excellent man"⁸⁰. Thirty years later, on the occasion of the removal of Fr. Mullooly's body from the Campo Verano to San Clemente, Fr. Reginald Walsh penned a tribute which, for all its Second Nocturn moments, is worth quoting in full⁸¹:

I lived with him from November 1877 till the day of his death in June 1880, and had many opportunities of knowing him well. From the first he impressed me by his piety, great love of S. Clement's, and his administrative capacity. As a religious he was remarkable for asceticism and love of regular observance. His spirit of poverty and obedience could hardly be excelled. During many years when an insufficient income made life in S. Clement's one of privation and inconvenience, Fr. Mullooly remained at his post. He never returned to Ireland, even for a short holiday. He not only kept the house most faithfully for the Irish Province, but by his self-denying economy, he at length succeeded in delivering the house from pecuniary difficulties. While frugal towards himself, he was liberal as regards others. I remember persons of great judgement saying that it would hardly be possible to get any other so devoted to the interests of his Province, and so competent to take care of them.

His prudence and tact in the midst of difficulties were extraordinary. Neither Garibaldi nor Cavour was a match for Fr. Mullooly. He saved S. Clement's in 1848 and again in 1870. He knew all the ways and means of the Italian Government, so far as its doings concerned him, and he was never outwitted by it. I may mention here that it was chiefly owing to his counsels and influence, that the houses of the Irish Franciscans, Augustinians,

⁸⁰ SCAR 62: letter of 29.6.1880.

⁸¹ SCAR 72.

and Dominicans, in Rome, were saved. He was equally successful in his dealings with the Rome Municipality or Corportaion: as shown, for instance, in the case of S. Sisto. During the years I lived with him, though Rome was in a disturbed state, I always felt that S. Clement's was perfectly safe. I have known Italians to have the most implicit confidence in his prudence and dexterity.

He was a good theologian, and in the midst of business retained an intimate knowledge of S. Thomas. Students were at first surprised to find that he remembered so well what he had learned some thirty years before. Fr. Mullooly was a Qualificator of the Holy Office, and probably was asked to join other Congregations, but he had not time for such work.

He always was bright and cheerful at recreation, and he liked to see those around him happy. We all knew that he had a great deal to do, but he was never preoccupied in manner at recreation, no matter how serious or troublesome the matter was which he had been thinking a few minutes before.

Besides attending with a minute care to everything in S. Clement's, he was often consulted about the Irish Province, etc., by the Superiors of the Order. He was also agent in Rome for many Bishops, and in this capacity went to Propaganda almost every day. The authorities there would have been very glad, had he accepted an Irish diocese, but no pressure would induce him to give up the care of S. Clement's. His influence in Rome was very great. I remember that a person who had been appointed to an Irish see came to Rome in the hope that he might be consecrated by the Pope. Those to whom he spoke first told him this could not be done. In the evening he came to S. Clement's and asked Fr. Mullooly to speak in his behalf. On the following morning he had a note from the Vatican to say that Leo XIII would consecrate him.

And this mention of Leo XIII reminds me of the following little incident. At the beginning of his reign, several persons who held prominent positions in Rome were desirous of being presented to him and before long they succeeded in getting an audience. Fr. Mullooly was not of the number. Months passed. Suddenly one day, he went to the Vatican —presumably, he said, in obedience to a command— at any rate, when he was presented the Pope exclaimed with a pleased countenance: "Ecco, il nostro Priore di S. Clemente, di cui abbiamo sentito tante cose belle".

Father Mullooly had a wide circle of acquaintances, and many fast friends. Visitors called to see him day after day. Even in his declining years, he was ready to show the underground church and to discourse on the treasures it contained. Its discovery had been the great work of his life and he knew every inch of it. He began the excavations without suggestion or help of any kind. Indeed at first people were inclined to consider his unprecedented project as likely to end in failure. Friends told him he would find nothing. Pius IX and Fr. Jandel said no more to him when giving their blessing than that they hoped he would not in searching for an underground church destroy the upper one. I remember hearing him say more than once, "I think I am the only Dominican in Italy whom Fr. Jandel has not blamed at some time or other".

Needless to remark, Fr. Mullooly was a good archeologist, and on intimate terms with De Rossi whom I saw perhaps more than once dining in S. Clement's. Fr. Mullooly's simplicity and sincerity made this man an especial favourite with persons in high station. He was always natural and at his ease. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, had the greatest regard for him. I remember that during his last illness a lady-in-waiting called one evening. She asked all particulars, and added, "I am going straight to Windsor, and I know that the first question the Prince will ask me will be, How is Father Mullooly? After his death I found among Fr. Mullooly's papers, more than thirty letters from royal personages and gifts.

VIII

THE COMMUNITY IN THE THIRD CENTURY, 1877-1977

The collegiate status of SS. Sisto e Clemente, so adroitly established by Fr. Mullooly and his lawyer Benedetto Giovenale in 1870-1875, was secured in practice by the arrival of five students from Ireland on 3 November 1877.

An annual stream of three or four students followed over the next forty years and more. By 1915, when the first World War made travel difficult, some 120 students had come to study in Rome, take the regular round of examinations, move through the various orders to the priesthood, and then return to Ireland. About one in three took the Dominican teaching degree known as the Lectorate at the Minerva.

Some teaching, mostly in practical theology, was done at San Clemente until about 1892. But it was an unambitious affair, and there was no hankering after the panoply of a *Studium generale*, with First and Second Regents, and the like. Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan was the first and only Lector of the new era of the "Collegium Sancti Clementis". He was followed by Fr. Reginald Walsh, Fr. Joseph Ceslaus Lyons, and, notably, by Fr. Thomas Quinn, who was the Lector (and student master) from 1883-1890.

The end of the line seems to have come with Fr. Jordan Powell (1890-1892), and the end of that tradition of study at SS. Sisto e Clemente which was unbroken in the 18th century and was resumed fitfully in the 19th between (but with gaps) 1825 and 1846 and 1855-1867. In any case, the College of St. Thomas at the Minerva, which had been given fresh life by the interest of Pope Leo XIII in Thomistic studies, was there to hand

to provide basic theological studies. And after the College of St. Thomas gave way to an international Dominican college in 1909 (the Collegio Angelico or Angelicum, today the University of St. Thomas), there was no point in maintaining a local teaching body at San Clemente.

In the years before the first World War the Irish contribution to the Angelicum was small but steady: two or three students each year from 1910-1915. After the War there was a jump in numbers from two in 1918 to five in 1919, four in 1920, six in 1921. After that there were generally three or four new students each year. As the Irish Dominican province grew in strength in the 1930s, the numbers increased accordingly. The spectacular years, probably, were 1933-1937, when an average of 12 students or student-priests from San Clemente attended the Angelicum in each of those years.

As a result, the community of San Clemente was often over 20 in the six or seven years before the second World War. The war years, of course, were lean ones, and from 1942-1945 there were just three Fathers and three Brothers in the community. After the war, the community, inflated a little by some students from Australia, rose from 16 in 1947 to 25 in 1951, 23 in 1952, and 25 in 1953. With a few exceptions, the pattern was maintained until 1970, but since 1971 the community has hovered around 15 on an average.

The character of the community, however, changed radically in the years after the second World War. From 1877 until then the community was run, as it had been for most of the period from 1816, by a threesome which consisted of the Prior, the master of students (often as subprior), and a third who was at one stage the bursar, if there was a bursar who had no other office, or a member of the community who was the Lector, or, after 1910, a professor at the Angelicum or in some similar Roman institution. Since it was rarely that there was a fourth, not to speak of a fifth, senior member of the community, this threesome usually constituted the Council of the house and, naturally, took all the decisions with respect to the students, the disposition of the house, the deployment of money, all, of course, under the watchful eye of the General of the Order, their immediate superior. After 1945, however, with the appointment of several Irish Dominicans to the community who had teaching

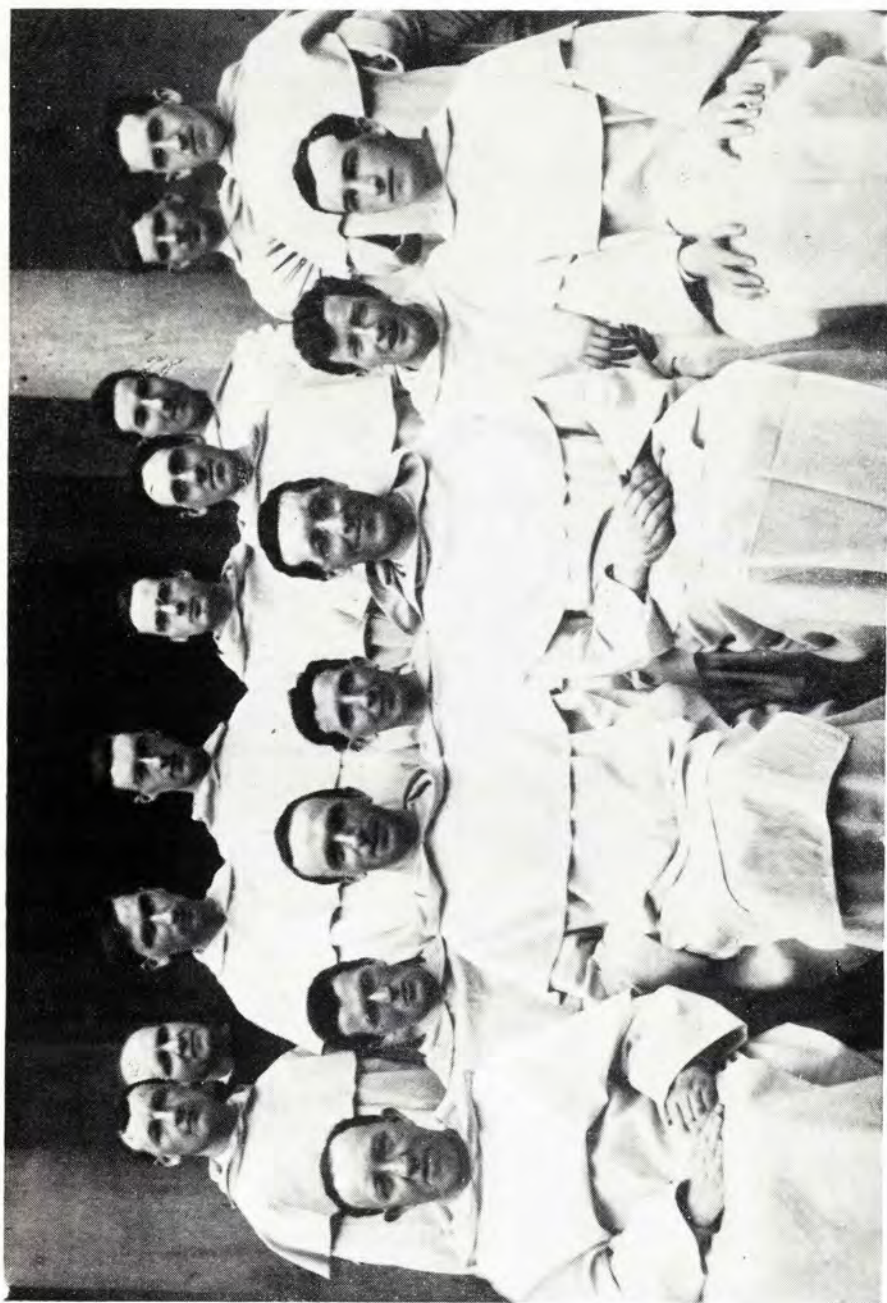


Plate 3 - The Community (less Bro Simon McAuliffe) in 1924

Standing, from left: Bertrand Curran, Thomas Fleming, John Heuston, Dominic Clarkson, Marcolin Colgan, James Doherty, Raymond O'Donoghue, Raymond Dowdall, Pius O'Daly. - *Seated, from left:* Francis Flavin (Subprior), Columba Courtney, Thomas Garde (Prior, later Provincial), Reginald Harrington (later Provincial), Michael Browne (later Master of the Order and Cardinal), Mannes Cussen (later Provincial), Ambrose Crofts.

and other posts in Rome, the Council gradually became larger than had been customary. Today, of course, in the wake of reforms within the Dominican Order, the Council, with its elected as well as ex-officio members, is broadly representative of the community in a way that was not possible before.

More importantly, the structure of the community has changed. Since 1954, when the province decided that in future students would not be sent to Rome until after ordination to the priesthood, there have not been as a rule any non-ordained students in the community. The usual thing from 1877 was to send students from Ireland as soon as they were ready to begin their theological studies. In spite of long, relaxed summers at O'Finan's villa in Tivoli, or, from 1937, at Romeno in the Alto Adige, some found the going very hard at San Clemente in the two or three years before the priesthood and a less regimented mode of existence.

Because of the decision of 1954, the convent of SS. Sisto e Clemente moved a further step away from the studium which it had been, by and large, from at least 1701 until the beginning of the present century. With the opening of the Angelicum in 1909, San Clemente changed from a house of studies to a residence for students. With the disappearance of the non-ordained student and the trappings of a studentate from 1954, it became a convent much like any other in the province, with brothers, young priests and senior priests, yet a convent dedicated to teaching and study in a degree that a normal convent, with its pastoral bustle, would find impossible to maintain.

The relationship to the Irish province also changed about this time. Since the time of Benedict XIII (1724-1730), San Clemente had been under the immediate jurisdiction of the General of the Order. This, as Fr. Fenning pointed out in c. 2 above, caused some concern to the province, though not necessarily to the community of SS. Sisto e Clemente, which, for most of the 18th century, was allowed to elect its own superiors whenever there were enough members with voting rights present. For much of the 19th century, when the convent rarely if ever had an electoral quorum, the General appointed the Prior directly, but more often than not, as during Fr. Jandel's long generalate from 1850-1875, after consultation with the Provincial in Ireland.

After Fr. Mullooly's death in 1880, a limited form of jurisdiction over San Clemente was allowed by some Generals to the Provincial. In the generalate of Fr. Larroca, for example, the Irish Provincial had the authority to designate Priors, and, indeed, sometimes to "designate and institute" them¹.

There never seems to have been any question, however, of permitting the community (or rather the three or four members with voting rights) to indulge in any form of election until 1919, when Fr. Louis Theissling allowed Frs. Nolan, Garde and Flavin to conduct a canonical election "pro hac vice tantum". They elected Fr. Thady Crofts, and on the expiry of his term of office in 1922, the new threesome of Frs. Garde, Flavin and Browne, appealed for a similar concession again². In spite of his conclusion, based on legislation of the General Chapter of 1920, that San Clemente was ineligible to elect a Prior because it had only three qualified electors, Fr. Theissling granted it permission to elect a Prior for as long as he was General (1916-1926). Fr. Garde was therefore duly elected, and when his term was over in 1925, the same threesome elected Fr. Michael Browne in his stead. By the time Fr. Browne's term ended, however, Fr. Paredes of Spain was in the General's saddle, and simply reappointed Fr. Browne for a second time on 24 May 1928. And although threesomes just as electorally qualified as Frs. Garde, Flavin and Browne continued at San Clemente during his long generalate (1929-1946), Fr. Martin Gillet, Paredes' successor, made no move to emulate the rather personal decision of Fr. Theissling.

In 1949, two years after SS. Sisto e Clemente had been handed back to the jurisdiction of the Irish Provincial by Fr. Emmanuel Suarez, there were not enough electors at San Clemente to warrant an election when Fr. Raymond Dowdall, who had held the fort during the rough war years, ended his third term as Prior in November of that year. The first Prior under the new dispensation was therefore an appointment of the Provincial in Ireland, now Fr. Garde³.

By 1952, however, when Fr. Leo MacArdle's term ended, the house had the requisite number of electors, so the first ordinary

¹ SCAR 54, pp. 110, 126, 140.

² SCAR 57B.

³ SCAR 99, p. 189.

election of a Prior of San Clemente since before the Roman Republic of 1798 took place on 17 December 1952, when Fr. Leo Lennon, then on the missions in Trinidad, was elected.

Like Frs. Dowdall and MacArdle in the previous eight years since the end of the war, Fr. Lennon, when he arrived in Rome in March 1953, had the care of a house in which one had to watch every penny and in which, for years to come, there would be little to spare for anything but straightforward necessities.

This was not always the case since 1877, when the first batch of students arrived from Ireland and San Clemente began to pick itself up after the frayed, uncertain years of fighting for recognition as a college for the education of foreigners. Rather, there was a long stretch from around 1900 to the outbreak of the second World War when San Clemente was quite affluent, chiefly because of some events which took place within a few years of the death of Fr. Mullooly and which caused much anguish to the community at the time.

In his dealings with the Giunta Liquidatrice which were chronicled in the last chapter, Fr. Mullooly was baulked of success in one important area. The Giunta would not allow him to enter into a long-term emphyteutic contract with the municipality of Rome with respect to most of the monastery and buildings at San Sisto. Instead, he had to settle for a simple five-year lease on 16 August 1877⁴.

When the lease was up in 1882, the community, now headed by Fr. Alphonsus O'Callaghan, found that the Regio Commissariato, the successor of the Giunta, was looking askance at San Sisto. For although the contract with the municipality was duly renewed for another five years in 1882, the Commissariato, out of the blue, it seems, informed the community on 19 September 1883 that "it was very sorry now to have to reverse the decision" of the Giunta in 1875 which exempted San Sisto from conversion or public sale. It therefore decreed that all the buildings necessary for the maintenance of divine service, were subject to the law of conversion, and gave the community three months in which to meet the demands of the law. It noted that the Giunta had exempted San Sisto from conversion in 1875 because it was

⁴ SCAR 64, from which most of the details which follow are taken.

under the impression that a college such as that at San Clemente would be established there again, and it pointed out, ever so politely, that since there was no likelihood that such a college would ever take root again at San Sisto, it could not entertain the plea that San Sisto should not be subjected to the law of conversion because it was vital to the well-being of the college of San Clemente. San Michele at Tivoli was vital, because it provided a necessary summer retreat for those in the college. San Sisto was not, in any sense.

The community fought back by beginning negotiations with the municipality for an emphyteutic contract, a contract which was at the time equivalent to conversion yet avoided the indignity and the uncertainty of a public sale. When the Commissariato found out that these plans for a long-term contract were afoot, it countered the move by an order from the Council of State which outlawed emphyteutic contracts as substitutes for conversion. And when the community failed within the specified three months to satisfy the law of conversion, the Commissariato took the matter into its own hands and on 10 February 1884 ordered a public sale of all buildings at San Sisto which were not essential to the church of San Sisto as a place of worship. In effect this meant that the whole of the convent was up for public auction, with the exception of the sacristy attached to the church, the inner part of St. Dominic's chapter-room and its small sacristy, and some seven rooms over the chapter for the use of a priest and the custodian of the church and chapter.

The sale never took place. The officials of the municipality of Rome managed to hold it up while they worked on the Italian Government to obtain an order of expropriation. They were successful. On 18 December 1884 an expropriation order, to take effect within two years, was signed by King Umberto.

There was little now that the community of San Clemente could do except to hope for a decent indemnity. It asked for 130.000 lire and in fact received 120.000 (about £ 4500 sterling), which after some haggling in court and the intervention of the British Ambassador, it was allowed to invest freely, and fact chose to invest in the Italian Public Debt at five per cent.

This was not the end, by any means, of the community's connection with real estate at San Sisto. It still retained the proprietorship of the large gardens which the municipality was

using as a nursery. Since these gardens had been on a long-term emphyteutic lease to the municipality since 1859 they were not subject to conversion by public sale nor to the royal order of expropriation, and the community continued to receive an annual rent of some 1961 lire (£ 70) for about twenty years after the rest of San Sisto had been expropriated.

One of the conditions of the contract, however, was that the gardens could only be used as a nursery; if any part were to be put to any other use, then the gardens, as in any emphyteutic contract, would revert to the community with all their improvements. In 1909 the municipality, perhaps deliberately, broke that contract when they used some of the land to build a part of the Via Valle delle Camene (*Passeggiata Archeologica*). As a result, the community was enabled to reclaim the gardens, which shortly afterwards they sold back to the municipality for the tidy sum of 40.000 lire (about £ 1500).

The Torrione vineyard, so much a part of the fortunes of the Irish community of SS. Sisto e Clemente from 1677, was the next to go. In 1888, 1889, and 1890, about 21.500 square metres of a total 127.680 were expropriated at about three lire a square metre by various railway companies for new lines, while another section was expropriated for a road in 1907. Given these losses, and the encroachment of housing schemes on all sides, the community decided to sell the remaining 102.000 square metres, together with buildings and effects, in May and July 1911.

Altogether, between indemnities and sales, the Torrione realized some 292.000 lire (a little over £ 11.000), which was invested, as the money came to hand, in various Italian and foreign stocks. When one puts this sum with the various monies from the San Sisto properties, it seems that by 1912 San Clemente had investments worth at least 452.000 lire, roughly 17.500 pounds sterling.

By any measure this was a useful sum at the time, and must have made San Clemente one of the best-endowed houses occupied by Irish Dominicans (I do not say in the Irish province, since at the time it was still under the jurisdiction of the Dominican General). And, I am glad to report, it was almost as

⁵ SCAR 404 ("Investments").

generous with its money as Fr. Mullooly was with the income from the Torrione vineyard in his time. To mention only a few examples. In May 1913 there was a gift of £ 200 to the Provincial in Ireland for the education of aspirants to the Dominican Order. In 1916 £ 120 was given to Newbridge College for the same purpose. In 1918 a further £ 200 went to Tallaght for the education of the students there.

Naturally, some of the revenue from the San Sisto and Torrione monies was expended on San Clemente itself. A new and generous staircase was erected in the convent in 1912. In 1914-1915 Fr. Mullooly's palazzetto on the Via S. Giovanni, which had been condemned by the municipality in 1913, was reinforced and refurbished at a cost of 16.250 lire (£ 625). In 1926 a ferro-concrete gallery was constructed alongside the Mithraic temple at a cost of 40.000 lire (£ 420) to protect the temple from landslides. Between 1925 and 1930 the sacristy was enlarged, the central heating overhauled, and the house provided with more wash-rooms.

The most ambitious and expensive attempt to streamline the house followed some six years later. Between 1936 and 1939 the refectory was remodelled, an atrium was constructed outside the refectory, a wall across the lower salone was removed to give the present spacious area, a washroom jutting out from the east end of the building was lopped off to provide more light for the upper salone, and the kitchen, an inefficient, unhygienic, and to judge from photographs, improbable den, was introduced at last to the twentieth century.

These renovations under Fr. Pius O'Daly (Prior 1936-1940) were the most radical that had taken place at San Clemente for centuries, and they were done with an urgency and passion that probably hastened his early death in 1940 at the age of 41.

During his brief tenure of office Fr. O'Daly also had to cope with an emergency in the Mithraic area of the excavations, into which water began to creep ominously from under the fourth-century basilica sometime in early 1936.

From the very first day that Fr. Mullooly had excavated the Mithraic temple area in 1870, there had been trouble with water. By the time of his death in 1880, the water level had increased to such a height that access to the temple was impossible (unless, like a student some thirty years later, one donned a bathing suit

and, so to speak, swam down the great staircase). Eventually the water lapped the lintel of the doorway to the temple.

During the priorship of Fr. Crotty, a committee was formed to raise funds for an attempt to drain the whole area. On 26 April 1908 a 15 h. p. steam pump was turned loose on the area and kept at work day and night for a whole week. At the end of the week it was possible to visit the Mithraic temple for the first time for more than thirty years, but as soon as the pump was cut off the water returned to its original level within 24 hours.

The only solution seemed to be to dig a drain well below the level of the temple in the hope of directing the water under San Clemente to the old Roman Cloaca Maxima at the Colosseum, and thence to the Tiber.

Plans were drawn up, a large sum of money was found, and between 1912 and 1914, when Fr. Louis Nolan was Prior, a tunnel 6' x 3' and some 2000 feet long was constructed from the Cloaca Maxima to San Clemente at a depth varying from 45' at San Clemente, the higher ground, to 26' at the Colosseum, the lower. Ground was broken at the Colosseum on 10 June 1912, and after two years of danger and difficulty, the tunnel was completed by 16 May 1914, by which time the Mithraic area was entirely free of water⁶.

The area remained dry and open to visitors for some twenty years afterwards, but in the winter of 1935-1936 water began to seep through the great tufa wall at the west end of the large Roman building under the church and to menace the Temple and its surrounds. In March 1936 work was begun under Fr. O'Daly, in the absence of Fr. Rowan, the Prior, who was ill, on extending the tunnel back along the north wall of the Roman building so as to entice the water through the tufa wall into the tunnel down below. When this proved not to be wholly a success, Fr. O'Daly (now Prior) and his engineers decided in March 1937 to search for the source of the water itself. By cutting through the vault of the room at the end of the right (north) aisle of the 4th-century basilica and then clearing the room underneath and all the rooms at the west end of the Roman building, the excavators eventually

⁶ See L. NOLAN, *St. Clement's Tunnel* (Boston 1914), and *De effosionibus peractis ad S. Clementem de Urbe* (Rome 1918).

reached the source of the water in the room almost under St. Cyril's tomb which Fr. Mullooly had found half-full of water in 1869 and then had closed up again. The water was breaking through the south tufa wall from under the Via S. Giovanni, and once a small channel had been made through the rooms at the west end to the north tufa wall, but at a level of about 3' below the pavement, the water ceased to give trouble and flowed placidly along, as it does today, into the great tunnel of 1914 through a hole in the north tufa wall.

These necessary measures to combat the possibility of another flooding of the Mitraic area, though costly, had a nice side-effect in that they made the Roman rooms under the west end of the basilica accessible for the first time to scholars and visitors. In the years immediately after the war, Fr. Dowdall, Fr. O'Daly's immediate successor as Prior, continued the excavations under the north aisle of the church and in time cleared a way through to the east end and the narthex. Like Fr. O'Daly he also had to dig a channel under the floor, for it was soon clear that the water coming in through the tufa wall on the south side was not confined to the two vaulted rooms under Cyril's tomb, but was in fact breaking through much of the length of that wall along under the Via S. Giovanni and then flowing across the church to the north side.

By comparison with the tunnel of 1912-1914, the expense of the work done by Frs. O'Daly and Dowdall in their excavations, much of which San Clemente itself bore, was negligible. The tunnel, without which the lower reaches of San Clemente would have remained inaccessible and unexplored, was a prodigious feat of engineering and cost a staggering amount of money - 33,000 dollars, or, in lire of the period, Lit. 170,393. In spite of the healthy financial state of San Clemente at the time, the tunnel, like so much else, would have remained a pipe dream were it not for a helping hand from outside.

In the case of the tunnel the helping hand was the very generous one of Cardinal William O'Connell, archbishop of Boston, who had become Cardinal of the Title of San Clemente in 1911⁷. One of the duties of a Cardinal Titular is to embellish

⁷ See J. GAFFEY, "The Changing of the Guard: The rise of Cardinal O'Connell of Boston", *Catholic Historical Review* 59 (1973) 225-244.

his church. Cardinal O'Connell, in the best tradition of Cardinals Roverella in the 15th century, Naro in the early 19th, or Bonnehose in Mullooly's day, took the duty very seriously, and, when approached by Fr. Nolan with the problem of the water in the Mithraic area and the expensive plan for draining it, raised all the money to pay for the tunnel - 25,000 dollars from his many Boston friends and admirers, 8,000 from himself and his diocese.

In other words, the magnificent tunnel, of which the visitor to San Clemente sees nothing but a stout gate at its mouth, did not cost the community of San Clemente a penny, no more than did the urgent structural work on the ceiling of Clement XI in the present church, which was totally underwritten by O'Connell's short-lived successor as Titular, Cardinal Glennon of St. Louis (1946), nor the extensive work of Cardinal Cicognani (1958-1962), who provided a complete new lighting system for the church and excavations, restored the chapel of St. John the Baptist, under which he is buried, gave the courtyard a complete overhauling, and installed a raft of mellow benches in the Blessed Sacrament aisle - nor, finally, the great rescue job done on a tottering sacristy by the present Titular, Cardinal Shehan of Baltimore.

Comfortable though it was for a while until renovations, excavations and devaluation tore a hole in its capital, the community of San Clemente could never have afforded these embellishments and structural works. On its own, to take another example, the community would never have been in a position to shoulder the cost of restoring the frescoes in the chapel of St. Catherine, so ably undertaken by the Istituto del Restauro, nor of the extensive work on the frescoes and pavements of the lower church which the Soprintendenza ai Monumenti del Lazio have so cheerfully done over the past twenty years.

Without these experts, and without the generosity of so many Cardinals Titular, San Clemente conceivably might be a hazard today to the Via S. Giovanni as it was in the days when the Ambrosians first took it over around 1400, or, indeed, a faded, mouldering ruin such as San Sisto was until recently.

And what, now that it has been mentioned again, of San Sisto, which was where the Irish Dominicans first took root in Rome? It is, I am happy to say, thriving, and probably as never before.

The expropriation of 1884 left very little of the monastery of St. Dominic to the Irish Dominicans: half the chapter room (where the Besson frescoes are), a small sacristy off the chapter room, and seven rooms overhead for the priest who would provide service to the church and for the caretaker of the church and monastery. The rest of the buildings were used by the municipality of Rome as they had been used by others since 1814 and in Fr. Mullooly's time, for storage and the like. The cloister housed the funeral carriages of the municipality, the refectory of St. Dominic became a long, handy stable for the funeral horses, the half of the chapter room that gave on to the cloister made a convenient hayloft. And that was how these places remained until the late 1920s.

The Prior of San Clemente was, of course, still the Prior of SS. Sisto e Clemente, but apart from Mass on the Station Day in Lent and on the Feast of S. Sisto, he had little to do with the church and what remained to him of the monastery after the expropriation.

Within ten years of the expropriation of the monastery, however, a new life began to open up for San Sisto. In 1891, Maria Antonia Lalia, a nun and former superior of the Dominican convent of S. Maria at Misilmeri, near Palermo, came to Rome to ask the Holy See for permission to go to Russia to found a college there for poor girls. She was then fifty years old, had no other languages but Italian and a smattering of French, and, accordingly, was discouraged from her idea by various advisors, notably the Dominican Fr. Albert Lepidi, who suggested instead that she should set up a college for poor girls in Rome⁸.

Given that Madre Lalia had not a penny to her name, this was a tall order. She was, however, lodging at the convent of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd (the "Lauretana") at Via S. Giovanni 28 (now part of a bank), a few doors away from San Clemente, and decided to call in there one day on the off chance that the Irish Dominicans might know of some place in Rome where she could set up a college of the type suggested by Fr. Lepidi. It was summer time, however, and the solitary Brother

⁸ For Madre Lalia and San Sisto, see T. CENTI, *Madre M. Antonia Lalia Fondatrice delle Suore Domenicane di San Sisto Vecchio* (Rome 1972), pp. 78-79, etc.

in the sacristy (but not Simon McAuliffe, as Fr. Centi suggests) told her that the Prior and all the community were at Tivoli for their villeggiatura, and would not return until 15 October. The only one besides himself was an old priest who had just said Mass (probably Fr. Michael Costello) and who certainly would not stir out of his room now that he had had time to become ensconced there. There was, however, a secular priest, a chaplain at San Clemente, who had come into the sacristy after Mass, and when he had heard her story he said simply, "The Irish Dominicans have S. Sisto, and it is empty. They'll be glad to give it to you since there is no income from it, and it is anyway a burden on their resources just to be custodians of it".

Madre Lalia went off to view San Sisto, and knew at once that it was exactly what she wanted. When the Prior, Fr. Louis Hickey ("Hick", as she calls him in a letter), returned to San Clemente on 15 October, Madre Lalia went to confess to him and then explained what she was about in Rome. She was, she says, a little unsure of herself, and had learned a little more about San Sisto since her first visit to San Clemente some months before. So the question she asked was whether or not Fr. Hickey thought she should approach the municipality of Rome, "who owned S. Sisto", for permission to start a school there.

It was a splendid cast, and Fr. Hickey rose straight to the bait. "Municipality or not, Madre Lalia reports him as saying, I own a part of San Sisto, and I give it to you now". In fact, he added, probably remembering the remarks of the Regio Commissariato in 1883, "it should not be very difficult to get another part of the building from the municipality itself, since what you are proposing to do is to start a school there".

Fr. Hickey, later Provincial of the Irish province, 1896-1904, began making inquiries at once from Fr. Lepidi and other Dominicans about Madre Lalia. He was impressed by what he heard, but could do nothing until the new Dominican General, Fr. Andreas Frühwirth, who had just been elected at Lyons on 19 September, returned to Rome.

Fr. Frühwirth reached Rome on 30 October, but was unable to see Madre Lalia for some weeks. When he did see her eventually, he was cautious and non-committal. Some Dominicans, it appears, were disturbed at the idea of giving San Sisto

to sisters, including one unnamed Provincial (but surely that of the Roman Province) who was of the opinion that he was the real proprietor of whatever remained to the Dominican Order at San Sisto. There were others who accused Fr. Hickey of wishing to condemn Madre Lalia and her future sisters to a horrible, malarial existence, if not to certain death, in such a trap as San Sisto.

In spite of obstacles, and with the help of Fr. Lepidi and of Cardinal Parocchi, the Vicar of Rome, Madre Lalia soon obtained permission to take up residence in San Sisto. On 29 November 1892, a little over a year after she had first asked for San Sisto, Fr. Hickey and the community of San Clemente gave to Madre Lalia "the use of any premises at San Sisto which belong to this College of San Clemente", while reserving the proprietorship to San Clemente.

There still remained one obstacle, however: the municipal custodian had need of a generous tip. When she had found the money, Madre Lalia, with two other Dominican Sisters who had arrived at her invitation from Misilmeri, took up residence at S. Sisto in a winter snow on 17 January 1893. All three borrowed some bedding from sympathetic convents, and set themselves up in one room over the chapter room that was less dilapidated than the other six.

The first time the Sisters had Mass in the long-neglected church was almost a month later, when Fr. Frühwirth, the General, was the celebrant. They had been warned of his intention to come for Mass a day or two before, and since there was nothing in the sacristy had begged San Clemente to lend them what was necessary. The church was humid with decay, the walls dripping, so on the morning of the great day the Sisters got up at five o'clock and built a fire on the pavement of the church to warm the place up before the General arrived at 9 o'clock, as he had intimated he would. Fr. Frühwirth, however, arrived at 6 o'clock. The church was full of black smoke, the atmosphere dank, and there was nothing in the sacristy with which to celebrate Mass. For a full two hours the General, with, as Madre Lalia put it, "heroic patience", waited in the miserable sacristy until a brother arrived from San Clemente about 8 o'clock with the Mass kit.

A disastrous beginning, it might seem, but Fr. Frühwirth was so decent and encouraging, even after a tour of the ram-

shackle monastery, that the Sisters, in Madre Lalia's words, soon forgot their "immense pain and humiliation".

Initially, all that the Sisters occupied at San Sisto was what San Clemente owned. But bit by bit over the next thirty or forty years, the Sisters by one device or another prised room after room and section after section off the other owner, the municipality. By 1893 she had won a room from the municipality so that the sisters could have access through it to the choir. In 1894 she got another room, and opened a school for children in it. In 1895 she set her eye on a large room and soon was able to turn it into a dormitory for the postulants. By 1907 she had much of the cloister.

On 29 October of that year, with the Dominicans of San Clemente singing the Mass, Madre Lalia celebrated the 50th anniversary of her profession. But the joy was short-lived. There were internal dissensions in the community, and in the five other convents she had founded. On 27 April 1910 she was deposed from her office of Prioress General by the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, and chose to live out the rest of her life at Ceglie Messapico, near Brindisi, where she died on 9 April 1914.

By the time Madre Lalia's remains were brought to Rome in 1939 and placed in the chapter room of St. Dominic, the church and a part of the monastery had been restored to some of their old glory.

Most of this work of renovation was due to the interest and initiative of Cardinal Achille Liénart, bishop of Lille, who became Cardinal Titular of San Sisto in 1930. Between 1930 and 1938 the church was completely repaired, the romanesque campanile restored, and parts of the primitive basilica were uncovered. At the same time, and spurred on by Liénart, the Dominicans of San Clemente made up for most of their neglect of San Sisto for well over a century by pitching in as best they could.

On occasions before this, to be fair, San Clemente had shown an interest, however fitful, in what it owned at San Sisto. In 1923 it contributed Lit. 1000 (£ 10) to encourage the municipality to do something to prevent water getting on to the frescoes of Père Besson in the chapter room. In 1928 the community strengthened the apse of the church, and in 1929, when the Dominican mentor of the San Sisto Sisters, Fr. Vacas Galindo, a professor at the Angelicum, persuaded the municipality to abandon the

hayloft that occupied the courtyard end of the chapter room, San Clemente agreed to contribute Lit. 15.000 (then about £ 200) to the renovation of the whole chapter room, the municipality paying the remaining Lit. 35.000 of the total expense.

Later, when there was a possibility that the municipality might agree to place an altar in the chapter room, the community gave Fr. Vacas Galindo some 5.000 lire for incidentals, and for tips to various minor officials to smooth the way. In 1931 Lit. 3500 were handed to the same Dominican for repairs to the sacristy, and so on.

With Liénart leading the way, San Clemente contributed Lit. 7.500 to the strengthening and repair of the apse, to the total cost of which the Irish Province gave some Lit. 36.500 (£ 500). In 1933, when Cardinal Liénart expressed his willingness to undertake major restorations (estimated at Lit. 70.000), San Clemente administered the various sums which he forwarded (e.g. Lit. 30.000 in 1933), but does not seem to have made any contribution itself⁹.

Apart from the return of Madre Lalia's body in 1939, the greatest moment in the generalate of her protégée Cecilia Fichera (1920-1965) probably was the donation of the whole monastery of San Sisto to the Sisters of San Sisto on 28 February 1937. Years of pressure on the municipality and the government of the country had paid off, and the municipality began at once to move its funeral carriages out of the cortile and its horses out of St. Dominic's refectory.

On the day afterwards, Fr. Pius O'Daly, the Prior of San Clemente, visited the refectory-stable for, seemingly, the first time, and had a series of pictures taken (see Plate 4). From what he could see, the job facing the Sisters in the convent as a whole was formidable. They were exceedingly poor yet the estimate for the restoration of the great refectory alone was some Lit. 231.000 (£ 3000; \$ 15.000).

It was during that visit to the refectory that Fr. O'Daly had the idea of making an appeal for restoration funds for the refectory to all the English-speaking provinces, male and female, of the Dominican Order. With the blessing of Fr. Gillet, the

⁹ SCAR 57B.

General, and of Fr. Garde, the Assistant for the English-speaking provinces, an appeal was drafted, with suitable photographs, and was ready for distribution within a month.

The text of the appeal begins by describing the condition of the buildings at San Sisto, and, throwing history to the winds, notes largely that "the ravages of time and more so the malice of men, have conspired to bring them to a sad state of abandonment, even of desecration". The plight of the Sisters is stated more factually: "In this the Mother House of the Congregation were housed a Community of 110, and 120 orphans. They have had until now about one third of the original convent. The congestion through want of space was lamentable. The rooms used as refectories were overcrowded. So too were the dormitories in which some of the sisters had actually to sleep beneath the beams and rafters of a leaking roof". The appeal closed with a reminder that "with the monies received the ancient refectory and atrium will be perfectly restored, and the balance if any handed over towards the general restoration fund". A slab would be erected "to commemorate the generosity of the benefactors", and a prayer *in perpetuum* "would be said daily by the community, for the welfare of those who helped in the noble work"¹⁰.

The appeal was heard generously throughout the English-speaking world. Although the final sum fell some £ 250 short of the estimated total of £ 3000, it was enough for the immediate purpose, and exactly one year later the large refectory and attractive atrium (see Plate 4) were in use once again by Dominicans. To crown the joy of the Sisters, the Council of San Clemente voted in 1940 to cede to them the seven rooms which San Clemente still owned over the chapter room, an agreement which was formally notarized ten years later on 18 February 1950¹¹.

Once the Sisters had gained complete control of the monastery (as distinct, that is, from the church, the sacristy, and the inner half of the chapter room, which are still the property of San Clemente), they began to deploy the new space with great success.

Today, although the number of Sisters has dropped to 80, San Sisto is a flourishing concern. A primary school, founded

¹⁰ SCAR 89, pp. 70-71.

¹¹ SCAR 73, 2.

around 1940, has the full recognition of the state, as have the secondary school (1948) and the school for primary teachers which was set up in 1950, when the present spacious schools were built.

One of the busiest parts of the fine S. Sisto complex of today is the school for the apostolate of printing set up in 1929 behind the apse of the basilica, on the Via delle Camene. Over the years it has worked hard to train young printers, compositors and editors, and is capable of an admirable job of printing. For years it has produced, with infinite patience, the *Ordo* for the whole Dominican Order. One of its greatest feats, perhaps, and a singular tercentenary contribution, was to have turned this long-winded and uneven history of the Irish Dominican community of SS. Sisto e Clemente, and of the various other communities which have inhabited San Sisto and San Clemente, into a printed book within the all too short space of some two months in the autumn of 1977.



Plate 4 - The Refectory of St. Dominic at San Sisto before and after Restoration.



APPENDIX I

Priors of SS. Sisto e Clemente, 1677-1977

When the Irish Dominicans took over SS. Sisto e Clemente on 20 August 1677, the Prior of the two convents was Fr. Andrea Groni. He remained on as Prior until the end of that year, and as Prior gave the habit to Luis del Rosario for the convent of Guatemala on 21 September at San Clemente, and received the profession there on 18 October of Andrew Adam Brown, a Scot, of the English province, in the presence of Cardinal Howard and others, including Fausto Bedusi, the vicar of San Clemente, and Francesco del Pizzo, the novice master. The change from an Italian to an Irish staff (Thomas Craff, Prior, John Colman, subprior and master of novices) took place some time after that, probably in November. The first evidence of Fr. Craff as Prior is on 15 January 1678, when he received the profession of Vincenzo Castelli for the convent of Chio (SCAR 53, LV, fo. 9r; LP fo. 7r). He had been teaching for some time at Urbino, but because of various commitments there, was unable to travel at once to Rome when invited by Fr. John O'Connor, the vicar provincial, to become Prior. When he died on 17 September 1678, a new superior was not appointed at once, and John O'Connor took the profession of Luis del Rosario on 21 September.

In general, the period to 1700 is badly documented. The Council book (SCAR 37), running from 1659-1749, suddenly jumps from 1671 to 1689. The book of receptions and professions (1676-1787: SCAR 53), which Fr. Louis Nolan happily recovered from the Biblioteca comunale of Ascoli Piceno in 1916, is original only from 1718. The entries covering 1676-1718 were probably copied by Humbert Burke, shortly after he became Prior, from a volume,

probably the old San Sisto book of professions, which, at times, he was unable to decipher, and which, in fact, contained his own records as council secretary and master of novices from 1701 (for a calendar of SCAR 53, see H. Fenning in *Collectanea Hibernica* 14 [1971] 13-35).

For the period 1677-1700, then, the present list is largely dependent on a list of Priors (1677-1777) found among the papers of John Thomas Troy (Prior 1772-1777) and published from Dublin Diocesan Archives by P. F. Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, Third series (Dublin 1881), pp. 359-361. For Priors after that the list has been established from vestition, profession, council, Mass, kitchen, and account books, and, from 1910 onwards, when it first begins to record dates of election, from the Catalogus or Directory of the province.

Terminal dates for priorships are only assigned where the statutory three-year term was prolonged (because of an approaching provincial chapter, for example) or anticipated (to facilitate the electorate, for example, or because of another appointment) or simply cut short, as in the case of Patrick Kirwan, who was deposed and sent into exile by the then General at the behest of Pope Clement XIII because he received Charles James Stuart ("Charles III") with royal honours at San Sisto on 1 April 1766 — "motivis non contemnendis ductus", as George Plunkett, the council secretary remarks (SCAR 57, p. 69). Where there is no certain date for the beginning of a priorship, the first known date is given, but with an asterisk. Priors who died in office are indicated by a cross.

Thomas Craff

(also Coffey, Creagh)

*15. 1.1678 - 17. 9.1678 †

Charles O'Connor, Vicar

* 4.10.1678

Felix MacDowell

*23. 1.1679

Thomas Burke

1683

Charles O'Connor

1687

Christopher French, Vicar

14. 2.1691

William O'Dwyer

- 23. 5.1693

George Nangle

1693

Gerard Weldon (Veldon)

1694

Dominic Mulfin

1697

Thomas Burke

* 3. 7.1700

Peter MacDermott	* 2. 7.1703
John Dillon	* 3.10.1707
Antoninus Sall	*30.10.1710
Patrick O'Dugan	*26.11.1713
Humbert Burke	*28.11.1716
Humbert Burke	1719
James Fitzgerald	*21. 4.1723
Patrick O'Dugan	25. 5.1726
Patrick O'Dugan	25. 5.1729
John MacGhee	17.10.1732
John Brett	24.10.1735
Thomas Vincent Kelly	30. 5.1739 - 13. 9.1739 †
Thomas Burke, Praeses	13. 9.1739
James Fitzgerald	24. 6.1740
James Fitzgerald	6. 7.1743
Peter MacKeon	19.11.1746
James Watson	21.12.1749 - 4. 3.1752 †
Thomas Hope	15. 3.1752
John Thomas Netterville	23. 3.1755
John O'Neill	9.11.1757
Patrick Kirwan	14.11.1760
Patrick Kirwan	16. 5.1764 - 8. 4.1766
John Murphy	4.10.1766
Michael Brennan	15.10.1769
John Thomas Troy	1.11.1772
John Thomas Troy, Vicar (bp. 2.12.1776)	11.11.1775 - 21. 3.1777
Francis Thomas Levins	14. 4.1777
John Connolly, Vicar	7. 9.1779
Luke Concanen	20. 6.1781
Luke Concanen	30. 6.1784
John Connolly	8. 7.1787
John Connolly	28. 1.1791
John Connolly, Praeses	13. 5.1794
Clement Dunne	28. 6.1796
Clement Dunne	- 28.11.1803 †
Joseph Taylor	* 9. 1.1804
Joseph Taylor	9.1807
Joseph Taylor	- 11. 5.1816 (?)

* * *

Francis O'Finan	11. 5.1816
Joseph Harrigan	29. 6.1819
Giacinto Cipolletti	* 4. 2.1821
Joseph Harrigan	6.1824 - 4. 6.1826
Joseph Lyons, Vicar	1826
Ignazio Buffa	30.10.1827
Thomas Butler, Praeses	4.11.1829
Mauro Reggio	1.11.1830
Giuseppe Mennini	15.10.1831
Michael O'Regan	10.1834
Dominic Cotts, Praeses	19. 6.1837
Dominic Cotts	6. 1.1838
Giuseppe Clotet	1842
Lorenzo Varano, Vicar	1846
Thomas Mullins	1848 - 25.10.1850
Joseph Mullooly, Praeses	27.10.1850
Joseph Mullooly	26. 9.1854
Thomas Folan	5.11.1857 - 18. 9.1858
Joseph Mullooly	25.12.1858
Joseph Mullooly, Praeses	17. 2.1862
Thomas Nicholas Burke	6.10.1864 - 7. 7.1867
Joseph Mullooly, Vicar	1867
Joseph Mullooly	30.12.1868
Joseph Mullooly	1871
Joseph Mullooly	1874
Joseph Mullooly	20.12.1877 - 25. 6.1880 †
Thomas O'Callaghan	2.11.1880
Thomas O'Callaghan	2. 9.1883
Michael Costello	2. 9.1884
Louis Hickey	18.10.1887
Louis Hickey	18.10.1890
Humbert Donegan	21. 4.1894
Pius Dowling	19. 9.1897
Pius Dowling	3.10.1900
Pius Dowling	3.11.1903 - 9. 1.1905
Thomas Crotty	9. 1.1905
Thomas Crotty	13. 2.1908 - 23. 4.1911
Michael Moore	8. 5.1911 - 17. 6.1912 (illness)

Louis Nolan	22.11.1912
Louis Nolan	22.11.1915
Thady Crofts	12. 2.1919 - 23. 4.1922
Thomas Garde	9. 5.1922
Michael Browne	22. 5.1925
Michel Browne	24. 5.1928 - 15. 7.1930
Vincent Rowan	15. 7.1930
Vincent Rowan	1.11.1933 - 6. 8.1936 †
Pius O'Daly	1.11.1936
Pius O'Daly	1.11.1939 - 16. 5.1940 †
Raymund Dowdall	15.10.1940
Raymund Dowdall	15.10.1943
Raymund Dowdall	23.11.1946
Isidore McArdle	20.12.1949
Leo Lennon	9. 3.1953
Leo Lennon	25. 4.1956
Henry Peel	4. 5.1959
Anselm Moynihan	21. 6.1962
Anselm Moynihan	17. 5.1965
Ambrose Duffy	31. 5.1968
Ambrose Duffy	11. 6.1971
Luke Dempsey	14. 5.1974

APPENDIX II

A Necrology of SS. Sisto e Clemente, 1645-1977

A year or so before he died in 1960, Fr. Thomas Garde suggested strongly on several occasions that there should be a *Tabella* or plaque in the sacristy of San Clemente listing all those who had died at San Clemente or San Sisto since the Irish Dominicans took possession of the two convents in 1677, "ne memoria eorum pereat". There was, as I discovered later, such a list for both places for the years 1645-1677 (SCAR 60, pp. 85-88), but nothing for the three hundred years after that, though here and there deaths were noted in passing in council book, Mass books, and the like.

The present chronology is very, very incomplete, I am sure, but it is at least a beginning. Obviously it is impossible to list all those who lived in or were assigned to San Sisto and San Clemente over those years. What is presented here is something less ambitious. It is not, however, a necrology of the community of SS. Sisto e Clemente but of SS. Sisto e Clemente (although, for lack of information, it is largely San Clemente from 1800 onwards). First of all it includes all those Irish or other Dominicans who were members of the community at the time of their death, or who died at San Clemente; then all Irish Dominicans who have died in Rome or its vicinity since about 1645, irrespective of their affiliation (like Fr. Garde, most would have belonged to SS. Sisto e Clemente at one time or another); finally, all others who are buried in San Clemente or San Sisto (cardinals, for example), or who, like some of the long-serving lay staff, have died while in the service of the community.

In drawing up this list I have used all the entries in SCAR 60

for 1645-1677, the *Necrologium Provinciae Hiberniae Fr. S. O.P.* (Dublin 1953), various account books, etc. in SCAR, and, with many thanks to Fr. Godfrey Anstruther of the English Dominican province, who copied them out for me in 1960, the Irish Dominican entries in the Minerva necrology which Fr. P. T. Masetti put together in 1873 for the years 1575-1869 from the church's parish registers.

In the necrology of 1645-1677, the place of burial at San Clemente is given as "the sacristy". This I take to mean an inner or second sacristy, beyond the present one, more or less where St. Cyril's chapel is today. As we know from evidence given by the historian Fioravanti Martinelli at the Tor di Nona in 1629 (Vatican Library, MS. Barb. lat. 4885, fos. 37v-49r), the sacristy as such in his day was the present-day vestibule. Off this sacristy (through an entrance immediately to the left, now closed) there were two rooms (the present sacristy and St. Cyril's chapel), the inner one of which was a burial chamber, with portable altar and, on a ledge above the eye level, ten locked coffers or "cap-pellette".

Possibly this is the sacristy to which the necrology refers, although there is no mention of it in the various inventories of the church in SCAR 60. Before his death in 1716, the Dominican Cardinal Ferrari, together with the Maronite bishop Athanasius Safar, had a vault prepared for themselves in front of the altar of S. Domenico in Soriano in which to be buried, but later both elected to be buried elsewhere. From 1750 this began to be used as a burial vault by the Irish Dominicans. In 1866, when excavating the lower church, Fr. Mullooly transferred the remains which he found in this vault to a new one in front of the high altar in the newly-excavated basilica. Burials at S. Maria sopra Minerva were in a vault in front of the chapel of St. Dominic.

- 7.1634 Thomas Nicholas Lynch of Galway, Prior of San Sisto (= SS). Buried in S. Maria sopra Minerva (= Minerva).
- 28. 9.1645 Vincent de Clementis, French Laybrother, who died while setting up a herbal pharmacy at San Clemente (= SC), where buried in sacristy.
- 16. 9.1648 Didacus de Mira of Irish province. Buried SC in sacristy.

- 8.10.1648 Giovanni Donato de Grassis of Bandevolo, a guest, while on business for his brother, a Dominican. Buried SC in sacristy.
- 13.10.1648 Giovanni a Santa Maria of Osimo (Ancona), servant. Buried SC in sacristy.
- 9.12.1648 Antonio Cusentino of Calabria, vicar of convent of Ferentino, who died of dropsy while visiting SS, where buried.
- 22.12.1648 Giovanni Suares, Sicilian, who after 25 years as a Dominican became a secular priest, but, when dying, took habit again at SC, where he died. Buried SC in sacristy.
11. 7.1650 Tommaso Casannia of Rome, a young and promising priest who, after a long illness, died at SC but was buried at SS as he had requested, because it was there he had received the habit and had made his profession.
26. 8.1651 Reginald Cesareus, a Pole of the Russian province. A very holy man, he predicted that he would die on a Saturday, because of his devotion to Our Lady, and that he would be the only one to die of the six who were ill at the time. Buried SS.
2. 9.1652 Stefano da Firenze, Laybrother, aged 70. A distinguished herbalist ("aromatarius egregius"), he died at and was buried in sacristy of SC, after more than 30 years as a Dominican.
1. 7.1662 Flora, wife of Domenico Barbò, who, after a long illness, died in her home near SC, to which she was brought by the parish priest and clergy of St. John Lateran for burial in the sacristy.
- 28.10.1664 Giulia, wife of Sebastiano Daniele Marinense, who died at home near SC in childbirth, and was buried in sacristy.
23. 8.1676 John Baptist Hackett, at the Minerva, where buried.
17. 9.1678 Thomas Craff, Prior, at San Clemente. Presumably buried there.
- 25.12.1678 John O'Connor, procurator general and vicar provincial of Irish province, in house of Duke Francesco Gaetani. Buried SS.
13. 1.1712 Charles O'Connor, Prior 1687-1691, aged 62. Buried Minerva.

3. 2.1712 James Fitzeustace, secular priest, Irish. Buried SS.
15. 3.1724 Thomas Burke, Prior 1683-1687. Buried Minerva.
24. 4.1728 Patrick Plunkett, Casanatense theologian from 1700. Buried Minerva.
15. 6.1728 Gerard Weldon, Prior 1694-1697, probably at SC.
23. 5.1739 Edmund Burke, Casanatense theologian from 1729, aged 74. Buried Minerva.
13. 9.1739 Thomas Vincent Kelly, Prior. Buried probably SC.
17. 9.1742 Vincenzo Gotti, Dominican, cardinal of Title of SS, where buried.
- 2.1743 John Dominic Lynch, aged 32. Buried Minerva.
- 2.1743 Patrick O'Dugan, Prior 1713-1716, 1726-1732. Buried probably SS.
17. 1.1745 Luigi Lucini, Dominican, cardinal of Title of SS, where buried.
- 1750 James Fitzgerald, Prior 1723-1726. First to be buried in Ferrari-Safar vault in front of altar of S. Domenico in Soriano at SC.
4. 3.1752 James Watson, Prior. Buried probably SS.
- 9.1753 John Rochford, bursar, member of community from 1726.
16. 2.1756 Patrick Brullaughan, Casanatense theologian from 1742, aged 55. Buried Minerva.
28. 5.1758 Amadeus Eyal, Bavarian, Laybrother of SS e SC, aged 42. Died at Minerva, where presumably buried.
8. 1.1759 Michael Ward, native of Dublin, student, aged 20. Died at Naples, in convent of S. Catarina, having departed SS one week earlier.
22. 5.1763 John Baptist Grollier, Laybrother, who took the habit as a member of Irish province at SS on 7.3.1714 and made solemn profession at SC on 30.5.1716. Buried SC?
- 29.11.1763 Matthias Vogler, Laybrother, German, who received the habit as a member of the Irish province on 6.4.1733 and made profession at SC on 28.11.1735. Buried SC?
- 15.12.1763 Barnabas Mangan, bursar, aged 41.
26. 3.1768 John Baptist Lynch, aged 50, former regent of SS 1742-1745, penitentiary at S. Maria Maggiore since 1.5.1746, and vicar of the college of penitentiaries from 27.2.

1756. To comply with the law of Pius V with respect to penitentiaries of S. M. Maggiore, was assigned to the convent of S. Domenico at Terracina. Buried at Minerva.
- 176? Michael Forstall, who received habit at SC on 22.7.1715, died at Genoa as a member of province of Lombardy (SCAR 53, LV, p. 12: "Obiit Genuae anno 176 ").
9. 1.1770 Johannes Mayr, Laybrother, Tiroler, who received the habit as a member of the Irish province on 26.2.1730 and was professed at SC on 11.9.1732. Buried SS?
- 1786 James Bodkin, Casanatense theologian, former provincial of Roman province, member of community 1739-1743. Buried at Minerva?
- 2.1792 Thomas Rock, student, at Naples, shortly after leaving SC with malaria.
- 26.10.1792 Clement Donnelly, at Louvain, on way back to Ireland after a bout of malaria at SC.
- 21.11.1793 Charles O'Kelly, Casanatense theologian from 1756, aged 88. Buried at Minerva.
- 28.11.1803. Clement Dunne, Prior, at SC.
- 9.1807 Dominic MacDonough, Bursar, at SC.
19. 6.1810 Luke Concanen, first bishop of New York, Prior 1784-1790, at Naples aged 63.
- 20.11.1819 Joseph Taylor, aged 72, Prior 1804-1810-? Buried SC.
16. 5.1832 Benedetto Naro, cardinal of the title of SC 1816-1832. Buried under chapel of St. Catherine.
11. 4.1835 Francesco Canal, cardinal of the Title of SC 1834-1835. Buried under Rosary chapel.
- 27.11.1847 Francis Joseph O'Finan, bishop of Killala, Prior 1816-1819, aged 76. Buried at Minerva.
1. 6.1852 Andrew O'Brien, aged 75, who joined the Order as a Laybrother, later became a priest, served for a while in 1842 as bursar at SC, and worked for some years in the hospice at the Minerva on N. American Dominican affairs. Buried in Minerva.
- 4.1865 Frediano Guirlani of Lucca, Laybrother, who entered SC as a Tertiary in 1826 and took the habit in 1831. Buried SC?

- 8.1875 Vincent Doherty, aged 50, who had been a student at SC in 1844-1846, and was a member of SC from 1867. Buried in the Campo Verano at S. Lorenzo, as are all others from now on, unless otherwise noted.
- 2.1876 Peter Vincent Skelly. Died at SC.
25. 6.1880 Joseph Mullooly, Prior, aged 68. Buried in Campo Verano, but his remains were returned in 1902 to SC, where they are now in the burial vault in lower church in front of high altar.
1. 8.1880 Sebastian Twomey, student, of typhus, after some nine months at SC, to which he had come from Ireland in the Autumn of 1879 after a year of novitiate.
21. 1.1884 Constantius Mahoney, subdeacon, who had arrived from Tallaght on 20.9.1881.
- 8.10.1890 Natale Scarpezzi, Laybrother, aged 57.
27. 2.1892 Giacinto Parsetti, Laybrother, aged 71.
15. 7.1894 Gabriel Moore, aged 28, who had been a priest since 11.6.1892.
5. 3.1906 Michael Costello, Prior 1884-1887, aged 83.
13. 7.1907 Louis Hickey, ex-Provincial, Prior 1887-1893, aged 65.
28. 1.1909 James Lyttleton, aged 70, who came to Rome in 1881 as one of a four-man *équipe* charged with producing a critical edition of the works of St. Thomas (the "Leonine" edition).
9. 4.1914 Maria Antonia Lalia, aged 74, foundress (1893) at SS of the Congregazione delle Suore Domenicane di San Sisto Vecchio. She died at Ceglie Mesaspico (Brindisi), but since 1939 has been buried in chapter room at SS.
28. 9.1916 Reginald Carr, subdeacon, aged 26, at Nettuno.
- 17.12.1916 Hyacinthe-Marie Cormier, lately Master General of the Dominican Order, who had been in retirement at SC since 4 September. Buried at SS. Domenico e Sisto (Angelicum).
6. 8.1936 Vincent Rowan, Prior, in hospital in Dublin, aged 54.
18. 5.1940 Pius O'Daly, Prior, in hospital in Dublin, aged 41.
2. 6.1941 Luigi Baltrica, aged 79, who came from Sigillo to SC as Cook in 1880.

25. 6.1945 Simon McAuliffe, Laybrother, aged 76, who joined SC in 1896 after first profession, and never returned again to Ireland.
27. 3.1946 Gundisalvus Nunes, Laybrother, aged 65, who joined the Irish province from Portugal in 1905, and SC in 1935.
4. 7.1946 Peter McSweeney, Laybrother, aged 53, who joined the Order in 1918, and came to SC in 1929.
- 27.12.1954 Onorato Brugnoli, aged 83, who came to SC from Poli as gardener.
28. 9.1956 Amadeo Iannucci of Poli, aged 78, cook at SC since 1900.
20. 5.1960 Thomas Garde, ex-Provincial, Prior 1922-1925, aged 73.
12. 8.1963 Patrick McSwiggan, bursar, in hospital in Dublin, aged 44.
29. 5.1967 Maria Cecilia Fichera, Prioress General of the Congregazione delle Suore Domenicane di S. Sisto Vecchio, 1920-1965, aged 79. Buried in chapter room at SS.
19. 1.1969 Ernesto Andreangeli, aged 85, who was in the service of the community from 1907. He too was a native of Poli.
31. 3.1971 Michael Browne, Cardinal of the Title of S. Paolo in Arenula, General of the Dominican Order 1955-1962, Prior 1925-1930, in Rome, aged 84. Buried in St. Mary's Tallaght, Co. Dublin.
- 17.12.1973 Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Cardinal of the Title of SC 1958-1962, aged 90. Buried in lower church of SC under chapel of St. John Baptist which he had restored.

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