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The Irish Dominican  
Province, 1698-1797

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*Hugh Fenning O P*

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Liam G. Walsh, D.P.  
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THE IRISH DOMINICAN PROVINCE  
1698-1797





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## Preface

Since the Irish Dominicans or Friars Preachers have worked at home and abroad for more than seven centuries, it has long been practically impossible to write a thorough account of their story within the limits of a single volume. Many Dominicans, from Bartholomew Russell in the 1850s to Luke Taheny a century later, gathered materials for such a book, but each in turn went to his reward leaving boxes of historical notes but little of substance in print. The best answer to the problem was to limit the terrain: to concentrate on one particular century rather than on seven and so nourish some small hope of writing a substantial book within a lifetime. The choice of the eighteenth century rather than any other was due to the influence of Dean Cogan's *Diocese of Meath: Ancient and Modern*, of which the pages teem with the names of Dominican curates and parish priests, legally members of the priories of Mullingar and Trim, who were forced by circumstance to work and die "on the secular mission". It seemed natural, even a work of piety, to discover more about these solitary friars and the world in which they lived.

Every historian looks for a "period" or subject with a definite beginning and a definite end. In the present case there is no problem about the beginning, since the regular clergy of all orders were sent into exile with the bishops of Ireland in 1698. The problem lies rather with the end. Only a few Dominicans were marginally involved in the rebellion of 1798; the Act of Union in 1800 meant nothing to them as a body; even Catholic Emancipation in 1829 denied their legal existence. However, the 1798 rebellion was preceded by the viceroy's prohibition of any meeting of more than five or six people. That was in 1797 when the Dominicans were due to hold their provincial chapter, a quadriennial legislative assembly chiefly devoted to the election of a new prior provincial or national superior. While most of those entitled to attend the chapter stayed at home, a small group from Dublin and Meath proceeded to elect a new provincial. With this domestic coup our story ends, if only because the dispute was not finally settled until the new century had begun, while the "schismatic chapter" of 1797 was to colour and embitter the affairs of the Irish province into the 1820s.

The scope of this book is somewhat wider than its title might lead one to suppose. Throughout the century, the Irish Dominicans had colleges of their own at Rome, Lisbon and Louvain. They worked as chaplains to the English-speaking merchant colonies of Spain, as also at



the embassy chapels of London. Their chief areas of missionary activity outside Ireland before 1773 were in Scotland and at St Croix in the Danish West Indies. From 1785 they began to work in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and the United States. In Ireland itself they maintained some twenty priories or convents of which the smaller and most remote were doomed to extinction after 1750, largely because of an enforced brake on recruitment. The reader will also find some account of the enclosed nuns of the Order who had four monasteries in Ireland and another at Lisbon, apart from some attempted foundations on the continent.

There is no emphasis in this present study on the history of individual houses, but they all occasionally appear, sometimes in the context of a dispute with the local bishop, and sometimes because a new detail of local interest seemed worth a mention. Nor is there any specific account of the thirteen Dominicans who became bishops in Ireland during this period. After episcopal consecration, they no longer came under the jurisdiction of the Order, and seldom played any part in its affairs. Their careers belong rather to diocesan history, though they often proved useful to their former confreres as helpers "close at hand in time of distress".

The regular clergy of Ireland numbered almost eight hundred at their peak in 1750, and thus accounted for about one third of the priests on the mission. Almost exclusively they were friars; exactly half of them were Franciscans. That left the Dominicans, with 180, the Augustinians and the Carmelites in descending order of numerical importance. What affected any of these groups generally affected the others, not only because the political situation was the same for all, but because they could at times fall out among themselves or join forces in an attempt to make some bishop change his mind. For these reasons, the present work is of more than Dominican interest; it adds to what is known about the other mendicant orders, about particular dioceses, and even about the Church in Ireland as a whole. This is all the more timely since the most recent ambitious work on eighteenth-century Ireland has virtually nothing to say about the Church or faith of the necessarily silent majority.

The national superiors or "priors provincial", who held office under normal circumstances for four years, have been used in this study to give a framework or structure to the whole. This has proved a useful device for maintaining chronological development, since important events can find their proper place even if the provincial of the time knew little or nothing about them. The method does not lend itself so readily to the

development of themes nor to subjects such as the careers of individual missionaries in the United States.

By force of circumstance, the story unfolded here first appeared at intervals between 1968 and 1986 as a series of seven articles in *Archivum Fratrum Predicatorum*, the Roman journal of the Istituto Storico Domenicano. They are here reprinted with as many minor adjustments as possible to give separate articles the appearance of a book. Fortunately all were originally written in the same format to provide a continuous narrative.

The assistance of many historians who helped me down the years is acknowledged in the footnotes. Fr Luke Taheny (d. 1973) was the first to encourage my interest in the history of the province. Only for Fr Louis Coffey, provincial, I would never have been sent to Louvain to study history, nor to Santa Sabina in Rome as a member of the Istituto Storico Domenicano. The reader is as much indebted to both of them as I am myself. Fr Emilio Panella OP, currently editor of the *Archivum*, kindly gave his permission to reprint these articles. The present provincial of Ireland, Fr Thomas Jordan, almost without being asked, has generously underwritten this publication. Fathers Austin Flannery, Bernard Treacy and Michael Commane of Dominican Publications have done the rest. To one and all, my most grateful thanks.

Hugh Fenning OP  
Tallaght  
September 1990

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## Abbreviations

AFP:	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i> .
AGOP:	General archives of the Order of Preachers, Santa Sabina, Rome.
APF:	Archives of the S. Congregation "de Propaganda Fide", Piazza di Spagna, Rome.
Arch. Hib.:	<i>Archivum Hibernicum</i> .
ASV:	Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City, Rome.
Coll. Hib.:	<i>Collectanea Hibernica</i> .
Hib. Dom.:	T. de Burgo, <i>Hibernia Dominicana</i> , Cologne 1762.
MOPH:	<i>Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica</i> , Rome 1896, in progress.
O'Heyne:	(ed. A. Coleman), <i>The Irish Dominicans of the Seventeenth Century by John O'Heyne O.P.</i> , Dundalk 1902.
SCA:	Scottish Catholic Archives, Columba House, Edinburgh.
SCAR:	San Clemente archives, Via Labicana, Rome.
SOP:	J. Quétif - J. Échard, <i>Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum</i> , Paris 1719-1721, 2 vols.
IA:	Irish Dominican Provincial Archives, St Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

## CHAPTER ONE

# Exile and Recovery 1698 - 1721

### INTRODUCTION AND SOURCES

The first two decades of the century was a time of real crisis for the Irish Dominican province, a period which opened with the exile of almost all its members and closed with the celebration at Dublin of the first elective provincial chapter of the 18th century. The history of those years is, accordingly, a story of disruption, dispersal, survival, and eventual restoration. While the exile of 1698 was neither the first nor the most severe suffered by Irish religious, it was far more thorough, far more complete, than the partially effective exiles of the 17th century. It was also to be the last persecution of the regular clergy carried out by the Irish government. One would like to know how their enforced exile affected the Irish Dominicans, what befell the exiles on the continent, how various convents were maintained or restored in Ireland, how fresh recruits were received and trained. These and other possible questions are, however, only touched upon incidentally in the present study. What follows is primarily an account of the four provincials who directed the recovery of the province. One will find in it whatever is known of their careers and activities, but questions of law and jurisdiction occupy the centre of the stage. The year 1721 has been chosen as the *terminus ad quem*, not because it marks the dawn of toleration, but because it marks the end of the Master General's immediate control over the naming of provincials and over the three foreign colleges of the province.

Since periods of crisis are rarely easy to document, it is not surprising that only two or three letters survive of all those presumably written by the provincials during these twenty-three years. Save for the *Liber Provinciae*, a register of visitations and appointments covering the years 1683-1717, and the house-chronicle of Athenry, few contemporary



documents have been preserved in Ireland<sup>1</sup>. Among the existing literary sources the most revealing are probably the unpublished historical writings of Fr. Edmund Burke (1665-1739)<sup>2</sup>. His *Dissertatio* and the much shorter *Brevis Notitia* appear to have been intended for the public. His notebook or Journal, however, (from which the two works mentioned appear to have been compiled), contains far more detailed and much less guarded comment on the internal affairs of the province. In John O'Heyne's *Epilogus Chronologicus* (1706) we have an historical source which is on the one hand utterly free from any trace of Edmund Burke's party spirit, and which on the other is devoted to an aspect of provincial history on which Burke scarcely touched<sup>3</sup>. O'Heyne contented himself with naming and describing every Irish member of the Order whom he had ever met or heard of: his book in consequence, though scarcely a history, remains our best source of information on the sufferings of the friars during the Jacobite War (1689-1691) and their later dispersal on the continent. Although later writers such as Thomas Burke (1762) and Dr. Pochin Mould (1957) have touched upon this period<sup>4</sup>, the only detailed studies are those made at the beginning of this century by Fr. Reginald Walsh. We have several articles from his pen on Irish Dominicans who suffered imprisonment or transportation

<sup>1</sup> Both are in the provincial archives at St Mary's, Tallaght, Co. Dublin, hereafter cited as TA. See H. Fenning, *The Athenry House-Chronicle, 1666-1779*, in *Coll. Lib. II* (1968) 36-52.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Edmund Burke's career is briefly sketched by Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, Kilkenny 1762, 548-550. His *Journal* (now AGOP XIII, 156) contains copies of documents extracted from the now lost archives of Holy Cross College, Louvain, as well as several Latin narratives of his own composition on the history of the Province. AGOP XIII, 157 (a collection of Irish documents ranging in date from 1669 to 1795) contains two of his other works: one is the *Dissertatio* or *Dissertatiuncula de origine, antiquitate, et progressu Provinciae Hiberniae Ord. Praed.*, written on both sides of 27 leaves and divided into 64 numbered paragraphs; the other is an unfinished copy of his *Brevis Notitia Provinciae Hiberniae ab anno 1600 ad 1736 inclusive*. Finally, there is a single page of narrative in Burke's hand, perhaps an intended addition to the *Dissertatio*, in AGOP XIV, PP part 1, 389. Hereafter these writings will be cited only by their titles: *Journal*, *Dissertatio*, and *Brevis Notitia*.

<sup>3</sup> John O'Heyne, *Epilogus Chronologicus*, Louvain 1706, an extremely rare work: there is a copy in the provincial archives and another in the British Museum. A second edition, accompanied by an English translation, was published by Fr. Ambrose Coleman at Dundalk in 1902. All references in this book are to the second edition, cited simply as O'Heyne.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 152-164, 528-530. Daphne Pochin Mould, *The Irish Dominicans*, Dublin 1957, 150-177.

in the years under consideration here <sup>5</sup>. The burning of the Public Record Office in Dublin (1922), from which most of his information had been derived, has given his articles permanent value.

Among the purely archival sources, the most consistently useful and important is Series IV of the Master General's archives, in which one finds the minutes of the Generals' letters to their Irish subjects. These registers were not always well kept, and some (particularly for the French provinces) appear to have been lost <sup>6</sup>, but those which remain are indispensable for the history of the Irish province during this period. They are particularly useful for the history of the three colleges (Louvain, Rome, and Lisbon) which from 1694 to 1721 were under the General's immediate direction. They are particularly disappointing in that they contain virtually no trace of Fr. Cloche's correspondence with the Irish provincials after 1710. The archives of Propaganda Fide contain some relevant original letters, notably apropos of the attempt to depose the provincial in 1713, but by far the greater part of the material found there refers either to the College of Louvain or to applications made for faculties or money by Irish priests of San Sisto in Rome. For some reason, perhaps the return of calm to the Irish mission, there is scarcely one reference to Irish Dominicans in the archives of Propaganda between 1715 and 1720. The series *Nunziatura di Fiandra* in the Vatican Archives, ably calendared by Fr. Cathaldus Giblin, O.F.M., can hardly be said to fill this lacuna, but it does contain some very informative documents and has been particularly useful in explaining the diplomatic background to the exile of 1698 <sup>7</sup>.

#### THE SETTING OF THE STAGE, 1685-1691

During the brief effective reign (1685-89) of James II, the first Catholic ruler of England and Ireland since Mary Tudor, the Province enjoyed its first period of calm for many decades and availed of the

<sup>5</sup> R. Walsh, *Glimpses of the Penal Times*, published in fifteen numbered installments in the pages of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 20 (1906), 22 (1907), 25 (1909), 26 (1909), 27 (1910), 28 (1910), 29 (1911), 30 (1911).

<sup>6</sup> Only two volumes covering the years 1698-1721 concern the French provinces: IV. 186, spanning the period 1692-1719, is mostly composed of letters to people outside the order; IV. 202, ranging from 1711 to 1731, contains more letters to Dominicans but cannot compare for fullness or regularity with the contemporary Italian and Spanish registers. Since most of the Irish exiles of 1698 seem to have gone first to France, it is unfortunate that the volumes of Series IV dealing with the French provinces should have been badly kept or later lost.

<sup>7</sup> C. Giblin, O.F.M., *Catalogue of material of Irish interest in the Collection*

opportunity to set its house in order. Long abandoned convents were restored, the habit was publicly worn, and the provincials exerted themselves to improve religious discipline among their subjects. Unfortunately, the war in Ireland (1689-91) between James II and William of Orange disrupted much of what the friars had laboriously achieved under royal protection in the preceding four years. As the war progressed, always in William's favour, the Dominicans seem to have successively abandoned their poor convents everywhere outside Connacht. In August 1689 the Protestants of Ulster, where William's army landed, took control of Derry and Enniskillen and proclaimed him as their king. In the following summer the chief battle of the war was fought near Drogheda on the Boyne. Victory there gave William possession of Drogheda, Dublin, Kilkenny, Waterford, and Cork, in each of which there were Dominican communities before his arrival. Meanwhile, though James had fled to France, his army remained substantially intact in Connacht. After further battles at Athlone and Aughrim, the war closed in 1691 with a siege of two days at Galway and another of two months at Limerick. On the conclusion of the siege of Limerick the soldiers of the Irish army, 14,000 strong, were permitted to sail for France where they enlisted in the army of Louis XIV. William's success ensured the subsequent domination of the Protestant minority over Irish affairs and thus laid the political basis, not only for the exile of the religious in 1698, but for all the imminent penal laws against the Catholics which were to remain on the statute books until 1829<sup>8</sup>.

There is no need to imagine the effect of this three-year war on the Dominican province: one can read of it in the pages of O'Heyne. Although that author nowhere addresses himself specifically to the subject, for his method remains consistently biographical, one can reconstruct the scene from his *obiter dicta*. After the battle of the Boyne and the immediate surrender of Drogheda, Frs. James Teeling and Constantine

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Nunziatura di Fiandra, Vatican Archives, Part 3, Vols. 81-101, *Collectanea Hibernica*, No. 4 (Dublin 1961); Part 4, Vols. 102-122, *Collectanea Hibernica*, No. 5 (Dublin 1962).

<sup>8</sup> The main lines of the political struggle are discussed by G. N. Clark, *The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714*, Oxford 1947, 290-311. The most recent study on the penal laws in their relation to the Catholic church has been written by Maureen Wall, *The Penal Laws, 1691-1760, Church and State from the Treaty of Limerick to the accession of George III*, (Irish History Series, No. 1) Dublin 1961. Both these works have bibliographies on their subjects.

MacDonogh of that community made their way to Limerick<sup>9</sup>. At Dublin, Fr. James Fullam 'was obliged to leave the country'<sup>10</sup>. From Kilkenny, occupied by the Williamites, Fr. Raggett fled west to Athenry<sup>11</sup> and Fr. Thomas Brennan to Portumna<sup>12</sup>. Another refugee from Leinster received at Athenry was an old priest from the convent of Athy whose name O'Heyne could not recall<sup>13</sup>. On the taking of Cork, Fr. Peter O'Garvan left for Portugal, bringing the altar-plate of the convent with him<sup>14</sup>. When Galway surrendered, the ex-provincial Fr. John Browne with several other religious spent more than four months in prison<sup>15</sup>. Fr. Gerald Gibbon, having accidentally encountered a detachment of the Protestant army near Listowel, was killed by them without ceremony<sup>16</sup>. After the battle of Aughrim, Fr. Richard O'Madden of Portumna died of hunger and exposure after a fortnight spent hiding in a bog until William's army should have passed<sup>17</sup>. Besides these O'Heyne speaks of eleven others, many of them army chaplains, who left for France on the fall of Limerick in 1691. Undoubtedly the war reduced the number of Dominicans working in Ireland, broke up such struggling convents as had existed outside Connacht, and disrupted the normal organization of the province. O'Heyne mentions one whose return to Ireland after his studies was prevented by the war<sup>18</sup>, and another who, having been assigned to Sligo as a *lector*, found it impossible to teach and left again with James' army for France<sup>19</sup>.

Leaving to one side the losses, destruction and inconveniences just described, one could say that the war undermined the stability of the

<sup>9</sup> O'Heyne, 21, 251.

<sup>10</sup> O'Heyne, 29.

<sup>11</sup> O'Heyne, 33.

<sup>12</sup> O'Heyne, 33. Both Fr. Brennan and Fr. Raggett died within a year of leaving Kilkenny.

<sup>13</sup> O'Heyne, 49.

<sup>14</sup> O'Heyne, 71. The plate of the convent was deposited for many years at St. Malo before being brought back to Cork where it is still preserved. It is described by Margaret MacAuliffe, *The Dominicans in Cork*, Cork 1939, 25-26. It appears from AGOP IV, 217, pp. 19-20, that Fr. O'Garvan was more properly called Louis and that the plate taken by him from Cork consisted of four silver chalices, a silver crucifix, a silver monstrance, and a silver ciborium.

<sup>15</sup> O'Heyne, 145.

<sup>16</sup> O'Heyne, 99.

<sup>17</sup> O'Heyne, 211.

<sup>18</sup> Ambrose O'Garvan, detained at La Rochelle. O'Heyne, 77.

<sup>19</sup> Michael O'Hara. O'Heyne, 253.



Dominican province in two ways. William's victory laid the cornerstone of an enduring political structure hostile to its very existence, and at the same time permanently impoverished the wealthy Catholics on whom it relied heavily for its support. Something will later be said of the political situation: the economic aspect of the question may be dealt with here. The biggest obstacle to the recovery of the Province after 1691 was that the war was followed by the confiscation of the estates of all who had taken arms against William. The proportion of land in Catholic hands fell in fact from 22% in 1688 to 14% in 1703<sup>20</sup>. Thus the friars lost many of their best benefactors and protectors, and lost besides whatever money or land had been administered for them by Catholics ruined in the war. The following passage in reference to the convent of Sligo exemplifies this economic difficulty. It occurs in a report of 1703 written in exile by Patrick MacDonogh, formerly prior of the convent<sup>21</sup>.

'It is certain that the friars of Sligoe lost all their goods and effects in the unhappie warrs of Irland onely their challices and ornaments and were very poore, and though they came to a head in the country, they lived in a mean condition having butt from the hand to the mouth by reason wee cud benefit nothing by our mortgage, and the country and oure benefactors were reduced and charity was very coulede in the hearte of Christians, and when wee were forced to breake house and home by the act of Parliament and leave the Kingdome, our small effects cud not pay our rents and debts.'

PATRICK MARSHALL, 1694-1699

Among the Dominicans who fled from Ireland after the fall of Limerick was the provincial himself, Fr. Gelasius Matthews, more commonly called MacMahon. He set off through France to Rome, leaving Fr. Patrick Marshall of Kilkenny as vicar-provincial behind him<sup>22</sup>. Since Fr. MacMahon's term of office was to finish in the following summer, Fr. Marshall convened a provincial chapter at Dublin by which he was himself elected provincial of Ireland on 23 August 1692.

Fr. Marshall, a son of the Leinster convent of Kilkenny, had studied at Vittoria in Spain, and after working in England for many years, was active in Leinster from at least as early as 1683<sup>23</sup>. O'Heyne would

<sup>20</sup> J. G. Simms, *The Williamite Confiscation in Ireland, 1690-1703*, (Studies in Irish History, Vol. 7), London 1956, 195-196.

<sup>21</sup> Published by D. Mould, *The Irish Dominicans*, 254-259.

<sup>22</sup> Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 132.

<sup>23</sup> O'Heyne, 37-39. Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 528-529.

have it that he was twice prior of Kilkenny: we are more certain of his priorships in Waterford (1683, 1685) and Athy (1688-1689)<sup>24</sup>. During the same period he occasionally resided in Dublin and held the important posts of Provincial Procurator (1685, 1688) and Visitor for Leinster (1685-1688)<sup>25</sup>. In 1687 he was named an army chaplain in addition to his other duties<sup>26</sup>. Perhaps he owed his appointment as vicar-provincial not so much to his high standing on the mission as to the system of alternation whereby the provincials were elected in turn from the four civil provinces (Ulster, Leinster, Connacht, and Munster). MacMahon, knowing that his successor would be chosen from among the Dominicans of Leinster, may have wished by making Marshall vicar-provincial to indicate his suitability for higher office. Though Fr. Marshall may have had the requisite qualities, few Irish provincials can have been as unfortunate as he in the circumstances of their government. His term was to open with a serious misunderstanding and to end, soon after the general exile, to the evident relief of the Master General.

As we have said, Fr. Patrick Marshall was elected provincial in August 1692. However, a month before the election, quite unknown to the capitular Fathers, the Master General had continued Fr. MacMahon in office for a further two years<sup>27</sup>. On 21 February 1693, Fr. Henry de Guzman, Vicar General of the Order, wrote to Ireland declaring that the acts of the chapter of 1692 were null<sup>28</sup>. Fr. Marshall's election was thus quashed 'in order to prevent a schism in the province', and all were commanded to accept Fr. Gelasius MacMahon as the legitimate provincial. The latter, however, remaining at Louvain, and the postal services between Ireland and the continent being unreliable, Fr. Marshall had already ruled as provincial-elect for two years when, in the autumn of 1694, he first received word of the cassation. Edmund Burke records that though Fr. MacMahon sent the letter of cassation to Fr. Marshall in good time, the latter denied ever having

<sup>24</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae.

<sup>25</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae.

<sup>26</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae.

<sup>27</sup> On 5 July 1692, *ex autoritate apostolica*, and on the recommendation of Cardinal Altieri. AGOP IV. 182, p. 134.

<sup>28</sup> There is a full official copy in a small fascicule of loose leaves (pp. 16-17) now to be found in AGOP IV. 182, but with its own independent pagination. There is also a copy by Edmund Burke, Journal, 83-86.

received it until he was shown a second copy by Fr. Thomas Burke, prior of Athenry, at the provincial chapter of 1694<sup>29</sup>.

With the expiration of Fr. MacMahon's six-year term of office on 5 July 1694, the opportunity presented itself for putting matters on a clearer and completely legal footing. It was an opportunity ignored. Without first informing the priests in Ireland of his intention, the Master General obtained papal permission (dated 14 August) to appoint Fr. Marshall as provincial for a four-year period and sent him his patents of office on the 20th of the same month<sup>30</sup>. Four days later the Vicar-General wrote to inform Fr. Hyacinth Grace, then vicar-provincial, that Fr. MacMahon's term of office had expired. Lacking either the text or the official minute of de Guzman's letter, it is hard to understand why he did not refer to the fact that a provincial had just been appointed<sup>31</sup>. The arrival of his letter in Ireland before the news of Fr. Marshall's appointment led the vicar-provincial to call a chapter in Dublin at which Fr. Patrick Marshall was needlessly, but fortunately, elected provincial. Since the action of the General correctly anticipated in this case the wishes of the province, there was now no longer any difficulty: Fr. Patrick Marshall was undoubtedly the lawful provincial. That much had been achieved, but the province felt somewhat dissatisfied with the General's recourse to the Holy See for the re-appointment of Fr. MacMahon. Since this resentment was to underly all subsequent relations between Fr. Cloche and his Irish subjects, the letter (11 Oct 1694) in which the definitors requested the confirmation of Marshall's

<sup>29</sup> Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 86-87. See also *Dissertatio*, XLI.

<sup>30</sup> 20 August 1694. AGOP IV. 182, p. 178.

<sup>31</sup> This letter is referred to in the original sealed scrutiny, dated Dublin 11 Oct 1694, declaring the election of Patrick Marshall as provincial. AGOP XIII. 157. 'Vacante Provincialatu nostrae Provinciae Hiberniae post expletum biennium R.A. P.F. Gelasii Matthaei S. Theologiae Magistri, instituti prioris provincialis huius nostrae Provinciae Hiberniae per Litteras Apostolicas datas mense Julio anno D. 1692, ut nobis intimatum fuit per R.A.P.F. Henricum de Guzman S.T.M. tunc Vicarium Generalem totius Ordinis die vigesima quarta Augusti Anno 1694...'. The document was signed by the three longest-protessed priors in the province: Dominic Davett of Coleraine, Peter O'Neill of Carlingford, and Bartholomew Heyne of Portumna. Marshall was elected on 10 Oct 1694 by 23 out of 32 votes: eight votes went to Constantine Garvan and one to Thomas Burke. Edmund Burke refers to the fact that the votes of Connacht went to Fr. Garvan of Glanworth in Munster. *Dissertatio*, XLV.



election may be quoted here <sup>32</sup>. Had they known that the provincial of their choice was already provincial, *ex concessione apostolica*, whether elected by them or not, they would have had still greater reason to complain.

'Quare ne nos sine capite tanquam oves errantes diutius maneamus, humillime rogamus R. P. Vestram quatenus hanc nostram electionem probare et confirmare dignetur, et ut in posterum omnis confusionis ansa removeatur. Imploramus R. P. V. ut pro sua erga nos paterna providentia huiusmodi Brevia a Sede Apostolica manantia, intuitu cuiuslibet ex nostris fratribus, ibidem vel alibi pro dictis Brevibus contra pacem huius afflictæ Patriæ sollicitantis, impediatur...'

#### LOSS OF JURISDICTION OVER THE FOREIGN COLLEGES, 1694

On beginning his legal provincialate in October 1694, Fr. Marshall was immediately faced with a serious controversy which further threatened the relations between the province and the Master General, relations already sufficiently strained by the confusion surrounding his own accession to office. The subject of debate — his jurisdiction over the foreign colleges — was not one with which the new provincial was already intimate: his background was not academic. But he was determined to preserve the rights of the province so far as in him lay: 'none shall be more forward to defende the rights and priviledges granted by Supreme authority to the Fathers of this Province then I shall; soe if they be lost, that fault shall not be left att my doores' <sup>33</sup>.

To a great extent we are dependent on the manuscript writings of Edmund Burke for the details of the jurisdiction dispute <sup>34</sup>. His version is that some member of the province hostile to Gelasius MacMahon pointed out to Fr. Cloche that according to Fontana (citing the General Chapters of 1650 and 1656) the Irish Colleges on the continent should have been immediately subject, not to the Irish provincial but to the General. In May 1694, just as MacMahon's provincialate was

<sup>32</sup> AGOP XIII. 157. The definitors were Dominic Dogherty, Thomas Nangle, Peter Ryan, and Bartholomew Heyne. Fr. Ambrose Fitzgerald acted as secretary of the chapter.

<sup>33</sup> Marshall to Edmund Burke, Dublin 29 Nov 1694. From the copy in Burke's Journal, 87.

<sup>34</sup> Journal, 87-121. Dissertatio, XLII. The appeal by the members of Holy Cross, Louvain, to the Internuncio in Brussels (30 Mar 1695) is documented in the archives of Propaganda Fide (hereafter APF), SC Collegi Vari, Collegi Olandesi ed Irlandesi di Lovanio (1622-1802), Vol. I, 130-134, 139-147.

in its final weeks, the General Chapter at the Minerva in Rome confirmed the legislation of 1650 subjecting the Irish Colleges at Louvain and Lisbon, with the nuns' monastery at Lisbon, to the immediate jurisdiction of the Master General<sup>35</sup>. Another ordination directed the General to supervise the affairs of San Sisto, the Irish College in Rome, which had already been removed from the provincial's jurisdiction on 4 April 1693<sup>36</sup>. The Irish representative at the chapter, Fr. Ambrose MacDermott a penitentiary of Santa Maria Maggiore, complained immediately afterwards that the first ordination *pro provincia Hiberniae* (the ordination on the colleges) in the manuscript acts of the chapter, had been added to the text by the secretary, and that the question of jurisdiction over the colleges at Louvain and Lisbon had not so much as been raised, much less decided, at the chapter<sup>37</sup>. Armed with attestations to this effect from the provincials of England, Lower Germany, Bohemia, and the Roman province, he approached Cardinal Ferrari, Master of the Sacred Palace, by whose intervention the printing of the chapter acts was delayed for twelve years. The text, still containing the 'intruded' ordination, was finally published in 1706 with the acts of the chapter held at Bologna in that year<sup>38</sup>. If this story of Edmund Burke's be true, it goes far towards explaining why the Irish, particularly at Louvain where Burke was teaching, resented the ordination of the Chapter. There are many extant documents regarding the appeal made by the staff at Louvain under the leadership of Gelasius MacMahon against the General's reassumption of immediate jurisdiction. They carried the matter over the General's head to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide. But we must turn rather to Patrick Marshall's participation in the dispute. He wished to protect the rights of the province, but still agreed with his advisers in Ireland that prudence dictated complete submission to Fr. Cloche. Burke says that Marshall, not knowing the dubious origin of the ordination, took it without question

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<sup>35</sup> Acta Capitulorum Generalium O.P. (ed. Reichert), MOPH XIII, 256-331. The section *pro Provincia Hiberniae* is on 314-316. Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, XLVI.

<sup>36</sup> AGOP IV. 182, p. 138.

<sup>37</sup> Burke, *Dissertatio*, XLVII.

<sup>38</sup> Burke's story is true at least in regard to the delay in the publication of the chapter acts. The acts of 1694, as they appeared in 1706, were preceded by a letter from Fr. Cloche explaining the reasons for the delay: chief among them had been the need to coordinate various parts of the acts, lest they should give rise to dissension. Acta Capitulorum Generalium, VIII, 257-258.

as the declared will of the General Chapter. Fortunately, Edmund Burke wrote into his journal a copy of the letter in which Fr. Marshall expressed his considered view on the jurisdiction dispute to his predecessor, Fr. MacMahon, then resident at Holy Cross Louvain (of which he had once been prior), was inclined to favour the priests of the College in their resistance to the ordination<sup>39</sup>.

Eximious fr. Gelasius Matthaei and the rest of the Rev. Fathers in Louvain and elsewhere,

I proposed to all the Fathers of the province about appealeing, or the prosecution of the appellation and to stand out in the defence of our Collidges in partibus Ultramarinis against our Generall; but none of them would be of the opinion, but all yields to the Generall and the last Generall Chapter: they taking seriously to consideration the Inconveniencies that may attend such proceedings against our Generall, which may incense him against us and our Province and may ruine our Students in their Studies abroad, besides severall other inconveniencies. Besides this, Master Browne<sup>40</sup> says that you never had your recourse to him from Lovaine, but in defiance of him that you recurred always to the Generall dureing his time, and Master William Bourke<sup>41</sup> sayes almost the same, that in his time you recurred to the Generall very often. Therefore they give their opinion that the Generall ought not to be opposed as to this matter, and in a juncture of time that the Province can scarce lay out a farthing for postage or anything else. The following words are their opinion in this manner: *Infrascriptis censeo nos non debere litigare contra Generalem nostrum de jurisdictione supradictorum Collegiorum, sed nos ordinationi ultimi Capituli Generalis et Generali inhaerere submittere.*

Testamur quod copia haec sit vera.

fr. Petrus Rothe, prior Dublinensis.

fr. Joannes ffanyng.

fr. Petrus Archer.

fr. Ambrosius Moony, supprior.

fr. Patritius Marshall humilis prior provincialis per Hiberniam sic censeo.

I declare my opinion is this, that I would oppose the Generall *viribus et posse* had I knowen had he any intention to alienate those Collidges to any other use but for the Irish Dominicans<sup>42</sup>, and I do not consent but on this consid-

fr. Joannes Browne.

fr. Gulielmus de Burgo, S.T.M.

ita censeo.

fr. Anthonius Rothe.

<sup>39</sup> Edmund Burke, Journal, 88-89.

<sup>40</sup> John Browne, provincial of Ireland 1684-1688.

<sup>41</sup> William Burke junior, Provincial of Ireland 1674-1682.

<sup>42</sup> The staff of Holy Cross, Louvain, presumably feared that the province would lose its foreign colleges completely, as the Augustinians had in Rome and the Discalced Carmelites were later to do in Louvain itself.

eration. But I have such trust and confidence in the Generall's goodnesse towards us, that he designs noe such thing against us. Neither do I doubt of his liberality, but that on a submissive supplication from the Provinciaill and the Province that he will restore us againe to them, which supplication I shall remitt to you a week hence to be forwarded to him and in the name of the province.

Yours, Patrick Marshall.

Copia vera.

This interesting letter was presumably sent on the same date (18 July 1695) as the formal mandate of submission which accompanied it and which follows immediately after in Edmund Burke's journal. That document, likewise signed by the provincial, ordered the members of the foreign colleges, particularly those at Louvain, to obey the General's wishes<sup>43</sup>. Edmund Burke devotes several pages of criticism to these two letters, holding forth against what he styles Marshall's *tergiversationes et contradictiones*: he was, after all, one of the leaders of the spirited attack from Louvain against Fr. Cloche. But there is no need, in this context, to pursue the matter further. Suffice it to say that from 1694 until after Cloche's death (26 February 1720) the colleges at Louvain, Rome, and Lisbon were under his immediate jurisdiction. The Irish provincials could not, without the General's beneplacitum, carry out visitation, appoint officials, or even assign subjects to them<sup>44</sup>. In fairness to Fr. Cloche one must add that he fully realised most of Fr. Marshalls' expectations: the colleges were not alienated from the province, and the General devoted the greatest attention to their welfare.

#### THE EVE OF THE EXILE, 1695-1698

From what has been said of the Jacobite war and the difficulties created for the regular clergy by William's complete success, one can imagine how difficult it was for Fr. Marshall to re-organize the province after 1692. The day was drawing near when all the religious would be forced to leave the country; each passing year put fresh obstacles in the path of reconstruction, as the Protestant minority grew slowly more conscious of its power; but still a certain restoration was achieved and

<sup>43</sup> Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 89-91.

<sup>44</sup> For Burke's criticism see *Journal*, 91-96. Such a commission, a more ample one than was granted to later provincials, was given to Fr. Marshall on 8 June 1695, authorizing him to appoint officials in Louvain, to assign subjects to the College, and to remove them from it. AGOP IV, 182, p. 234.



it is important to note those elements in the organization of the province which enabled it to survive the almost complete exclusion of its members from the country.

In the first place, the province was long inured to persecution. As Fr. Coleman wrote by way of comment on O'Heyne's matter-of-fact style: 'O'Heyne and his contemporaries were so used to persecution from childhood, that it had become a second nature to them: its various new phases and developments, including imprisonment and exile, being taken by them as a matter of course, just as the accidents of war are regarded by veteran soldiers inured to long campaigns' <sup>45</sup>. From 1540, when the Irish government first adopted the Protestant faith, the province had seldom enjoyed anything more than toleration from the rulers of the country. More than a hundred of its members had died violent deaths for their faith. The organization of the province adapted itself in the course of time to meet the ever-present danger of full-scale persecution. At home, the various convents carried out their work when and as the actual situation permitted. Abroad, the province had colleges at Louvain, Lisbon, and Rome for the training of its clerics; a hospice at Bilbao for those coming or going to Spain, and procurators to manage its affairs in London, Paris, and Madrid. The nuns had monasteries at Galway in Ireland and on the outskirts of Lisbon. In the year 1695, despite the loss of those who left the country in 1691, and despite crippling financial difficulties, there were still 170 priests of the province in Ireland, actually or nominally attached to thirty-six convents <sup>46</sup>. Of these priests seventy-five were in Connacht, forty-four in Leinster, thirty-two in Munster, and nineteen in Ulster. Thus on the eve of the exile the province was strongest in the west, to which Cromwell had banished the Catholics in 1650, and weakest in the north, where Presbyterians of Scots origin had been long entrenched. When the blow fell in 1698 and these priests were forced to leave Ireland, they were not completely without resources on the continent. The three colleges maintained their work by providing fresh missionaries, acted as clearing houses for the exiles, and proved to be so many strategically placed bases of operation for the friars and their provincials.

It is agreed that had William of Orange been able to enforce his

<sup>45</sup> O'Heyne, xi.

<sup>46</sup> Calculated from the data supplied by TA, *Liber Provinciae*, a record kept by the Irish provincials from 1683 to 1711ca. 1695 is the latest year for which the members of all the communities are listed.

views on Ireland in the years following the war, the position both of the Catholic majority and of the Dissenters would have been tolerable<sup>47</sup>. As it happened, the landowning Protestant minority, representing one-tenth of the population, took control of the parliament and of the country. When therefore a French victory on the continent no longer threatened to affect the Irish scene, the first clause of the hard-won treaty of Limerick (guaranteeing freedom of religion) was set aside and in summer 1697 the Dublin parliament began to frame 'An Act for Suppressing all Fryerys, Monasterys, Nunneryes, etc.'<sup>48</sup>. The act ordered everyone exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and all members of the regular clergy, to leave the kingdom before the 1st of May 1698. Should any remain they were to suffer imprisonment and transportation, while those returning after such transportation were to be held guilty of high treason. The third section of the act forbade the entry of regulars and those exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction into the country 'from and after the 29th of December 1697' under pain of twelve months' imprisonment and subsequent transportation. Thus the only priests who could remain in, or enter, Ireland after the dates fixed by parliament were members of the diocesan clergy below the rank of dean. It was hoped that, lacking bishops to ordain new candidates, the secular clergy itself would cease to exist within a few decades.

Since the text of this act was available from 1697 (when it was printed by Andrew Crook at Dublin)<sup>49</sup> the bishops, vicars-general, and regular clergy had some months to put their affairs in order before leaving the country. We know something of the decisions reached early in 1698 by the Franciscan definitory: they decided to obey the decree of expulsion, to furnish their exiles with letters of obedience, to bring their novices to the continent, and to petition the government to exempt their old and infirm friars from the effects of the act<sup>50</sup>. Likewise we have a few documents listing the goods of some Franciscan and Augustinian convents on the eve of the exile<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford 1914, 110 ff. This is the principal work on the sufferings of the clergy under the penal code.

<sup>48</sup> The text of the relevant sections has been published by W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 118.

<sup>49</sup> There is a Latin copy of this pamphlet in APF, SC Irlanda 7, ff. 141-155.

<sup>50</sup> *Liber Lovaniensis*, ed. C. Giblin, Dublin 1956, 225. Here there is a report on the definitory meeting held at Dublin on 15 Feb 1697 (presumably old style).

<sup>51</sup> B. Egan O.F.M., *Inventory of articles belonging to the Friary of Donegal, 1698*, published from Archivio di Stato (Roma) in *Franciscan Donegal*, ed. Terence

Information of a similar kind in regard to the Dominicans is not so readily available. The two most interesting items, already published by Dr. Pochin Mould, are an inventory of the goods of the convent of Galway which (5 April 1698) were entrusted to Valentine Browne, a merchant, and the report of 1703 on the convent of Sligo already cited<sup>52</sup>. In the course of this long document Fr. Patrick MacDonagh refers to an order issued by the provincial just before the exile, authorizing the priors of convents to sell their property so as not to leave for the continent completely penniless.

'There was a generall Licence given by the Provincial of Ireland to every Priore to dispose of the goods and chalices of every convent with the mutuall consent of his conventualls as he thought more expedient and convenient for the present and for the future.

The fathers of the convent of Sligoe having noe other effects or worldly means butt their chalices, they agreed unanimously to dispose of some of their Chalices to redeeme their present necessity: and found it more proper and lawful before God and the world to make use of them than to perish in a foraigne country nott knoweing to what part of the universe wud they be turned to, nor what reception wud they get among strangers.'

The ten chalices were disposed of in various ways — some left in safe hands, some sold to pay debts, some pawned, and some brought by the friars to the continent.

#### ATTEMPTS TO AVERT THE EXILE, 1697-1698

From as early as the summer of 1697 Mgr Orazio Spada, the internuncio at Brussels, did his utmost to avert the exile by diplomatic means. The peace-conference of Ryswick was then in progress, and Spada continually urged the Catholic representatives to intercede with William of Orange for the Irish regular clergy. The diplomat who collaborated most cheerfully with the internuncio, both during and after the conference, was Count Auersperg, the Emperor's envoy to the Prince of Orange. Earnest interventions were also made by Francis Bernard de Quiros, the Spanish ambassador, the Duke Elector of Bavaria, Count von Kaunitz, the Emperor's plenipotentiary, the Count

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O'Donnell, O.F.M., *Ros Nuala* 1952, 113-117. Other inventories referring to the Franciscan friary of Kilconnell and to an Augustinian priory in Co. Galway may be read in W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 129-130.

<sup>52</sup> D. Pochin Mould, *The Irish Dominicans*, 152-153, 254-259.



de Tirlemont, and the Prince and Princess de Vaudémont<sup>53</sup>. Louis XIV's treatment of the Huguenots prevented the effective intervention of the French representatives. Two Irish religious, the Dominican Laurence O'Farrell (chaplain to Kaunitz) and an Augustinian named Dowdall, exerted what little influence they could at Ryswick to help their Irish brethren<sup>54</sup>.

Towards the end of 1697 Ambrose Fitzgerald, procurator for the Irish province at London, wrote to Edmund Burke at Louvain about the Act of expulsion, enclosing a printed copy of the decree. Under the leadership of Dominic Burke, the exiled Dominican bishop of Elphin, the leading Irish priests at Louvain decided to send Latin copies of the decree to whosoever might be able to prevent its execution. Edmund Burke thus describes their contribution to the work of the diplomats<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> Our chief source on the interventions of these representatives is the Nunziatura di Fiandra series in the Vatican archives, the Irish documents in which have been calendared by Cathaldus Giblin in *Collectanea Hibernica*. All subsequent references are to this calendar, itself virtually a translation of the originals: e.g. Coll. Hib. No. 4 (1961) 118.

<sup>54</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, XLVIII. Another Dominican named Thomas Naghten was active at Madrid on behalf of the Irish Catholics in the summer of 1699. At the time of the exile he was a lector at S. Sisto in Rome. APF, SOCG 531, f. 216<sup>r</sup>. On 18 Feb 1699 he was named Preacher General for the convent of Dublin. AGOP IV. 182, p. 367. On 23 Jul 1699 he wrote from the hospice (alla Passione) at Madrid to a cardinal in Rome (probably the Prefect of Propaganda) describing his diplomatic work on the cardinal's behalf. APF, SC Irlanda 5, f. 618<sup>r</sup>. There is also a letter (17 Sept 1699) from the Nuncio at Madrid to a cardinal (Barberini?) relating how he had helped Fr. Naghten to approach the King on behalf of the Irish Catholics. Fr. Naghten then wanted to go to Holland to reason with William of Orange. Ibidem, f. 698<sup>rv</sup>. In March 1700 he was forbidden to enter Rome, and in the following month ordered to the Irish mission by the General. AGOP IV. 182, pp. 382-383; 194, f. 79<sup>r</sup>. Another Dominican diplomat of the period was Anthony Carroll, recommended by Clement XI to King John V of Portugal as a spokesman for the Irish Catholics in 1709. Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 158, 587. AGOP IV. 166, p. 115.

<sup>55</sup> *Journal*, 140. *Dissertatio*, LII. On bishop Dominic Burke see Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 496-499, where there are some additional details on this episode. The two Irish secular priests mentioned in the extract cited above were John Sullivan, rector of the Irish Pastoral College, and Francis Martin, a professor of theology at the University. Fr. Giblin's catalogue or calendar of the Nunziatura di Fiandra provides much information on both of them. Thomas Burke lists the titles of the two Louvain pamphlets (*Hibernia Dominicana*, 545-546) in a manner which leads one to suspect that he never actually saw a copy of either. A. Papillon merely copies Burke: *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, editio altera,

<sup>4</sup> Illustrissimus fr. Dominicus de Burgo, Atheniensis, episcopus Elphinensis, Lovanii tunc exul, congregavit Eximios Joannem Sulevan, Martin, et praecipuos Dominicanos et Franciscanos Hibernos ibidem degentes. Comuni consensu resolutum fuit Decretum illud in Latinum transferre cum praefatione nostra ad Principes Orthodoxos, illudque imprimere et per orbem spargere Catholicum, quod factum est. Nam ad omnes Principes, Archiepiscopos, Episcopos, etc., exemplaria per publicum cursorem sub coopertura missa sunt. Insuper libellum supplicem gravamina Hiberniae nervose exprimentem, cum praecipuis Decreti punctis ad SS. Dom. Innocentium XII et eximios Cardinales, Nuncio Apostolico Bruxellis ego ipse missus tradidi Romam transmittendum.<sup>5</sup>

The effect of this and of other interventions by the Irish on the continent was that the Pope alerted the Nuncios to the threatened danger, and the latter did what they could to prevent it. William and his English officials were, however, far too able to be deflected from their policies by the diplomatic offensive launched against them. A series of half-truths, polite evasions, and assurances, left the Internuncio at Brussels under the impression that his efforts were succeeding until the exile actually took place. On 16 September 1697 Blathwayt, the English Secretary of State, stated in a letter to Count Auersperg that the act against the religious contained nothing new, that it was only what 'some of the secular clergy had always wished for', but that nothing would be done which could give the Allies the least cause for offence<sup>56</sup>. In October William told the Duke Elector of Bavaria that he was obliged to fall in with the wishes of the Irish parliament, and that strong measures

Fasciculus XII, 1934, 36-37. There are, however, in the archives of Propaganda Fide, two pamphlets which (though anonymous, undated, and lacking any indication of the place in which they were printed) fully correspond to Edmund Burke's description. The first is entitled: ACTA / Pro Expulsione / PAPISTARUM / Fungentium / aliqua Ecclesiastica jurisdictione, & / Regularium omnium Papistici / Cleri ex Regno Iberniae. / Dublinii impressa per ANDREAM / CROOK Typographum Excell.mae suae / Majestatis in monte CORK / prope vicum vulgo dictum / COPPER ALLEY 1697. / ACCEDIT / Praefatio ad Lectorem Orthodoxum / CUI SUBNEXA EST / FORMULA / JURAMENTI / DUPLICIS. 12mo. 22 numbered pages. White cardboard cover. APF, SC Irlanda 7, ff. 141-155.

The second has a shorter title: Ad Sanctiss. D. N. / INNOCENTIIUM / PAPAM XII / Libellus Supplex / Ecclesiasticorum Hibernorum / Exulum / Nec obscurorum, nec paucorum / De praesenti A catholicorum Molimine / AD / CATHOLICAM RELIGIONEM / In Hibernia extirpandam. / Anno M.DC.XCVII. The date here is part of the title. 12mo, 12 unnumbered leaves. Red and gold paper cover. APF, SC Irlanda 8, ff. 533-544.

<sup>56</sup> Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) 58-60. Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, XLIX and L.

were required to curb 'the turbulent spirit' of the regular clergy<sup>57</sup>. The Prince and Princess de Vaudémont, who visited King William in November and spoke to him on behalf of the Irish Catholics, were answered (according to the Internuncio) 'in very general terms'<sup>58</sup>. In Edmund Burke's more dramatic account of the meeting, when the Princess pleaded for the Irish with tears in her eyes, William answered, 'Madam, you know I am attached to the Catholics. Why then do you believe that I would permit them to be oppressed or disturbed?'<sup>59</sup> During December 1697 Mgr Spada passed on to Rome the bland assurance of 'a certain English minister' that the laws would not be enforced, or that they would be used only to make the Catholics more submissive, or that (should they be found too difficult or troublesome to enforce) no effort would be made to execute them<sup>60</sup>.

Mgr Spada placed so much confidence in these encouraging comments, and so little in what Irish religious told him, that he assured Dr. Dominic Burke at Louvain, and even the Pope himself, that the act expelling the bishops and regulars would be revoked. Edmund Burke claims to have seen the original letter in which Spada addressed the bishop of Elphin: 'Illustrissime Domine, laeta vobis signífico nuntia, revocata esse Decreta Parlamenti Hiberniae contra Episcopos et Regulares'<sup>61</sup>. This, seemingly, was in May 1698 when about seven hundred Irish religious were already on the seas bound for France and Spain<sup>62</sup>. Innocent XII continued to regard the decree as a dead letter until he found one of the exiles, Joseph Power, O.D.C., at his very feet<sup>63</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) 62.

<sup>58</sup> Op. cit., 64.

<sup>59</sup> Dissertatio, XLVIII.

<sup>60</sup> Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) 64.

<sup>61</sup> Dissertatio, LI. In this paragraph I have followed Edmund Burke rather than the *Nunziatura di Fiandra* which, unfortunately, lacks all letters from Spada between 17 Jan and 2 May 1698. It does, however, contain an optimistic letter dated 23 May (some weeks after the exile had begun) which helps to support Burke's thesis that the Internuncio was lulled into a sense of false security. Coll. Hib. No. 4 (1961) 65-66.

<sup>62</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish priests, 132-133*, citing a letter from Mary of Modena, James II's queen. 'All the regular priests of the Irish mission numbering about 700 have been already hunted out of that country. There are just now near 400 of them in France; the others are in Spain and Portugal or in Flanders and Italy. I have seen several of them and they have touched me deeply. They tell us of events in that country which make the heart bleed, and if this continues, to all appearance our holy religion will be uprooted in that kingdom'.

<sup>63</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LI.

' Sanctissimus Innocentius XII, totus laetus et securus de notitia revocationis Decretorum a suo Nuntio accepta, Agenti pro Hibernis apud Suam Sanctitatem exilium repraesentanti dicere solebat, *Consolare, consolare, nos scimus melius quid in vestrum favorem actum sit*, nec exules in Galliam appulisse credidit donec P. Josephus Power, Carmelita Discalceatus ex Loghrea, prostratus ad ipsius pedes, factum probavit dicens se unum esse ex multis qui expulsi venerunt in Galliam. Quo audito pius Papa lacrymatus ait, *Fui deceptus per Nuntium, ut ipse deceptus fuit*. Sic decipietur semper, qui dictis Protestantium contra Catholicos fidem praebebunt.'

### THE EXILE OF 1698

Thus, as the 1st of May 1698, the date fixed for the exodus, drew near the efforts of the diplomats to avert the blow had completely failed. In many previous crises the Irish regulars had been able to go to earth and avoid similar decrees of banishment: this time only a few escaped the net. In December 1697 the magistrates and Protestant clergy were instructed that all ecclesiastics 'were to be compelled to enter into bonds to appear before the Council in Dublin when required'<sup>64</sup>. In February 1698 the collectors and surveyors of the revenue districts received orders to send in the name and address of every priest in their respective areas<sup>65</sup>. The government, which never before had had such a thorough report on the Catholic clergy, could now arrest every priest in Ireland when it pleased. If, however, the regulars decided to obey the decree, it was not from fear of arrest<sup>66</sup>. They felt that resistance

<sup>64</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 119.

<sup>65</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 119-120. The only such report to have survived is that for the diocese of Dublin, published by W. P. Burke, *op. cit.*, 120-127, though the same author discovered a digest of the returns from the revenue districts, printed *op. cit.*, 127-128. The Dublin report has recently been more carefully edited by William M. O'Riordan, *A List of the Priests, Secular and Regular, of the diocese of Dublin, in the year 1697*, in *Reportorium Novum*, Vol. I, No. 1 (Dublin 1955) 140-153. See p. 141 for the names of the Dominicans living in Cook Street, Dublin: Thomas [i.e. Patrick] Marshall, James Hanin, James Eagan, and Christopher Farrell.

<sup>66</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIII. 'Nonnulli, circumstantias ignorantes, culparunt exules ecclesiasticos, quod tam prompte discesserint et tanto in numero. Verum non ignavia sed prudentia et Gubernii astutia in causa fuit. Gubernium enim observavit quod nulla severitate Episcopos ac Regulares eousque ex Hibernia extirpare potuerit, quamvis carceribus perpetuis aut morte ipsa plurimos torqueri diligenter satagerit; idque tribuit zelo ecclesiasticorum et protectioni populi Catholici; unde utrique remediis efficacioribus obviare studuit.'

Zelum mitigandum speravit Gubernium tolerando quosdam Parochos qui



might cause the government to banish the diocesan clergy too, and they did not wish to cause the ruin of any Catholic family, since laypeople were liable within the terms of the same Act of parliament to heavy fines and even the confiscation of all their goods were they to be found sheltering a bishop or religious<sup>67</sup>. Only a few of the regular clergy elected to remain in Ireland and brave the consequences: the rest set out for the appointed ports of embarkation to be carried at government expense into perpetual exile.

Some left before, some after, the date appointed. O'Heyne relates that the Dominican community in Galway sailed about the 20th of March<sup>68</sup>, while the author himself embarked from the same city in company with one hundred and twenty-six religious on the 17th of June<sup>69</sup>. In those last few months he had attended to the nuns of Galway whose cloister had been broken open and who were forced to wear lay clothes. Following O'Heyne's advice they decided to remain in Ireland. Some few details regarding the voyage of the Dominicans have come down to us. There is, for instance, a letter from the archbishop of Tuam describing the pitiful condition of the exiled priests he had seen on a boat bound for Brest from Galway: the writer mentions two members of the province, Lazarus Lynch and Henry Dolphin, who were among them<sup>70</sup>. On 15 July the Nuncio at Lisbon reported the arrival there on a small and unseaworthy ship of six Irish Dominicans who were dressed as soldiers and so came ashore without money or possessions of any kind. On presenting themselves to the Nuncio, after their Irish brethren at Corpo Santo had dressed them properly, they gave him a

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Catholicis inservirent, et insuper id abunde sufficere ut sic persuaderet confaederatis principibus orthodoxis, quos nollet irritatos si severius contra Catholicos ageret. Deinde ad obviandum protectioni Catholicorum in Hibernia, statuit ne ullus exulum a Catholico reciperetur hospitio, aut panis buccellam sub poena confiscationis bonorum ac criminis laesae majestatis, illi porrigeretur, aliudve patrociniū etiam minimum. Episcopi ergo et Regulares passim mito consilio resolverant abire, ne fideles destituerentur omni alimonia spiritali parochorum paucorum registratorum ad vitam; et insuper ne Catholici laici (sibi subveniēdo contra legem) penitus destruerentur bonis et libertate privati: unde charitative et prudenter exulāri se permiserant, sperantes reditum et proprii veri Regis restorationem\*.

<sup>67</sup> See section 4 of 9 William III, Cap. 26, quoted by W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 118.

<sup>68</sup> O'Heyne, 159. Coleman accidentally translates 'May' for 'Martii'.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>70</sup> 29 April 1698. A copy of a letter written from Flanders to Bonaventurē Burke, O.F.M., in Rome. Vatican Archives, Fondo Albani 168, f. 12<sup>rv</sup>.

Portuguese copy of the Act of parliament of which they were the victims<sup>71</sup>. John Dominic Sibury, the agent for Propaganda Fide at Cadiz, wrote on 2 October to the secretary of the Congregation from Porto Santa Maria, to say that there were various exiles in the ports of his area who wished to remain there so as to take the first opportunity of returning to Ireland, but that the local guardians and priors were reluctant to shelter them<sup>72</sup>. It has not proved possible to chart precisely the movements of the exiles, but some sort of pattern can be discerned in O'Heyne's biographical notes and the registers of the Master General. Those who did not go to the Irish colleges or the hospice at Bilbao seem to have concentrated themselves in the southern ports of Spain, in the Atlantic ports of France, and in the neighbourhood of Paris. Few went to Italy, and most of those who did went there a year or two after the exile. None seems to have ventured in Italy any farther south than Naples.

The majority were brought to French ports such as Nantes, St. Malo, and Dunkirk, whence they made their way to Paris. By January 1699 there were about four hundred Irish religious in the French capital: of these one hundred and eighteen were Dominicans<sup>73</sup>. No list of their names has as yet come to light, but we do know that the provincial, Fr. Patrick Marshall, was there on 20 July 1698 when he signed a common letter with the Augustinian and Franciscan superiors, informing the Cardinal Secretary of State of the exile and asking the Pope

<sup>71</sup> Lisbon 15 July 1698. Dominic Pasqui to Cardinal Spada. 'essendo in questi giorni pervenuti qua sei Religiosi professi dell'Ordine di S. Domenico in abito di soldato sopra un piccolo e mal sicuro bastimento, sprovvisti affatto di tutto i bisognevoli. Ha in questa citta quella natione un convento dell'istesso Ordine dove sono stati accolti con speranza di soccorso dell'insigne pietà e beneficenza della Maestà del Re. Mi hanno i detti Religiosi mostrata la copia dell'Atto del Parlamento nel lingua Portogese che nell'idioma Italiano'. The Nuncio enclosed these copies (not found) for the cardinal's benefit. Vatican Archives, S.S. Portogallo 54, f. 269<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> 2 Oct. 1698. 'Mi sono acuditi vari religiosi missionarii stati cacciati da Irlanda et Inghilterra per quanto si trovano esuli ricusandoli il ricetto li Guardiani e Priori delli Conventi di loro religioni in questi Porti ove desidererebbero di stare per esser piu pronti all'Occasioni se loro offerissero il poter restituirsi alle loro missione e mi hanno incaricato di doverne dare a VV. EE. questo motivo', APF, SOCG 532, f. 132<sup>rv</sup>. The reply of the Congregation (decided upon, 26 Jan 1699, No. 5) was 'Comendetur Generalibus'. APF, Atti 69, f. 23<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> This is inferred from the account (17 Jan 1699) of the alms given to them on behalf of the Pope, published from the Vatican Archives by P. F. Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, Second Series, Dublin, 1878, 347.

to help them <sup>74</sup>. Humbert Delphin of Athenry was also in Paris at the time, trying to place some novices he had brought with him into exile <sup>75</sup>.

<sup>74</sup> Being exiled with the rest of the religious of all the Orders, he came to Nantes accompanied by four simple novices. While searching for a place of novitiate for these young men, who were still three months off the full year of probation, he suffered many hardships, tramping up and down Paris on foot until he had placed them in the General Novitiate in the suburb of Saint Germain. He stayed with them, instructing them in the way of virtue, until their profession, and then came to Louvain to the college of Holy Cross where he was welcomed by all.<sup>7</sup>

The same college of Holy Cross, the nearest national haven for most of the exiles, did not know how to find room or food for all the members of the province who flocked to it. On 8 June 1698 the prior had written to the Internuncio explaining their plight: in the previous week six exiles had come to the door while others, including the provincial, were expected from day to day <sup>76</sup>. The friars were then living two in a room, but that was no hardship compared with the situation of the Irish Franciscans at Prague two years later. There it was a case of three in each cell, while others had no bed at all, and each had to be content with dry bread and raw beer for his daily diet <sup>77</sup>. Leaving Paris, Fr. Marshall

<sup>74</sup> Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense* II, 341-342.

<sup>75</sup> O'Heyne, 189-191. The names of the four novices (who had been clothed on 27 August 1697) are given in the Athenry house-chronicle (provincial archives) f. 11<sup>v</sup>: Dominic Daly, Martin Dolphin, John Burke, and Anthony McHooge.

<sup>76</sup> 8 June 1698. Thomas Barry, prior, and other officials of Holy Cross, to the Internuncio. 'Nec fundum nec redditus, nec mendicationis sive Quaestae subsidia habuimus; tum etiam ex frequenti Religiosorum numero ad nos quotidie adventante; nam nuperimme spatio sex vel octo dierum advenerunt sex, et multo plures simul cum ipso Provinciali expectantur... iis alendis media deficiunt, nec scimus quo eos dimittamus aut quomodo, tam enim ipsi sunt tenues ac teneri et expensarum vacua, Gallorum provinciae novis indies adventantibus ita occupatae, ut difficile inveniamus qualiter de iis disponere possimus, deque aliis ad nos brevi venturis. Praeterquam quod domus antea adeo fuerit repleta, ut in parvis cubiculis duplicare debuerimus Religiosos'. APF, SOCG 531, f. 47-48<sup>r</sup>. This was sent by the Internuncio to Propaganda on 13 June: Mgr Spada wrote again to the same effect on 30 August. Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) 68-69. Despite these crushing difficulties, Fr. Barry wished to receive novices in the college. This Fr. Cloche absolutely refused to permit on the grounds that there was no reason *multiplicare gentem* when they had not enough to eat as it was. AGOP IV, 192, p. 285 under date 16 June 1699.

<sup>77</sup> Franciscan Library Killiney, Prague Transcripts, 531- Prague 15 Feb 1700. Department of Accounts to the Bohemian Exchequer.



set out for Louvain towards the end of July 1698 and made Holy Cross his headquarters for the following year. By 6 September he had met the Internuncio to whom he described 'the new conspiracies which the Irish parliament had set on foot against the Catholics' <sup>78</sup>. He had, of course, already begun to correspond with the Master General, but unfortunately the only part of this correspondence to survive is the summaries of Fr. Cloche's answers in the registers of the General.

FR. MARSHALL AS VICAR-GENERAL OF IRELAND  
SEPTEMBER 1698-JULY 1699

Either shortly before leaving Ireland, or else as soon as he set foot on the continent, Fr. Marshall wrote informing the General of the exile. Fr. Cloche's reply (24 May 1698) expressed his paternal sympathy and promised that circular letters would be sent to the neighbouring provincials asking them charitably to receive the exiles, 'since they were suffering for the Catholic faith which hitherto they had so strenuously defended in Ireland' <sup>79</sup>. Cloche was as good as his word. One letter, presumably to the provincials of France and the Low Countries, was despatched on 28 June <sup>80</sup>; a second was sent on 24 August to the provincials of Spain, asking them not only to welcome the exiles, but also to send to Rome the names of such as reached their provinces <sup>81</sup>.

On reaching Louvain Fr. Marshall wrote once more, expressing his hopes that, on the intervention of the Catholic ambassadors at London, both regulars and bishops would soon be permitted to return. He also appears to have requested his own continuation in office, since Fr. Cloche in his reply (16 August) stated his intention of applying for it to the Holy See <sup>82</sup>. The elective chapter planned for the summer of 1698 had, of course, to be abandoned, and Marshall's term of office expired immediately after the exile, probably on 14 August, the date of his appointment four years before. However, instead of applying

<sup>78</sup> Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) 69-70.

<sup>79</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 240.

<sup>80</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 249. There is no indication as to whom this letter was addressed.

<sup>81</sup> To the provincials of Spain, Aragon, Portugal, and Andalusia. AGOP IV. 194, f. 26<sup>v</sup>. No such list of names has been found in AGOP XIII. The provincial chapter of Bethica (9 May 1699) recommended the exiles to the priors of its convents. AGOP XIII 23575 (*Absolutiones et Revocationes*, No. 3) p. 5.

<sup>82</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 255.

to the Holy See the General contented himself with naming Fr. Marshall Vicar-General of the province on 6 September 1698 for one year only <sup>83</sup>.

In these early months after the exile, Fr. Marshall gave much thought to the province's college at Rome. He wished to send down either Fr. Antoninus Sall or Fr. James Coghlan as Regent of studies, besides appointing a special Procurator there for the province. No doubt he recognized the limited capacity of Holy Cross to support the influx of penniless exiles with which it was burdened, and saw the need to provide another centre where Irish students could be trained. Fr. Cloche, however, insisted that he alone could assign subjects to SS. Sixtus and Clement, that there was no *studium* there and hence no need for professors, and that the college was too heavily indebted for the erection of a *studium* to be contemplated. He had spoken to Cardinal Spada, the Secretary of State, about an Irish procurator and had found his Eminence in agreement with himself that such an appointment would be undesirable <sup>84</sup>.

The views of the General further diverged from those of his Vicar on the alternation of offices among the members of the four nations (Ulster, Leinster, Connacht, and Munster) of which the province was composed. At the close of 1697 when the Irish provincial council asked Fr. Cloche to authorize the practice, he declined giving an immediate decision: the matter could be fully discussed at the General Chapter it was proposed to hold in 1699 and he would then make no difficulty about acceding to their wishes <sup>85</sup>. On reaching Louvain Fr. Marshall repeated the petition. Not alone was the request firmly refused (30 August 1698), but the Vicar-General was later (11 October) sharply rebuked for making appointments calculated to create discord between the members of the different nations <sup>86</sup>. It is interesting to note on this point that Fr. Cloche also opposed the system of alternation in Malta and in the South American province *de Novo Regno* <sup>87</sup>, believing that

<sup>83</sup> P. Patritius Marshall instituitur per unum duntaxat annum Vicarius Generalis ita ut hoc munus a termino sui Provincialatus computando subeat. AGOP IV. 182, p. 362.

<sup>84</sup> AGOP IV. 192, pp. 255 (16 Aug 1698), 258 (30 Aug 1698), 262 (27 Sept 1698). These are, of course, the dates of the General's replies from which the contents of Fr. Marshall's letters can be inferred.

<sup>85</sup> 18 Jan 1698. Cloche to the Fathers of the Irish Province, AGOP IV. 192, p. 229. The proposed general chapter did not take place until 1706.

<sup>86</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 258, 264.

<sup>87</sup> On Malta see S. L. Forte, Prior of Valletta and Vicar of Malta, AFP, XXXIV, 1964, 294-295. For the province *de Novo Regno* see AGOP IV. 194, f. 101.

it did not necessarily result in the appointment of the best candidates for office. From his reply to Fr. Marshall (30 August) it would also appear that he felt the system opened the way to resentment and recrimination. Ironically, the whole purpose of the system, laboriously achieved during the 17th century, had been precisely to keep the peace by assuring the exact equality of the four nations.

<sup>88</sup> 'Cum nos potius pacificam animorum reunionem in vestra Provincia, quam eorum dissipationem paterne meditemur, ideo nec possumus nec volumus petita officiorum diversitati iuxta plagas vestras condescendere, sed unice optamus ut non attentis plagarum partialitatibus, iuxta subjectorum capacitatem et officiorum condignam distributionem unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis cordi sumatis...

Valeat et animarum concordiam iuxta aequam distributionem nobiscum promovere satagat' <sup>88</sup>.

This advice seems to have been lost on Fr. Marshall, for he continued to make appointments as he wished: what these appointments were we do not know, save that one was that of a Vicar-Provincial, presumably in Ireland. The General's subsequent letters of 11 and 18 October 1698 reached a crescendo of indignation and the correspondence abruptly ceased <sup>89</sup>. If Fr. Marshall wrote again no trace of a reply can now be found in the registers. He continued to act as Vicar-General of the province until a new provincial was named in the following July. Shortly after he left for London and there worked as a missionary for many years. He died in 1725 <sup>90</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 258. Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIV.

<sup>89</sup> 11 Oct 1698. P. Vicario Generali Hiberniae... Non sine iusta indignatione percepimus V. Paternitatem nobis inconsultis praesumpsisse instituere aliquem Vicarium Provinciale, cum tamen pro conservanda inter fratres vestros religiosa pace minime expedire resciamus. Serio itaque tibi praecipimus, ut indilate isthanc institutionem, et alias similes a te factas revoces, partialitatesque Plagarum quoad Ordinis munia in vestra Provincia neutiquam foveas. Siquidem per huiusmodi non nisi dissidia, ad quae alias vestri Nationales proni sunt, fomentares, qui tamen vigore tui muneris ad ea praecavenda peculiariter obligaris. AGOP IV. 192, p. 264.

18 Oct 1698. Iterato sub iusta nostra indignatione serio praecipimus ut omnes, quas minus prudenter facis institutiones, modo, quam primum revoces. AGOP IV. 192, p. 264.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 528. Fr. Marshall did not forget the convent of Waterford of which he had once been prior, for there is a chalice bearing the inscription: 'Conv. Waterford O.P., Fr. Patrick Marshale, D.D., 1721', listed by J. J. Buckley, *Some Irish Altar Plate*, Dublin 1943, 147.

## PATRICK MACDONOGH (12 July 1699)

As Fr. Marshall's term of office was drawing to a close, the Master General appointed Patrick MacDonogh, P.G., of Sligo, as provincial on the recommendation of some Irish priests made through the Spanish *socius* <sup>91</sup>. This was the Fr. MacDonogh whose report on the convent of Sligo has been quoted more than once above and who, at the time of his appointment, was living in exile at Bilbao. O'Heyne devotes a long passage to his praise, especially to praise of his humility, relating that MacDonogh could not be persuaded to accept the provincialate <sup>92</sup>. He was constantly in poor health and perhaps felt the approach of death which was to claim him at Bilbao in 1705.

## AMBROSE O'CONNOR, 1700-1709

In naming a replacement for Fr. MacDonogh, the Master General respected the system of alternation by choosing another priest of Connacht on 24 January 1700 <sup>93</sup>. The new provincial was Fr. Ambrose O'Connor, S.T.P., a son of the convent of Sligo, and procurator for the Irish province at the court of Madrid, in which capacity he had been in correspondence with Fr. Cloche and his predecessor for more than twenty years <sup>94</sup>.

Fr. O'Connor did not immediately quit the hospice 'della Passione', his normal place of residence, on receiving word of the appointment: as late as 29 April he wrote thence to the General outlining his ideas on the province. To this Fr. Cloche replied that he approved O'Connor's plans and would transmit them to Fr. John O'Brien, S.T.M., who was then about to leave for Ireland and could help the provincial

<sup>91</sup> For some reason he is styled Denis in the official note of his appointment, 12 Jul 1699. A.R.P. Patritius Denis, P.G. Instituitur Provincialis pro Provincia Hiberniae ad commendationem quam fecerunt quidam Patres eiusdem Provinciae per P. Mag. Socium Hispaniae. AGOP IV. 182, p. 372. The appointment is also mentioned by Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIV.

<sup>92</sup> O'Heyne, 249-251.

<sup>93</sup> P. Praesentatus Ambrosius O'Conor instituitur provincialis modo acephalae provinciae Hiberniae. Monetur tamen ut Procuratoris munus, quo a tempore fuit Madriti perfunctus, nulli interim conferat. AGOP IV. 182, p. 380.

<sup>94</sup> O'Heyne, 253, and Appendix (ed. A. Coleman), 103-104. Th. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 500, 529, 546.

by implementing his plans there <sup>95</sup>. This harmony of view, noticeable at the very beginning of the correspondence, continued undisturbed for the following nine years and enabled O'Connor to succeed even where Patrick Marshall had failed. Admittedly the new provincial was warned in July not to interfere with the affairs of the two Irish communities at Lisbon <sup>96</sup>, but when he went later in 1700 to Louvain Fr. Cloche not only permitted him to carry out a visitation of Holy Cross, but warmly endorsed the ordinations laid down by the provincial for the good of the college <sup>97</sup>. The text of the ordinations has not survived, but we do have the names of those in the community at Louvain at the time of the visitation, 28 January 1701 <sup>98</sup>.

Until the autumn of the same year, Fr. O'Connor seems to have remained in or near Louvain, busying himself in the reorganization of the province and preparing for his own return to Ireland. Much of his efforts were devoted to raising money: his experience as procurator was here turned to advantage as he tracked and claimed the goods left by deceased members of the province such as Bernard O'Connor who died, probably in Guatemala, about this time <sup>99</sup>. Edmund Burke refers to 'the immense sums' acquired by the provincial at Madrid and spent by him in Ireland or during his frequent journeys <sup>100</sup>. Another aspect of Fr. O'Connor's activity in 1701 was his assignation of fresh missionaries to Ireland. By letters dated at Brussels on 12 February, Fathers John MacMahon and John Keown were sent to the Ulster convent of Gola: on 3 August Fr. Edmund Shiel was similarly assigned to his native convent of Derry <sup>101</sup>. During the same period the General

<sup>95</sup> Probably John O'Brien the elder, though there is no other reason to believe he went to Ireland at this time. Fr. Cloche's letter was dated 30 May 1700. AGOP IV. 194, f. 79<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> 24 July 1700. P. Provinciali Hiberniae. Mandatur ne suam jurisdictionem in utrumque fratrum et sororum Conventum Ulissiponensem usurpet. AGOP IV. 192, p. 329.

<sup>97</sup> Cloche to O'Connor, 19 Feb 1701. AGOP IV. 192, p. 350.

Cloche to Regens Primarius, Holy Cross. 5 Mar 1701. Respondetur et significatur quod Prior Provincialis nil possit mutare circa factam moderatorum institutionem, debent tamen ipsi parere ipsius ordinationibus circa chori et mensae sequelam statutis. AGOP IV. 192, p. 351.

<sup>98</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae. There were thirty-two in the community at this time.

<sup>99</sup> Cloche to O'Connor, 15 Oct 1701. AGOP IV. 192, p. 366. On 11 May 1689 this Fr. Bernard O'Connor was made S.T. Praesentatus at the request of the province of St. Vincent of Chiapa and Guatemala. AGOP IV. 176\*\*, f. 2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> Journal, 132.

<sup>101</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae, f. 38<sup>r</sup>. Note that all three were sent to Ulster.

consented to the re-opening of the *studium* in San Sisto at Rome and gave orders that two or three professed novices were to come from Louvain to begin philosophy there<sup>102</sup>. Whether this concession was due to an improvement in the finances of San Sisto, or to a change of heart on the part of Fr. Cloche, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor deserves some credit for achieving without difficulty what his predecessor had been rebuked for suggesting. Henceforth the Irish province had a third centre of education for its clerics and a few more teaching posts for its lectors.

#### THE HOSPICE OF ST. ANTHONY IN FAVEROLLES, 1701-1703

Before describing Fr. O'Connor's first visit to Ireland something should be said about the attempted foundation of a hospice near Soissons for the use of the province: if not actually the work of the provincial, the scheme was at least set on foot under his supervision. The leading spirit of the enterprise was Fr. Hugh Callanan, a priest long resident in Paris, whom we shall meet again as provincial of Ireland. Sometime during 1701, Callanan prevailed on the Duc d'Orleans, brother of Louis XIV, to make a foundation for the Irish exiles in the hospice or hermitage of St. Anthony in the parish of Faverolles near Villers-Cotterêts in the diocese of Soissons. On 20 September 1701 Fr. Dominic McGenis, the provincial procurator in Paris, was appointed Rector of the hospice, presumably by Fr. Ambrose O'Connor; but that is the first and last we hear of Fr. McGenis' participation in the affair<sup>103</sup>. The only other Irishman known to have been involved in the foundation was Fr. Edmund MacEgan who accompanied Fr. O'Heyne into exile and lived for more than two years in the convent of Gonesse near Paris before going on to Faverolles: the old man died soon after

<sup>102</sup> The re-opening of the *studium* is first mentioned in the registers under date 19 Feb 1701 where Fr. Sall's removal to San Sisto is touched upon. On 28 May permission was given for three novices to come as students of philosophy to Rome from Louvain: their lector was to be Humbert Burke. On 15 October, one of the three having died, Fr. Cloche said it would be sufficient to send two. AGOP IV. 192, pp. 350, 356-7, 361, 366-7.

<sup>103</sup> TA, Liber Provinciae, f. 38<sup>r</sup>. However, this entry may possibly mean only that Fr. McGenis was sent the letters appointing another. '20 Septembris 1701 missa est ad R.P.F. Dominicum McGenis institutio Rectoris pro Hospitio Sancti Antonii prope Parisios in Gallia, qui quidem Pater est Procurator provinciae Hiberniae per Galliam.' On McGenis see O'Heyne, 21. On 12 Sept 1705 Fr. McGenis was appointed procurator for the province at Madrid. AGOP IV. 166, p. 91.



and was buried by the Norbertine canons in Villers-Cotterêts on 1 October 1702<sup>104</sup>. Various difficulties, mentioned but unspecified by Thomas Burke, prevented the province from ever taking secure possession of the hermitage<sup>105</sup>. Fr. Callanan, however, must have continued his efforts into 1703, for Fr. Cloche wrote twice to the bishop of Soissons during that year: first (on 20 February) to ask his help for the struggling establishment, and later (on 30 October) to thank him for his assistance<sup>106</sup>.

#### VISITATION IN IRELAND, 1701-1703

Although the provincial had applied for missionary faculties to Propaganda as early as April 1701, it was not until October or November that he set out for Ireland with some of his subjects<sup>107</sup>. Their route brought them through England where Fr. O'Connor was imprisoned but soon made an ingenious escape<sup>108</sup>. Although Edmund Burke's writings agree with the Athenry house-chronicle in saying that the provincial reached Ireland in 1701, there is no definite trace of his movements until 8 August 1702 when he carried out visitation in the 'con-

<sup>104</sup> O'Heyne, 213-15.

<sup>105</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 450-451. 'vix aut ne vix quidem ob nonnullas difficultates reipsa possessum'.

<sup>106</sup> 20 Feb 1703. Mons. l'evêque de Soissons. Il prie sa grandeur de protéger l'établissement que M. le Duc d'Orléans a fait des Religieux de l'Ordre dans l'Ermitage de S. Antoine paroisse de Faverolles auprès de Villerscotrets et qu'il y envoie le R.P.M. Callanan docteur de Paris Irlandois pour estre vicaire des Religieux de cette nation. AGOP IV. 186, f. 108<sup>v</sup>.

30 Oct. 1703. Mons. l'evêque de Soissons. La charité que V. G. exerce envers les Irlandois de mon Ordre, m'oblige à vous en rendre Grâces. Le soin que vous avez pris de remettre le soin de cet hermitage au P. M. Cunnanan [sic] déerois qu'il sera fort attentif à seconder les bonnes intentions de V.G. AGOP IV. 186, f. 111<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>107</sup> Propaganda considered his request 'pro litteris patentibus et facultatibus Missionarii Apostolici' on 5 April 1701, and directed him to apply to the Internuncio at Brussels. APF, Atti 71, f. 81<sup>v</sup>-82<sup>r</sup>. There is nothing of interest in the original undated petition, save that O'Connor asserted that he was now about 'to expose his life' by returning to Ireland. APF, SOCG 538, f. 316<sup>r</sup>. On 7 May 1701, Fr. Cloche left it to himself to decide 'an stante persecutione intrare debeat in Hiberniam'. AGOP IV. 192, p. 355. A more definite ruling followed on 22 October: 'insinuat quod deberet aliorum religiosorum Provinciales imitari et Hiberniam intrare'. *ibid.* p. 367.

<sup>108</sup> Edmund Burke, *Brevis Notitia*, p. 3. 'inde per Angliam (ubi captus et incarceratus et rara arte liberatus) transiit in Hiberniam'.

vent' of Roscommon<sup>109</sup>. For the following eighteen months he appears to have remained on the mission, visiting what few hidden communities survived, carrying out formal visitation, appointing priors so that novices could legally be received (Cardinal Ferrari and the General had both advised him on this score), and calling home more of his subjects from the continent<sup>110</sup>. He was still engaged in this work on 21 July 1703 when Fr. Cloche prolonged his provincialate by four years, *ex commissione Pontificis*<sup>111</sup>. From the report to the Pope made after his return from Ireland it appears that on Fr. O'Connor's arrival on the mission he found there about ninety of his subjects: five of these had been in prison for four years, and the others were liable to the same fate if discovered<sup>112</sup>. The provincial himself was tracked from place to place, so one can readily understand why the surviving communities were almost exclusively in Connacht, the most Catholic of the four provinces, and why Fr. O'Connor rarely strayed outside it<sup>113</sup>. Since most of our information on his activities and movements comes from the *Liber Provinciae* — an old register which the provincial appears to have recovered and used — the details can most conveniently be arranged in chronological order, as in the following plan.

- f. 27<sup>r</sup>. 8 Aug 1702. Roscommon (Connacht). Nomina fratrum... in actuali visitatione.

Dominic O'Connor, John Breckan, Hugh Flaherty, Dominic Hannen, Michael Wealsh, Thomas Burke.

Dominic O'Connor elected and confirmed as prior. John Breckan appointed subprior.

- f. 28<sup>r</sup>. 4 Sept 1702. Burrishoole (Connacht).

James Niellus assigned to the convent.

<sup>109</sup> The Athenry house-chronicle, part of which may have been written by Edmund Burke himself, is preserved in the provincial archives (TA). Perhaps the provincial reached Ireland between January and 25 March 1702, which would have been reckoned as part of 1701 according to the 'old style' then in use in Ireland.

<sup>110</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIV; *Journal*, 132.

<sup>111</sup> 21 July 1703. P. Praesentatus Ambrosius O'Connor continuatur ex Commissione Pontificis ad aliud quadriennium in munere provincialatus. AGOP IV. 182, p. 419.

<sup>112</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 546. This report is more fully discussed below.

<sup>113</sup> The provincial refers, in the report just mentioned, to the manner in which he was pursued. 'quae et quanta ipse fuerit interea perpressus, quoties ad carceres quaesitus, quam presse saepius insecutus, referre consulto omittit'.

- 15 Sept 1702. Burrishoole (Connacht). Sub Ambrosio O'Connor Provinciali.  
Patrick Wealsh, James Cullen, James Niellus.  
Patrick Wealsh appointed prior: was permitted to receive novices that same year.
- f. 28<sup>r</sup>. 16 Sept 1702. Strade (Connacht). Nomina fratrum.  
James Cullen, Anthony Hynagan, James Nicholas, Raymund Henagan, Cormac Corcrane.  
James Cullen [of Burrishoole] appointed prior.
- f. 27<sup>v</sup>. 18 Sept 1702. Portumna (Connacht). Sub Ambrosio Connor provinciali. Nomina fratrum.  
Christopher Wealsh, James Wale, Thomas Maddin, Peter Anglon, Bernard Connor.  
Christopher Wealsh appointed prior on the 19th.  
20 Sept 1702. Galway (Connacht). Nomina fratrum in actuali visitatione provincialis.  
Gregory French, Nicholas Blacke. Peter Kinnily, laybrother.  
Gregory French appointed prior.  
— 1702. Galway (Connacht). Nomina Monialium Galviensi anno 1702.  
Mary of St. Thomas Lynch, prioress. Agnes of St. John Evangelist, subprioress. Catherine of St. Mary Kirwan, Bridget of St. Ignatius Lynch, mistress of novices. Anne of St. Thomas Lynch, vicaress. Elinia of St. Bernard Lynaugh, Catherine of Jesus Blake, Eleanor of the Holy Trinity Blake, Mary Lynch of St. Thomas, Mary Joyce of the Holy Rosary, Elizabeth of St. Joseph Darcy, Margaret Darcy of St. Martin, Mary Bedlow of Jesus. All professed.
- f. 38<sup>v</sup>. 3 Oct 1702. Carlingford (Ulster).  
Bernard Berne appointed prior. Peter Mathews appointed subprior.  
3 Oct 1702. Newtownards (Ulster).  
Edmund Berne appointed vicar-in-capite.
- f. 28<sup>r</sup>. 4 Oct 1702. Ballindoon (Connacht).  
Bernard MacDermottroe appointed prior.
- f. 38<sup>v</sup>. 5 Oct 1702. Derry (Ulster).  
Dominic Davett appointed prior.  
5 Oct 1702. Coleraine (Ulster).  
Dominic Burlahan appointed prior [= Brullaughan].
- f. 27<sup>r</sup>. 7 Oct 1702. Roscommon (Connacht).  
Dominic O'Connor, prior, permitted to receive novices.
- f. 28<sup>v</sup>. 10 Feb 1703. Roscommon (Connacht).  
William Burke and Dominic McGuire made their profession.
- f. 27<sup>v</sup>. 22 Feb 1703. Galway (Connacht).  
Sister Bridget Lynch appointed prioress.

- f. 28<sup>v</sup>. 10 Mar 1703. Roscommon (Connacht).  
Dimissorial letters made out for William Burke to receive all sacred orders.
- f. 27<sup>v</sup>. 15 Aug 1703. Athenry (Connacht). *Nomina fratrum*.  
Anthony Hugo, Raymund Kenny. Barnabas Gosky, laybrother.  
Anthony Hugo appointed prior.
- f. 28<sup>r</sup>. 18 Aug 1703. Urlare (Connacht). In actuali visitatione sub Ambrosio O'Connor provinciali.  
Peter Costello, Richard MacMorishroe, Edmund MacMorishroe, John McDaniel, Raymund Costello.  
Peter Costello appointed prior.  
— 1703. Sligo (Connacht). *Nomina fratrum*.  
Gregory Nellus, Anthony Hartt, Thomas Gara, Patrick Conor incarceratus, Miler Philips.
- f. 28<sup>v</sup>. 7 Sept 1703. Clonshanville (Connacht). *Nomina fratrum*.  
Dominic MacDermottroe. Appointed prior.
- f. 28<sup>r</sup>. — 1703. Ballindoon (Connacht). *Nomina fratrum*.  
Bernard McDermottroe, Thomas Rutledge.
- f. 28<sup>v</sup>. 10 Oct 1703. R.P.F. Dominicus Connor creatus et institutus fuit Vicarius Provincialis huius Regni discedente ad ultra marinas partes R.A.P.F. Ambrosio O'Connor, S.T.P., huius provinciae pro tunc Provinciali die 10 Octobris 1703.
- f. 65<sup>v</sup>. 18 Oct 1703. Limerick (Munster).  
Dominic Carroll appointed prior.  
18 Oct 1703. Tralee (Munster).  
Dominic Egan appointed prior.

Omitting the two novices professed at Roscommon in February 1703 the total number of friars named in this record is only forty-six: since Fr. O'Connor found about ninety in Ireland there must have been as many more again scattered through the country. O'Heyne speaks of several who remained at home despite the exile but whose names do not occur for this period in the *Liber Provinciae*. Significantly, most of these belonged to Limerick and Derry and therefore outside the province of Connacht with which the provincial was most concerned. In all probability there were then no Dominican communities or *nuclei* in the other three provinces, and such priests as were to be found there lived as best they could alone. Even granting that Connacht was a Catholic area it is surprising that the provincial should have found there no less than nine communities, however rudimentary. As appears from the entries quoted above, Fr. O'Connor appointed superiors for four convents in Ulster: he was perhaps also responsible

for the appointment of two priors in Munster made a week after his nomination of Dominic O'Connor as Vicar-Provincial. While there is no trace of any attempt to name priors in Leinster, one cannot definitely state that no such appointment was made: there is some reason to believe that an entire page is lacking from the section of the *Liber Provinciae* devoted to that province.

Apart altogether from being provincial, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor was also one of James III's secret agents, a fact which may help to explain why there are long periods in his career during which he simply disappears from view. One such period occurs between his departure from Ireland in October 1703 and May 1704 when he wrote to the Master General from Brussels reporting on his visitation. Once again, our knowledge of his letter is unfortunately indirect, so that we know only that it concerned the staffing of Holy Cross, Louvain and requested Fr. Cloche to assign three more missionaries to Ireland. The General replied on 17 June 1704 enclosing the required patents for Fathers Thomas Clemens, Thomas Fitzgerald, and John Baptist O'Shiels: the assignments were drawn up *in simplici forma* lest the usual elaborate formula should compromise the priests were the documents to be found in their possession<sup>114</sup>. In the same month Fr. O'Connor carried out another visitation of Holy Cross. While praising his zeal for doing so, Fr. Cloche took the opportunity to insist that he could visit the college only as the General's commissary, not as provincial, repeating once more that the Irish colleges at Lisbon and Louvain were under his own immediate jurisdiction<sup>115</sup>.

While at Louvain the provincial wrote and published a letter to Clement XI describing the sufferings of the Catholics in Ireland, a

<sup>114</sup> Fr. Cloche's letter also provides more details on the development of the studium in San Sisto. 'Tuas de 17 Maii Bruxellis datas accepimus ex quibus perju-cunde didicimus quanta bona perfeceris in Patria tua. Ut porro acquissimo tuo desiderio obsecundemus Patentes hodie mittimus RR. PP. Thomae Clemens, Thomae Fitzgerald, et J. B. O'Shiels ut in Hiberniam profisci valeant sacro missionum muneris operam daturi. In simplici quidem forma voluimus exprimi patentes ne si in ampliori fuissent expressae, et ipsis et Religioni posset obesse. Patrem Delphini hic studentem libenter Lovanium mittemus Philosophiae lectorem, sed ne desertum evadat hic studium Romanum, de certo transmittendis huc duobus ex vestris capacioribus studentibus theologis certiores fieri optamus.' AGOP IV. 166, p. 259.

<sup>115</sup> Cloche to O'Connor, 1 July 1704. AGOP IV. 166, p. 261. Fr. Cloche on this occasion expressed his willingness to follow the provincial's suggestions in regard to the Rectorship of the college at Lisbon.



letter devoted for the greater part to a list of the new penal laws<sup>116</sup>. It is in this report that he made passing reference to his own subjects on the mission.

'A quadriennio quippe et ultra, Provincialis licet immeritus institutus Orator ex Hispania per Belgium et Angliam in Hiberniam properavit, ibidemque sibi subditos (numero nonaginta circiter) per Regnum hinc inde dispersos, et non sine fructu occulte evangelizantes invisit atque ad contumelias, aliaque quantumvis aspera pro nomine Jesu laete patienda pro viribus animavit. Quae et quanta ipse fuerit interea perpressus, quoties ad carceres quaesitus, quam presse saepius insecutus, referre consulto omittit et servus licet inutilis Altissimo consecrat'<sup>117</sup>.

#### TWO HISTORIANS OF THE PROVINCE, 1706

Not least among the many good qualities of Fr. Antoninus Cloche was his concern for the history of the Order, a concern to which he gave practical expression through the General Chapter of 1694 by commanding all provincials to have the history of their provinces written within a year and to send the finished works immediately to the Master General<sup>118</sup>. The troubled state of the Irish province, the exile of 1698, and the delay in the convocation of the following General Chapter, doubtlessly played their part in preventing the province from responding immediately to the General's appeal. But as it grew certain that a Chapter would be held at Bologna in 1706, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor addressed himself to the question. The result of his initiative more than compensates for the fact that his report to the General on 17 May 1704 cannot be found and that he should have spoken so briefly of his visit to Ireland in his printed letter to the Pope. Following exactly the prescriptions of the General Chapter he chose John O'Heyne as '*chronologus provinciae*' and instructed him to write what he knew '*as a testimony*'

<sup>116</sup> Ad SS. Dominum Clementem Papam XI Libellus Supplex de Praesenti Hiberniae sub Acatolico jugo statu. MDCCIV. There is a copy of the pamphlet in the Vatican Archives, Fondo Albani 164, ff. 125-132. Apart from the printed work, two manuscript copies survive: one *loc. cit.*, ff. 133-136, the other in the archives of San Clemente, Rome (SCAR), Codex II, Vol. 1, ff. 81-84. There is some reason to believe that the work appeared in 1705 and that its date (1704) should be read as part of the title. On the one hand, it refers to his appointment as provincial 'more than four years ago'; on the other he therein styles himself a Master of Theology, to which rank he was raised only in July 1705. AGOP IV. 166, p. 85.

<sup>117</sup> The passage occurs on p. 6 of the printed work.

<sup>118</sup> Acta Capitulorum Generalium, (ed. Reichert), MOPH XIII, 289.

to all the members of the province, living and dead<sup>119</sup>. Since O'Heyne based most of his first chapter on a letter written to him from Paris on 26 February 1706 by Dominic Maguire, the exiled Dominican archbishop of Armagh, the appointment was probably made in 1704 or 1705. The volume was printed at Louvain in 1706, perhaps the very year in which the writing of it had been begun<sup>120</sup>.

True, the book contained only forty-eight or forty-nine pages (for some copies lacked the final page), O'Heyne's Latin and literary style were equally unpolished, his sources few and unreliable. On these and other grounds Echard severely criticized it<sup>121</sup>. But for all its shortcomings it is historically invaluable, largely because the author had the wisdom to devote most of his attention to what he could speak of with certainty — the members of the province he had met and lived with during a long and varied career. O'Heyne had studied at Salamanca, had taught in France and Louvain, was twice a missionary in Ireland where he had been Master of Novices in Drogheda and prior of Urlar. He had known severe persecution during the Titus Oates' Plot and had gone into exile from Galway in 1698. The parts of his book dealing with people or events prior to 1660 are naturally unsatisfactory, based as they were on a few general histories and oral tradition, but when he speaks of those he had known, and in particular of the Dominicans of his native Connacht, his every word has great historical value. No less than two hundred and fifty Irish Dominicans are named, and most of them described, in O'Heyne's forty-nine pages. The fact that he wrote at a time when so many of these priests were refugees in every corner of western Europe doubled the importance of his work. For this some of the credit must go to Fr. Ambrose O'Connor who commissioned him to do it.

<sup>119</sup> The appointment is mentioned on the original title-page of the finished volume. 'nunc autem instituto Chronologo suae Provinciae per mandatum Eximii P. M. Fr. Ambrosii O'Conor, Provincialis perdigni praefatae Provinciae'. O'Heyne, 1. In speaking of Dominic Lynch, the great theologian of Seville, the author throws more light on the object of his work: 'et hic insinuo non ex aliquo privato affectu amabili aut patrio, sed ut testimonium, secundum mandatum mihi impositum a meo praesenti provinciali, P. M. Fr. Ambrosio O'Conor'. O'Heyne, 148. That the volume was intended for the Master General may be seen from the author's comment on John O'Brien, S.T.M. 'Bonus vir est, et notior Reverendissimo P. Magistro nostro Generali praesenti, quam ut ego extendam calamus in eius encomia'. O'Heyne, 74-76.

<sup>120</sup> The archbishop's letter is mentioned in O'Heyne, 7, 9, 11.

<sup>121</sup> Quétif-Echard, *Scriptores Ord. Praed.*, Paris 1721, 791.

Not content with the exhaustive directions issued by the Chapter of 1694, Fr. Cloche followed them up by circular letters calling on individual friars to write the history of their own convents. One such letter came into the hands of Fr. Michael MacQuillan, an Irish member of the province of Paris and then subprior at Rouen<sup>122</sup>. Fr. MacQuillan immediately set to work and wrote a '*Catalogus Conventuum quos olim habuerunt Fratres Praedicatorum in provincia Ultoniae*'. Most of this four-page manuscript, which Fr. MacQuillan signed at Rouen on 15 April 1706, is devoted to the author's native convent of Coleraine; there is a good section on Derry, but the other three convents are scarcely touched upon at all. Unlike O'Heyne he attempted the impossible task of establishing the antiquity of these foundations and identifying their founders, so that his composition lacks the qualities which made O'Heyne's work a success. Nonetheless MacQuillan's effort has the merit of preserving the local Ulster traditions of his day, particularly those referring to the mass-martyrdom of Dominicans in Elizabethan times.

#### MORE MISSIONARIES FOR IRELAND, 1705

There are few traces of Fr. O'Connor's activities during 1705. It is however to be presumed that he spent at least the first half of that year at Madrid, for O'Heyne says that after his return from Ireland to Louvain he made his way through France to Madrid and was living there in 1706 when O'Heyne was writing about him<sup>123</sup>. On 4 July 1705 he was promoted to the rank of Master of Theology 'at the request of the province', and on 22 August the General praised his zeal on learning

<sup>122</sup> On this Fr. MacQuillan, called Peter by O'Heyne, see O'Heyne, 13; Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 548; and especially Quétif-Echard, *Scriptores O.P.*, II, 787. His *Catalogus Conventuum Ultoniae*, now AGOP XIV E, pp. 655-658, is signed by him as 's. theologiae professor et supprior conventus Rothomagensis'. The opening lines of the work reveal the writer's motive. 'Quamprimum legi literas Reverendissimi Patris nostri Magistri Generalis quibus singulis injunxit ut historiam suorum conventuum exscriberent atque Romam mitterent, summam adhibui diligentiam ad investiganda ea quae non solum ad conventum meum spectant sed etiam quae ad alios qui sunt aut olim fuerunt in praefata Hiberniae parte quae mihi natale solum est'.

<sup>123</sup> O'Heyne, 253. One may note a letter sent to him on 2 May 1705 by Fr. Cloche. 'Intimatur ob vi Magistrorum numerum non convenire multiplicari hunc gradum, praecipue cum provincia sit valde desolata. Item jubetur hortari PP. suae nationis ad repatriandum, et subeundum munus missionis apostolicae'. AGOP IV, 166, p. 282.

that he wished to return with some fresh missionaries to Ireland<sup>124</sup>. We know that his Vicar-Provincial, Dominic O'Connor, died that summer on the 24th of June, a fact which made his immediate return advisable, but there is no other evidence for a second visit to the mission at this time<sup>125</sup>.

Whether or not he went himself to Ireland, Fr. O'Connor certainly made every effort to urge others to do so. After returning from his first visitation he distributed a printed circular letter to the scattered members of the province, relating the position of the Order in Ireland and urging them to return as soon as possible. Once again the original document is lacking, but one can discern its contents in the following petition of November 1705 made to Propaganda by Fr. Peter MacDermott, prior of San Sisto, to whom the provincial had made a special appeal. It was written in support of three young priests (James Fiaghny, Peter Cluan, and John Gusman or Gildea), all apparently sons of the convent of Sligo to which the provincial himself belonged, who had studied at San Sisto since January 1699 and now asked for missionary faculties, religious books in English, and money for their journey to Ireland<sup>126</sup>. The prior's petition is also interesting for its comments on the poverty of the community and on the financial assistance given to it by the Pope, Cardinal Ferrari, and the Master General.

' Il P. Priore di S. Sisto e S. Clemente dell'Ordine de Predicatori e natione Ibernese Oratore Umilissimo riverentemente espone all'EE. VV. come il suo Provinciale havendo visitato tutti li suoi Religiosi dispersi in vari luoghi del Regno, che ascendono al numero di ottanta, non senza frutto di quelle afflitte Anime, trovò nel giro che fece del Regno grandissimo bisogno di Operarii, per quanto detto Provinciale scrisse una Lettera circolare a tutti li suoi Religiosi dispersi in varie Provincie, sì in Italia, Spagna, e Francia, et in particolare all'Oratore, acciò li mandasse da questo Convento alcuni Re-

<sup>124</sup> The note of his promotion is in AGOP IV. 166, p. 85. The letter of 22 Aug 1705 is as follows. *Laudatur ipsius zelus, quo exardescit in missiones cum nonnullis secum ducendis in patriam apostolicis, et in hunc finem parum conducturum P. French...* AGOP IV. 166, p. 288.

<sup>125</sup> The obituary notice of Fr. Dominic O'Connor is in TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 29<sup>v</sup>. Edmund Burke speaks of three visits made to Ireland by the provincial: 'tertio ivit et rediit in Patriam'. *Dissertatio*, LIV. We are certain of two visits, 1702-3 and 1708, but a third cannot be documented save for the above suggestion in the General's registers.

<sup>126</sup> The prior's petition is only one of a group on the same subject now to be found in APF, SOCG 553, ff. 121-134. The reference to it is *loc. cit.*, f. 121<sup>r</sup>. For the decision of Propaganda see Atti 75, f. 346-347.

ligiosi di buoni costumi, et in dottrina sufficientissimi, che hanno finito li loro studii, i quali volentieri intraprenderanno quel disastroso viaggio per servizio di Dio, e consolatione di quell'Anime. Ma essendo l'entrata di questo Convento cosi tenue per il numero di Religiosi residenti in quello, anzi è tanto tenue, che se non fosse sovvenuto dalla somma carità di Nostro Signore, e dell'Emo. Sr. Cardinale Ferrari, e del P. Rmo. Generale di detta Religione, sarebbe impossibile di poter sussistere. Ricorre dunque l'Oratore alla somma pietà dell'EE. VV. humilmente supplicandole d'ordinare qualche sussidio per il viatico de sudetti tre Padri. Che della gratia etc. Quas Deus etc',

#### THE GENERAL CHAPTER AT BOLOGNA, 1706

Although the General Chapter of 1694 had decreed the holding of the next Chapter at Toulouse in 1697, no such chapter took place until 1706. At various times during the intervening years Fr. Cloche had high hopes of holding it in the near future, and on one such occasion (1 January 1701) wrote to inform Fr. Ambrose O'Connor that the Irish province, in view of its sufferings, was dispensed from sending a Definitor and Socius to the General Chapter<sup>127</sup>. Five years later, however, the General changed his mind and wrote to the provincial to say that Fr. Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva could be named definitor after receiving the necessary dispensation. A dispensation was required, for the holding of the provincial chapter of 1698 had been prevented by the exile and the brethren had had no subsequent opportunity of meeting, even to elect a definitor. Fr. O'Connor, encouraged by Edmund Burke, accordingly made a formal petition to the General, a papal brief was obtained, and Fr. Patrick Plunkett went to Bologna in May 1706 as *diffinitor provinciae Hiberniae*, taking Anthony Carroll of Lorrha as his socius<sup>128</sup>.

This is our first introduction to a man who, although only a theologian of the Casanatensian library, had considerable influence over the Master General and played the obscure but important part of unoff-

<sup>127</sup> AGOP IV. 192, p. 348.

<sup>128</sup> This is stated on the authority of Edmund Burke, Journal, 133. 'Hic [Patricius Plunkett] anno 1706 per Breve Apostolicum ad petitionem R.A.P. Magistri Ambrosii O'Conor Provincialis in Capitulo Generali Bononiensi Diffinitor extitit: cum enim instaret Capitulum Generale, scripsit Reverendissimus ad Provincialem, ut Plunkettum nominaret Diffinitorem, quod Provincialis (me etiam instigante) fecit; quia non dubitavimus illum pro Provincia nostra acturum prout conveniebat'. Burke then goes on to mention Plunkett's associates, including Carroll his socius at Bologna.



icial socius to Fr. Cloche on matters concerning the Irish province. For this we have, apart from other evidence, the unfriendly testimony of Edmund Burke: 'gratos aures Reverendissimi ut voluit habuit et replevit'<sup>129</sup>. Thomas Burke, who unlike his namesake knew Plunkett personally, paints a more pleasant picture in which Plunkett is revealed as a man of profound learning, elegant in speech and extremely polished in manner<sup>130</sup>. We know little of his early life save that he was born in Leinster, made profession for the Connacht convent of Roscommon, and went to France for his studies. Mercier has traced him to Nantes in 1689 and to St. Jacques in Paris in 1693<sup>131</sup>. At Paris he became a Doctor of the Sorbonne and lived on friendly terms with a fellow-Irishman named Hugh Callanan, later to be provincial of Ireland. In 1700 he was appointed theologian of the newly founded Casanatensian library, a post he held until his death in 1728<sup>132</sup>.

Although Plunkett and Carroll were the only official Irish representatives at Bologna, they were joined there by other members of the province who came in a private capacity. Among them were Hugh Callanan of Lorrha, Anthony Maguire of Gola, and others still whose names have not been recorded<sup>133</sup>. As can be seen, none of the group

<sup>129</sup> Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 133.

<sup>130</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 548. In this interesting notice, Thomas Burke asserts that Plunkett wrote several works under assumed names.

<sup>131</sup> J. Toravel has begun to make available the notes on French Dominicans left by Clodoald Mercier T.O.P. (1893-1942) in the archives of the Master General. For details on Fr. Patrick Plunkett see J. Toravel, *Nomenclature des religieux de la Congrégation de Bretagne aux XVII<sup>ème</sup> et XVIII<sup>ème</sup> siècles*, Angers 1964, 128; this is a typed, not a printed, work.

<sup>132</sup> A. Guglielmotti, *Catalogo dei Bibliotecari, Cattedratici, e Teologi del Collegio Casanatense*, Rome 1860, 28-37.

<sup>133</sup> 'Assumpsit Plunkettus sibi socium Magistrum Antonium Carroll Lohrensem Momoniensem, virum (ut ferunt) apprime probum; Callananus (cui Plunkettus a juventute devinctus erat notusque Parisiis), Maguire Ultoniensis et alii ex Lagenia, Momonia, et Ultonia tunc exules, occasionem nacti, clanculo (in scis et inconsultis Magistro Provinciale et omnibus Conaciacensibus), subscripserunt supplicationi de aequalitate Provinciarum Hiberniae in Capitulo stabilienda. Ideo Magister Antonius Maguire et Magister Kennedy ex Lohra, Bononiam propriis expensis accesserant...

Erant in Chateau-Thierry, monasterio in Gallia, aliqui Hiberni e nostris in exilio, monialium capellani. Magister Callananus privatim eos ad subscribendum petitioni praefatae induxit, excepto R.P. fr. Petro Kina Athenriense, viro omnium meritisimo, utpote qui in Hibernia plurimis cum singulari gratia et applausu praedicavit annis, et prior existens Taliensis et de Kilmalog in Momonia, plures recepit, ordinemque in illis Momoniae partibus propagavit. Hunc enim nullatenus voluit con-

was a native of Connacht which at that time had more sons than the other three provinces together. Unknown to the provincial, to Edmund Burke prior of Louvain, or to Peter MacDermott prior in Rome, (all three of whom were of the Connacht party), the Irish group at Bologna petitioned the Chapter to restore the system of alternation in the appointment of provincials and the election of superiors in the foreign colleges. To gain wider support for the measure, Hugh Callanan wrote to some Irish exiles at Château-Thierry, asking them to sign the petition. Among the exiles was Fr. Peter Kina of Athenry who, though the document was not shown to him lest he should reveal its contents, was later able to inform Edmund Burke of what had transpired.

The historical manuscripts of Edmund Burke have much more than this to say against the activities of Plunkett and his friends at Bologna: not all of it is reasonable or convincing. Perhaps it is sufficient to say that Plunkett's work in Bologna represented the first stage in the recovery of the three provinces (Ulster, Leinster, and Munster) hardest hit by the Jacobite war and the exile. Though less numerous than the brethren of Connacht, they were not prepared to submit to the hegemony of Connacht for any longer than was necessary. Besides, the re-introduction of the system of alternation had been requested by the whole Irish province in 1697 and the General had then promised that he would gladly concede it once it had been discussed and approved by the next General Chapter<sup>134</sup>. Why then should Plunkett be blamed for achieving at Bologna what the Fathers of the province had asked for on the eve of the exile, and what Fr. Cloche not long before had indignantly refused to Fr. Patrick Marshall?

The acts of the General Chapter contained nine ordinations *pro provincia Hiberniae*, of which the first two concern the system of alternation<sup>135</sup>. While the offices of provincial and of the superiors of the colleges were to go in turn to members of the four provinces, the students in the colleges were to be freely received no matter what province they came from. In filling professorships, preference was to be given to those educated in the college where the appointment was to be made. The next four rulings concerned the Irish priests and nuns in Lisbon

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sultum, ne fraudulenta subscriptio per illum detegeretur. Sic mihi declaravit optimus ille Pater, dum Lovanii Sacram docuerat postea Scripturam ex Provincialis Calanani mandato; ubi denuo obiit circa annum 1716'. Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 133-134.

<sup>134</sup> The request was probably made in the closing months of 1697, for the General's reply was dated 18 Jan 1698. AGOP IV. 192, p. 229.

<sup>135</sup> *Acta Capitulum Generalium*, (ed. Reichert), MOPH XIII, 367-368.

and may on that account be attributed to Anthony Carroll who was long familiar with the situation there. The superiors and the nuns' confessors were always to be Irish; the monastery of Bom Successo was to have forty Irish nuns; while Scripture and Apologetics were to be introduced into the curriculum at Corpo Santo. The seventh ordination appealed to all provincials and priors to give a charitable reception to those begging alms for the college at Louvain<sup>136</sup>. The two final ordinations promoted various members of the province to the Mastership or Praesentatura in theology. Since Fr. Ambrose O'Connor, not to speak of his predecessor, had asked in vain more than once for such promotions, he had every reason to be pleased with Fr. Plunkett's success in obtaining them<sup>137</sup>. Edmund Burke himself was among those promoted on this occasion (becoming Master in theology), a fact which did not prevent him from complaining that the chapter made Masters of Theology 'out of wealthy army chaplains, few of whom had ever mounted either the pulpit or the rostrum' and some of whom were later honest enough to admit that they had not in the least expected such honours<sup>138</sup>.

#### FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, 1706-1707

While the capitular fathers were at work in Bologna in 1706, John O'Heyne was busily writing his account of the province. At the end of his short paragraph on Nicholas Blake of Galway, an exiled priest who had returned to Ireland in 1701, he wrote, 'I fear, however, that he is now in prison, because the heretics are going to extraordinary lengths in the pursuit of religious this year'<sup>139</sup>. Perhaps because of the unusual severity of the persecution, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor remained at Madrid for the time being. In Ireland the place of Dominic O'Connor his Vicar-Provincial, who died in the summer of 1705, was taken by a certain Fr. Walsh. We owe this detail to Bernard O'Donoghue, Vicar-

<sup>136</sup> Fr. Martin King and Br. Edmund Fitzgerald, a laybrother, carried out an extensive quest for Louvain in the first half of 1706. Their permission to do so, first granted by Fr. Cloche on 19 Dec 1705, was extended to include France and Italy on 14 August 1706. AGOP IV. 166, pp. 93, 98. Note that on the latter date Martin King was called Peter in the register. On 8 Jan 1707 this quest was extended to Germany and entrusted to Fr. John Maghee S.T.P. and Br. Fitzgerald. AGOP IV. 166, p. 102.

<sup>137</sup> These requests were replied to negatively on 15 Oct 1701 (AGOP IV. 192, p. 366), 22 Oct 1701 (IV. 192, p. 367), and 2 May 1705 (IV. 166, p. 282).

<sup>138</sup> Journal, 133.

<sup>139</sup> O'Heyne, 155.

Apostolic of Ardagh, whom Edmund Burke, prior of Louvain, had commissioned to act in some business concerning the province. The relevant sentence occurred in O'Donoghue's reply, translated and decoded by Edmund Burke for the benefit of Propaganda Fide: 'quaeque mihi circa tuos commissisti fratres peregi; eorum curam loco Domini Herbert [sic vocant Provincialem nostrum ne innotescat] agit Dominus Welsh, qui cohortem vestrum recrutabit cito' <sup>140</sup>.

The provincial's residence in Madrid, to which O'Heyne referred in 1706, is also mentioned in a letter of 1707 from Grimaldi, Internuncio in Brussels, to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda in regard to the finances of Holy Cross, Louvain. Propaganda had long been paying a subsidy to the college for the support of four students, a subsidy renewed every three years on the prior making application for it. When Edmund Burke so applied to the Congregation in February 1707, the secretary of Propaganda wrote to Grimaldi to enquire whether the conditions under which the subsidy was granted were being fulfilled <sup>141</sup>. Grimaldi apparently asked the superiors of Holy Cross for the relevant information and they, taking advantage of the opportunity, added to their report a strong plea for travelling-expenses for those former students of the college who would long since have gone to Ireland had they been able to afford it. In forwarding this document to Rome (24 March 1707), Grimaldi testified to the poverty of the college, mentioning what strains the exile of 1698 had put on its slender resources and how undesirable it was that the students should have to leave their books to beg. Another effect of their poverty was that Irish priests, assigned by their provincial to the mission, were forced to wander about the Low Countries begging for the price of their passage to Ireland, without in the meantime being able to shelter in their own college at Louvain. Grimaldi consequently gave his full support to the petition made to him by the superiors of Holy Cross on 16 March and asked Propaganda to consider their requests <sup>142</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> O'Donoghue's letter to Burke was dated 1 Oct 1706. APF, CP 32, f. 220<sup>r</sup>. Unfortunately there were then three Dominicans named Walsh in Ireland — Patrick, Michael, and Christopher — so it is not possible to identify the Vicar-Provincial with certainty.

<sup>141</sup> Burke's application to Propaganda was considered on 7 Feb 1707. APF, Atti 77, f. 23; SOCG 557, f. 144-145.

<sup>142</sup> Burke ceased to be prior of Holy Cross about this time, a fact which explains why the petition of 16 March to the Internuncio was not signed by the prior of the college: the latter had not yet taken office. APF, SOCG 558, f. 422-423<sup>r</sup>. The Inter-



This document, printed in full below, is basically a plea for money to send missionaries to Ireland and for the continuation of their subsidy from Propaganda: it gives one an insight into the economic problems of the province, cut off by the exile from its normal sources of revenue. The shortage of priests in Ireland was not simply due to the severity of the persecution, or to the reluctance of many to return. There were others who lived outside the country only because they were too poor to return. The petition also testifies to the work of Holy Cross College and tells us something of those who were trained there during this period. It is noteworthy that there were thirty-eight in the Community, about three times as many as in San Sisto, and probably rather more than there were in the college at Lisbon for which no precise figures are available.

Illustrissime ac Reverendissime Domine

Ad Illustrissimae ac Reverendissimae Vestrae Gratiae quaesita candide ac sincere respondemus ut sequitur.

1<sup>o</sup> Conventus noster pro Missione institutus, ex Superiorum ordinationibus nullum pro habitu induendo, aut pro studiis recipit, nisi singuli dum fuerint requisiti Missionem subire spondeant; ideoquin Rex Catholicus, Universitas ac Magistratus Lovaniensis nos hic residere permiserunt.

2<sup>o</sup> Conventus praeter Dei providentiam et fidelium eleemosinas annue non habet nisi 120 scuta Romana quae S. Congregatio de Propaganda Fide benigne concessit pro *sustentatione* (non pro *viatico*) quatuor Religiosorum per quadriennium, qui coram Illustrissimo Internuntio (pro tempore) spondere debent se in Hiberniam, expleto quadriennio studii, conferre; et insuper mille ducentos florenos annue pensionis a Rege Catholico ordinatae; cum tamen solum sexcentos recepit aliquando Conventus, aliquando quadringentas: et non raro nihil, propter temporum penuriam. Igitur Conventus qui de facto triginta octo Religiosos tam Exules a Patria, quam Professores et studentes alit, nullo modo valet *Viaticum* in Hiberniam dare Missionariis.

3<sup>o</sup> Religiosi illi qui coram Illustrissimo pro tempore Internuntio sese pro Missione praesentabant, protestari solebant se in Hiberniam studiis peractis migraturos, dummodo viaticum necessarium illis subministraretur, ut scire poterunt Eminentissimus Spada, et Illustrissimi Piazza et Bussio<sup>148</sup>.

nuncio's letter (24 Mar) to Cardinal Sacripante, Prefect of Propaganda, is now *loc. cit.*, ff. 421, 424. On 23 May 1707, Propaganda took these documents into account and renewed the subsidy, instructing the Internuntio to provide 100 scudi for the missionaries ready to leave for Ireland, APF, Atti 77, ff. 155-157.

<sup>148</sup> These were three former Internuncios in Brussels. Orazio Spada (May 1696-November 1698), Giulio Piazza (December 1690-May 1696), and Giovanni Battista Bussi (November 1698-June 1706). Coll. Hib., No. 1 (1958) 38.



4<sup>o</sup> Practicatum aliquando vidimus, quod dum aliquis ex nominatis Religiosis magis ad docendum aut regendum conventum credebatur a superioribus proficiuus, quam pro missione; et alii, non specialiter intuitu cardinalitiae pensionis nominati, magis pro missione quam ad alios hic instruendos capaces, inventi sunt; priores apud nos ad tempus remanserant, et eorum loco mittebantur in Hiberniam posteriores: hic enim Conventus plusquam septuaginta dedit Hiberniae Missionarios praeter illos qui expensis S. Congregationis alebantur; inter quos nonnulli fuere Doctores in Theologia, Provinciales, Priores, Concionatores, et Missionarii pro fide zelosi, quorum nomina strenuamque operam recensere prolixum foret.

5<sup>o</sup> Ab ultima expulsionem Regularium Anno 1696 coepta, solum ex praesentatis coram Illustrissimo pro tempore Internuntio iverunt in Hiberniam R. P. *Dominicus Brulaughan* et R. P. *Ludovicus Synnich* et R. P. *Mathaeus MacNamarra*; primus de facto est Prior titularis *Culrae* in Provincia Ultoniae; secundus obiit *Bredae* in Holandia an. 1699; tertius ex Hibernia redux cum aliis, alibi (ubi nescimus) manet exul: dicitur tamen quod *Compostellae* in *Hispania* extraneorum in zenodochio agit confessarium.

6<sup>o</sup> Praesentarunt alii sese coram Illustrissimo Bussio viaticum petentes, spretis periculis repatriare spondentes. Item Superiores huius Conventus libellos supplices in eum finem porrexerunt S. Congregationi mittendos; et tandem an. 1704 Eximius P. M. Provincialis Hiberniae fr. *Ambrosius O'Conor* ex Hibernia redux, Statum Missionis ibidem, penuriam Missionariorum, et Decreta Parlamenti illius anni Sanctissimo Domino Nostro in libello supplici misit, suppliciter rogans, quatenus Sua Sanctitas imminentibus Nationi malis, et specialiter de viatico Missionariis ire paratis, mature providere dignaretur.

Tandem idem Provincialis eodem anno Litteras Circulares ad suos per alios Regiones dispersos Religiosos misit, illos ad repatriandum invitando et exhortando (ideo enim ex Hibernia venit). Iverunt qui poterunt, ita quod de facto in Hibernia sint plusquam nonaginta Missionarii Dominicani: alii plures ire parati, defectu *viatici* remanere coguntur. Immo sub praeceptis et censuris in Patriam revocasset Provincialis (uti ex Bullis Clementis IX et X necnon ex actis Comitiorum Generalium Ordinis potest) quotquot inveniret Dominicanos Hibernos idoneos etsi aliis Provinciis incorporati, nisi obsesset mediocris Viatici defectus. Unde liquet id unum obstare quominus Hibernia de Missionariis sit provisum; pridem enim cum facilius esset transitus, et gratior apud Catholicos receptio minori erat opus viatico; nunc autem minor est hospitalitas, modica liberalitas, difficilior longe ingressus, etc.

Nomina Religiosorum nostro tempore Illustrissimis Internuntiis praesentatorum.

1. P. Ludovicus Synnich; hic, ut dictum est, obiit *Bredae* in Hiberniam tendens an. 1699.

2. R. P. Mathaeus MacNamarra; hic ex Hibernia redux, manet (ut audimus) confessarius extraneorum in zenodochio *Compostellano* in Hispania.

3. R. P. Petrus Moylen; hic adiit Illustrissimum *Bussium* petens Viaticum, et cum nihil receperit, ivit in Galliam ubi de facto commoratur prope oppidum dictum *Mante*, repatriare anhelans si media recepisset; est Religiosus pius, et ad concionandum aptus.

4. est R. P. Christopherus Connell, S. T. Praesentatus, actualis hic studii Regens Secundarius, pro quo ad missionem ivit (ut scripto declaratum reliquit) R. P. *Dominicus Brulaughan*, anno circiter 1696, ubi adhuc manet fructuosus Missionarius ut dictum est.

Expleto praefatorum quadriennio in Collegio, secuti sunt in dicta obligatione sequentes.

1. R. P. Petrus Conilane; hic obiit Lovanii dum studuit Theologiae.

2. R. P. Petrus MacCollin<sup>144</sup>; hic fuit supprior, et de facto est in hoc Conventu Syndicus.

3. R. P. Patritius Coghlan, nunc habitat prope *Valencenas*, Cappellannum agens honorabilis familiae.

4. R. P. Joannes Morgan; hic est in Gallia in *Chateau-Thierry*: omnes tres erant et sunt parati si media antea petita sed non obtenta recipere<sup>nt</sup>.

Expleto horum quadriennio, Secuti sunt Sequentes<sup>145</sup>.

1. R. P. Jacobus Stapleton; hic habet Provincialis obedientiales pro Hibernia ab anno.

2. R. P. Marcus Lyons, de facto est *Namurci* agens Capellannum Legionis de *Tilly*, ut illa via acquirat media ad repatriandum.

3. R. P. Michael Egan; est hic actualis Studentium Magister.

4. R. P. Hyacinthus Sulevane; hic studens existens, de Consilio Medicorum in Gallias abire coactus est pro sanitate recuperanda; an vivat, an iverit in Hiberniam, aut ubi sit de facto, ignoramus.

Qui de facto sunt in illa obligatione, et nondum expleverunt quadriennium, sunt

<sup>144</sup> On 14 April 1707, Fr. Christopher French O.P. of Holy Cross wrote to Propaganda to complain that Fr. Peter MacCullin and Fr. Christopher Connell S.T.P. had never gone to the Irish mission despite the fact that they had taken the missionary oath. He described the pair as both natives of Ulster, both over forty years of age, and both more than fifteen years living in Holy Cross. APF, SC *Irlanda* 6, f. 256<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> On 1 August 1699 the Internuncio reported to Rome that these four Dominicans (Lyons, Stapleton, Egan, and Sullivan) had recently come to take the missionary oath before him. At that time, as appears from the same letter, neither Egan nor Sullivan had yet been ordained priests. APF, SC *Irlanda* 5, f. 648<sup>r</sup>.

1. R. P. Thomas Fleming, hic vocatus Romam studet ad S. Xistum.
2. R. P. Jacobus Lynham, est hic Lovanii <sup>146</sup>.
3. R. P. Stephanus Egan; hic pariter studet Lovanii.
4. R. P. Thomas Connelly; hic pariter de Medicorum Consilio debuit ire in Galliam, et Parisiis ad S. Honoratum studuit.

Illustrissima Vestra Gratia nunc videt Conventum non posse Viaticum subministrare, videt pariter Religiosos ad id paratos; vel eosdem in *Individuo* (si ita requirat Sacra Congregatio) vel ad alios aequae utiles mittendos; percipiet facile quod Conventus periturus sit, si annua illa privetur pensione ac proinde deficiet nostrorum Religiosorum successio; Cum hic potissime induantur et instruantur nunc Novitii. Superest ergo ut apud S. Congregationem agere non gravetur pro Pensionis continuatione et solutione, et pro Viatico congruo singulis dando; tum enim Superiores nedum illos, sed et alios plures mittere satagent; quo facto nos antea plurimum obligatos, novo titulo devinciet, et pro omnimoda vestra prosperitate Deum O.M. deprecantes subscribimur.

Lovanii 16 Martii 1707.

Illustrissime ac Reverendissime Domine,  
 Illustrissimae ac Reverendissimae Gratiae Vestrae,  
 Obsequentissimi et addictissimi famuli,  
 fr. Joannes Dillon, S.T. Magister.  
 fr. Edmundus de Burgo, S.T. Doctor, Regens Primarius, etc.  
 fr. Christopherus Connell, S.T. Praes., Supprior.  
 fr. Petrus MacCollin, Syndicus.

This petition had the desired effect, for on 23 May 1707 Propaganda not only renewed its subsidy to Holy Cross but permitted the Internuncio to give a hundred scudi to those ready to go to Ireland <sup>147</sup>. If any documents illustrating Ambrose O'Connor's activities in Madrid ever come to light, it will probably be found that most of his efforts were directed towards the same pressing problem of financing the restoration of the province. In a passage quoted already, Edmund Burke explicitly refers to the 'immense sums' gathered by him at Madrid and spent during his visits to Ireland <sup>148</sup>. He had not, however, to find travelling

<sup>146</sup> On 18 July 1707 the prior and moderators of Holy Cross presented Fathers James Lynham and Stephen MacEgan to the Internuncio for missionary faculties and viaticum. APF, SC *Irlanda* 6, f. 269<sup>r</sup>. The document was signed by Michael MacQuillan S.T.P., now prior of Holy Cross.

<sup>147</sup> APF, Atti 77, ff. 155-157. The use to which the Internuncio put this permission may be seen from a letter (15 Nov 1708) from Grimaldi to Paolucci. Coll. Hib. No. 4 (1961) 104-105.

<sup>148</sup> Journal, 132.

expenses for those of his subjects who returned to Ireland from Spain. They automatically received a viatick of one hundred ducats from the Royal Treasury on the completion of their studies<sup>149</sup>.

#### A PROPOSED PROVINCIAL CHAPTER, 1708

The beginning of 1708 brought Fr. Ambrose O'Connor once more to Louvain, eight years after his first appointment as provincial. He wrote from Holy Cross to the General, using Edmund Burke as his secretary, and asked to be relieved of the provincialate<sup>150</sup>. He also requested that the college at Lisbon be allowed to clothe novices and that the Fathers of the province might be permitted to elect his successor. Since the Franciscans had already held some provincial chapters at Dublin, the Dominicans did not see why they should not do so too, especially since there were now enough Priors and vocals for the purpose on the mission. The minutes of Fr. Cloche's reply are available: the provincial was continued in office for one year and strictly commanded to hold an elective provincial chapter in June 1709. If he failed to do so, the appointment of a provincial would devolve on the Master General<sup>151</sup>. However we are not in this case dependent on the General's registers, for Edmund Burke made at least two copies of the letter. The full text is interesting in its own right, but it also serves to show how

<sup>149</sup> Fr. Reginald Walsh found at Simancas a volume recording the names of Irish and English priests who received this generous allowance between 1709 and 1759. A large number of Dominicans figure in those pages, but Fr. Walsh, finding the record defective, was able to note the names of only two occurring before 1729. The reference to the archives of Simancas is *Segretaria de Hacienda*, No. 966; *Via-ticos a Religiosos Irlandeses e Ingleses 1709-1759*. Fr. Walsh's copy of all the Irish names is among his papers in the provincial archives (TA).

<sup>150</sup> 'Initio anni 1708 (octavo provincialatus) scripsit Provincialis O'Conor ad Reverendissimum Cloche quod priores et vocales sufficientes ad eligendum Provinciale in Hibernia fuerint, quod ipse totus lassus libenter videret alterum electum, et quae ipse peregit summarie retulit'. Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LVII.

<sup>151</sup> '... tandem scripsit ad Reverendissimum (me amanuensem agente) rogans ut eum a provincialatu exonerare dignaretur et Patribus facultatem alterum eligendi concederet, et novitios in Collegio Ulissiponensi recipiendi'. Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 132.

<sup>152</sup> P.M. fr. Ambrosius O'Conor jubetur continuare suum provincialatus officium ad alium annum hac conditione apposita, ut in mense Junii anni 1709 infallibiliter intimet capitulum provinciale electivum. Si secus, sciatur jus providendi Provinciae esse devolutum ad Patrem Generalem. 25 Feb 1708. AGOP IV. 166, p. 117.

poorly Fr. Cloche's correspondence with his Irish subjects is represented by the official summaries <sup>152</sup>.

A.R.P. Provincialis salutem.

Quemadmodum ad Capitulum Provinciale electivum PP. Provinciae non amplius convocari queant, harum serie prorogamus tuam Paternitatem Admodum per annum in officio provincialatus, mandantes ut saltem in toto mense Junii 1709 PP. Capitulares ad Capituli Electivi celebrationem infallibiliter, quoad fieri potest, convoces; Nolumus enim Provinciam suo jure eligendi sibi Provinciale diutius privari; si vero toto mense Junii non fieret novi Provincialis electio, declaramus jus instituendi superiorem Provinciae vestrae ad nos devolutum. Porro pergratum nobis est quod P. Magister Provincialis Hispaniarum promiserit pro desolata Provincia vestra recipere ad habitum juvenes, et emissa sacra professione ad studia applicare; debet itaque Paternitas Vestra nullam in hoc pendere moram, sed ut hoc speciali favore frui conari. Poterunt etiam aliqui Candidati si sint, et in Collegio Ulissiponensi recipi et profiteri. Quibus nos et socios assiduis tuis precibus commendatos optamus.

Romae die 25 Februarii 1708.

Conservus tuus in Domino fr. Antoninus Cloche Magister Ordinis.

(a tergo sic scriptum erat) A. R. in Christo Patri Magistro fratri Ambrosio O'Connor Ord. Praed. Priori Provinciali Hiberniae, Franca per Mantova, Lovanium, Magister Ordinis. Asserventur usque ad adventum.

The reference made here to the reception of novices in the province of Spain and the college at Lisbon — a detail omitted from the summary — is of no small importance. So many had died <sup>153</sup> in the years immediately after the exile that the reception of novices was more than ever a vital part of provincial policy. Thanks in great measure to the efforts of Fr. O'Connor, novices were now being received not only in Ireland, but at Louvain, Rome, Lisbon, and even in the novitiates of other provinces. But to return to the provincial chapter demanded by the General, Fr. Cloche's command had no sooner been read and pondered by the provincial than he received in the next post another from the same source dated the 3rd of March. In this Fr. O'Connor was

<sup>152</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LVII; *Journal*, 144.

<sup>153</sup> O'Heyne, *passim*. There is a striking example in the Athenry house-chronicle, where thirty-two members of the community are grouped under the heading 'Obierunt ab anno exilii 1698': virtually all of these died abroad before 1724, most of them in the first few years of the exile. TA, Athenry house-chronicle, f. 4<sup>rv</sup>.



told to continue as provincial *ad tempus Generali bene visum* and to postpone the projected provincial chapter until the times were more settled <sup>154</sup>.

P. M. Ambrosio O'Connor provinciali Hiberniae. Injungitur quatenus suum officium ad tempus Generali bene visum continuet, et celebrationem Capituli Provincialis ad sereniora tempora, quia contra Catholicos renovantur in Hibernia persecutiones, transferat. De juvenibus autem pro susceptione sancti habitus vestiendi sollicitate curet.

As can be seen, the only excuse offered for this extraordinary volte-face was that persecution of the Irish Catholics had broken out anew. Although Edmund Burke fails to provide a copy of this second letter, it would appear from his writings that the General forbade the chapter *sub poena nullitatis*. Burke does, however, impute Fr. Cloche's complete and sudden change of mind to those members of the province, led by Patrick Plunkett, who had obtained the alternation of the provinciate between members of the four provinces at the General Chapter of Bologna. Were this legislation to be applied the next provincial would be from Munster, a province then virtually desolate. Plunkett may have preferred to guarantee a Munster provincial by having one appointed by the General, rather than run the risk that the vocals of Connacht, were a provincial chapter to be held in 1709, would ignore the system of alternation and use their numerical superiority to elect one of their own <sup>155</sup>.

#### A LULL IN THE PERSECUTION, 1707-MARCH 1708

Whatever one may think of Fr. Cloche's change of mind in regard to the holding of a provincial chapter, there is reason to doubt the force of the excuse he offered for it. So calm had the Irish situation been during 1707 that Rome took the first step in the restoration of the Irish hierarchy by naming no less than five bishops to Irish sees. One of these was Ambrose MacDermott, formerly a penitentiary of St. Mary Major's and now bishop of Elphin. Far from witnessing a new outbreak of persecution, the first months of 1708 seemed to promise more peaceful times for the regular clergy in Ireland.

Since the legal position of the missionaries had undergone no change

<sup>154</sup> AGOP IV, 166, p. 117.

<sup>155</sup> This suggestion is entirely my own, for Edmund Burke says nothing of Plunkett's motives.

during the decade following 1698, nothing has been said in these pages of the gradual construction in those years of the penal code. One should, however, mention the registration in 1704 of all the diocesan priests, if only because some religious, by registering themselves as secular priests, succeeded in securing a certain legal standing. Although the names of the registered priests have been preserved<sup>156</sup>, it would not be easy to identify or even number the Dominicans among them. Apparently there were some, for the Internuncio in a letter of 15 November 1708 provided statistics regarding what he called 'non-registered Dominicans': of these there were fifty in Connacht, ten in both Ulster and Leinster, and a few in Munster<sup>157</sup>. The non-registered thus totalled about seventy-five, whereas at this date the number of Dominicans on the mission numbered close to a hundred<sup>158</sup>. Technically speaking, whether registered or not, all these religious were outlaws, liable on discovery to imprisonment and transportation. Those among them who had already been so transported were liable to the death-sentence as traitors, though such a penalty was never actually inflicted: no religious of this time suffered more than imprisonment for life. It is however precisely in 1707 and the spring of 1708 that one finds the first evidence of what was to become the general policy regarding the regular clergy — the policy of ignoring their presence save when there were fears of a revolution in favour of the Stuarts or an individual religious brought himself to the unfavourable notice of the authorities.

Early in 1708 a Dominican named Peter O'Kenny wrote from Saluzzo in north-eastern Italy to the prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, expressing his desire to return to Ireland. He had a warm reply dated the 20th of February from Edmund Burke to whom the prior had shown the letter and who was overjoyed to hear that his old friend was still alive<sup>159</sup>. Burke hastened to assure O'Kenny that there was food

<sup>156</sup> A List of the Names of the Popish Parish Priests throughout the several counties in the kingdom of Ireland, together with their Places of Abode, Age, etc., Dublin, 1705. The pamphlet was reprinted in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 1876, 229 ff.

<sup>157</sup> APF, SOCG 565, ff. 73<sup>r</sup>-74<sup>r</sup>. See also Coll. Hib. No. 4 (1961) 104-105.

<sup>158</sup> 'plusquam nonaginta' according to the staff of Holy Cross on 16 Mar 1707 APF, SOCG 558, ff. 422-423<sup>r</sup>. See above p. 44.

<sup>159</sup> 20 Feb 1708. Burke to O'Kenny. A Latin copy, APF, SOCG 562, f. 174<sup>r</sup>. 'Victus et amictus in Hibernia nulli deest Ecclesiastico: in similibus Patria plus nunquam abundavit. Raritas Religiosorum eos chariores reddit: ex Minoritis et nostris plus quam centum eo redierunt a biennio, nec quidquid passi sunt; sed po-

and clothing for every priest in Ireland: never had the country been better provided with such things. The fewness of religious ensured them a warm welcome from the people. Within the previous two years more than a hundred Franciscans and Dominicans had entered Ireland without molestation. In a word, Burke continued, the road was open to anyone who had money for the journey. Those who behaved themselves properly on the mission were not in any danger: they could be discovered only by accident, which had not happened, so far as he knew, to anyone. On receipt of this letter O'Kenny wrote (17 March) to the Prefect of Propaganda, stating the need for missionaries in Ireland and explaining that though the government had not given positive approval to the regular clergy, it turned a blind eye to their activities<sup>160</sup>.

With the descent of the French on Scotland in support of James III at precisely the time O'Kenny was writing to Propaganda, government leniency came abruptly to an end. Among the first Dominicans to suffer the consequences was Ambrose MacDermott, bishop of Elphin, who happened to be in London when revolution in Scotland was attempted<sup>161</sup>. The bishop had been secretly consecrated in Rome during the previous year and was the first of many Dominicans who were promoted to Irish sees during the 18th century. From that point of view his elevation represents a stage in the recovery both of the Irish church and of its Dominican province. Though

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pulo discrete benefaciunt. Verbo: habenti viaticum via reputatur aperta, se honeste se in Patria gerenti nihil imminet periculi; nisi noscatur per infortunium, quod actenus nulli (quod sciam) accidit'. Burke added that O'Kenny could live freely at Athenry or Youghal. If he were to come immediately to Louvain he could travel with Mr. William Burke [O.P.?] and perhaps get some assistance from the Internuncio.

<sup>160</sup> APF, SOCG 562, f. 173<sup>rv</sup>. 'vivono senza ricevere una minima molestia come hanno scritto, non perche sia concessa una positiva licenza, ma li Comandanti Eretici chiudono l'occhio'. O'Kenny asserted that two other members of the province were ready to go with him to Ireland from Saluzzo, provided Propaganda gave them the necessary viatic. The reply of the Congregation (23 Apr 1708) was 'habebitur ratio'. APF, Atti 78, f. 293<sup>rv</sup>. This Fr. O'Kenny is not to be identified with the Fr. Peter Kenna (prior of Kilmallock and Tralee before the exile) so frequently mentioned by O'Heyne, but with the Peter Kinny who on 31 Mar 1696 was permitted to return to Ireland after finishing his studies at Genoa, AGOP IV, 182, p. 254.

<sup>161</sup> R. Walsh, *Glimpses of the Penal Times: Part VIII*, in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 26 (1909) 285-294. This fine article is devoted entirely to the bishop, but drew none of its information from either Propaganda or the Nunziatura di Fiandra.

many of his letters survive, one must resist the temptation to discuss them here<sup>162</sup>. Suffice it to say that he set out for Ireland in company with Fr. Peter MacDermott, a former lector and prior of San Sisto, reached London in January 1708, and was arrested about the end of March or the beginning of April. Though they put up a brave pretence of being native Italians, they were plainly told who and what they were, thrust into prison for four months, released on the persistent intervention of the Venetian ambassador, and given eight days to return to Flanders<sup>163</sup>.

#### THE PROVINCIAL'S VISIT TO IRELAND, 1708

Undeterred by the news of this mishap, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor set off himself for Ireland in the summer of 1708. Of this, probably his third visit, there is no trace either in the registers of the General or in the *Liber Provinciae*. Perhaps this was because the visit was chiefly a political one, undertaken to rally Irish support for the Stuart cause. Since his visit shortly followed the unsuccessful attempt of James III to land in Scotland, he found that the toleration experienced by the Catholics during the previous year had given way to severe repression. The following is part of the account he presented to Mary of Modena, widow of James II, on his safe return<sup>164</sup>.

'When I went over to Ireland, the king my master ordered me to inform myself exactly of the state of affairs in that kingdom. I have acquitted myself of that commission to the utmost of my power, as you may see by what follows. Having received orders to sail from Brest, notwithstanding the bad success of the Scottish expedition, I arrived in Ireland on the 7th of May

<sup>162</sup> For those of his letters in *Nunziatura di Fiandra* see Coll. Hib., No. 4 (1961) and No. 5 (1962). As regards the archives of Propaganda one may note at least two autograph letters of this period. 7 Aug 1708. MacDermott at Brussels to the Cardinals of Propaganda. APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, ff. 27-28. This describes his arrest and imprisonment in London. The other letter was dated at Antwerp on 8 Nov 1708 and was addressed to the Master General. It likewise described his adventure in England, but spoke too of his work in Holland and recommended two Irish Dominicans (FF. Colman O'Shaughnessy of Louvain and Patrick Gormley of London) to Fr. Cloche. APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, ff. 43-44.

<sup>163</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertation*, LV.

<sup>164</sup> Nathaniel Hooke, *The Secret History of Hooke's Negotiations in Scotland*, Dublin 1760, 105-111. For the political background see Charles Petrie, *The Jacobite Movement: the first phase, 1688-1716*, London 1948, 124-126. The published Stuart Papers (Historical Mss. Commission) shed no further light on Fr. O'Connor's mission.

of the present year 1708. Having heard the instant I landed that all the lords, clergy and gentlemen of the kingdom had been seized and all their horses carried off, I gave intelligence of that to Lord Clanrickard by the same frigate that brought me to the island. The same day I advanced into the country as far as I could, to have some conversation with the persons to whom I was directed by my instructions to address myself, I forbear to mention the danger I run, of being seized by the enemies of the king, who having discovered that I had landed from a French frigate, pursued me on all sides. After the alarm had continued for a few days, believing myself out of danger, I proceeded to visit the principal persons of the province of Connacht, who are my lords Clanrickard, D—, B—, R—, Sir Uliack Bourk, and Colonel Grene MacDonogh...

From the province of Connacht I crossed the province of Leinster in my way to Dublin, when I saw lord Limerick, who is one of the chief men of that country. At Dublin I found lord F—, D—, and F—, and Colonel MacDonogh. After having discoursed with them on the subject of my journey, they told me that the king my master needed not make the least doubt of their fidelity; that they desired nothing as earnestly as his restoration, and the being put in the way of contributing thereto...

I have employed a gentleman of merit, faithful and zealous, named Denis M'Menors, who knows all the nobility and the state of everything in the counties of Clare, Kerry, Mayo, and Cork; he has given me a list of all those who may be depended upon, and he has assured me that in five counties only, the king could raise in a short time 20,000 men, provided he furnished them with arms, the counties being in the number of those in which there is the greatest number of Roman Catholics. The counties of Roscommon, Sligo, and Leitrim are of the number, full of well-affected Catholics.

I was, besides, careful to inform myself of the means for surprising the city of Galway. A gentleman of the family of the Browne's... has assured me that with 500 well-disciplined men, he would undertake to make himself master of that place, as he knows it perfectly, both within and without... '.

The provincial then went on to describe how the key-town of Athlone on the Shannon could be taken by a force from Galway and Clare. He left Dublin on 11 August and made his way back to the continent through London, where he had an interview with two lords imprisoned in the Tower. Just as Ambrose MacDermott had been imprisoned for being a bishop, so Ambrose O'Connor was hunted for being a Jacobite agent. Apart from his own remarks about the manner in which he was pursued, we have the comments of an anonymous writer, probably Hugh MacMahon, bishop of Clogher, on the same subject. They occur in an undated protest against Fr. O'Connor's alleged attempt to have



himself named bishop of Ardagh<sup>165</sup>. When O'Connor went first to Ireland as provincial, according to this writer, he failed to cover his tracks, and was so unremittingly sought by the government that he had to flee to France. On going the 'second' time from France to Ireland he was recognized almost as soon as he landed, for his name and details of his appearance were listed at every port and a great reward was offered for him, alive or dead.

#### THE LAST YEARS OF FR. AMBROSE O'CONNOR, 1709-1711

With the appointment of his successor on 16 February 1709, Ambrose O'Connor's provincialate came at length to an end. He was, however, accorded the title of provincial by the Nuncio in Paris in a letter written on 25 February<sup>166</sup> to Cardinal Paolucci, Secretary of State: the letter described the visit to Paris paid some time before by the Irish Dominican provincial, recently returned 'from the mission'. O'Connor had revealed to the Nuncio the repressive measures newly employed against the Catholic religion, presenting him a memorial on the subject to be forwarded to the Pope. Though that memorial has not been traced, it appears from the Nuncio's letter to have dwelt at least in part on the oath abjuring the Stuarts now to be demanded even of the registered priests by the Irish parliament<sup>167</sup>. O'Connor felt, according to the Nuncio, that either the Emperor or the Venetian government might be able to secure the modification of the proposed law.

In September 1709 the ex-provincial had a letter from Fr. Cloche granting him leave to work in England, 'postquam gloriose finivit provincialatum Hiberniae'<sup>168</sup>. By 15 November he had already emerged

<sup>165</sup> The undated protest was signed by 'alcunī zelanti in Fiandra': its purpose was to prevent the appointment of John Verdon to the see of Ferns and of O'Connor to that of Ardagh on the grounds that the candidates were not natives of the respective ecclesiastical provinces. It is interesting for its comments on the unhappy results which in the preceding century followed the appointment of Oliver Plunkett, a Leinsterman, to the primatial see of Armagh. APF, CP 34<sup>a</sup>, ff. 265-266.

<sup>166</sup> APF, CP 34<sup>a</sup>, f. 268<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>167</sup> On the oath of abjuration see W. P. Burke, *Irish priests, 184-186*, and Maureen Wall, *The Penal laws*, 20-21.

<sup>168</sup> AGOP IV. 200, *pro Anglia* etc., p. 5. All subsequent references to this volume (IV. 200) are to the section 'pro Anglia, pro Germania Inferiori et Hybernia' unless otherwise stated.

from another brief imprisonment in London<sup>169</sup>. For the next two years he moved between Dublin and London, as active as ever on behalf of the Irish church in the world of politics and diplomacy. Among the various papers, mostly extracts from his correspondence, illustrating this activity, there is only one item of purely religious interest — a letter written at Dublin on 16 November 1710 denying newspaper reports that the chapels in Ireland were open<sup>170</sup>. James III sought his promotion (by letter dated 16 June 1709) to the sees of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. Fr. O'Connor died soon after at London on 19 February 1711 and was buried in the churchyard of St. James<sup>171</sup>.

#### HUGH CALLANAN, 1709-1717

The new provincial, appointed by Fr. Cloche on 16 February 1709, has been mentioned already in connection with the attempted foundation of a hospice near Villers-Cotterêts and as one of Patrick Plunkett's associates at the General Chapter of 1706<sup>172</sup>. Though originally

<sup>169</sup> Coll. Hib. No. 4 (1961) 128.

<sup>170</sup> The extract was sent to Propaganda by the Internuncio on 11 Dec 1710. APF, SOCG 575, f. 125<sup>r</sup>. Fr. O'Connor declared that, no matter what the newspapers said, the chapels were not open. The items in the papers were invented by Presbyterians who hated Ormonde, recently named Viceroy of Ireland. It would certainly be imprudent for our priests ('nostrates'), he continued, to open chapels now: better to be modest and hope for greater liberty at another time. For the newspaper reports denied by the ex-provincial see Coll. Hib. No. 5 (1962) 30. Another of O'Connor's letters (London, 28 Nov 1709) is in Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, II, 412, and there is a third (London, 8 Jun 1710) in APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, f. 278<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>171</sup> On his promotion see W. M. Brady, *The Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland, and Ireland*, Vol. I, Rome 1876, 293-294. The king's letter stated that Fr. O'Connor was 55 years old (i.e. in 1709). APF, CP 348, f. 244. Cardinal Caprara too wrote a warm recommendation of Fr. O'Connor. *ibid.*, f. 241. The date of death is recorded only by Edmund Burke. 'Per annos novem continuatus rexit, et denuo nominatus a Rege Jacobo III ob sua merita Episcopus Ardensis, obiit ante Bullam acceptam Londini 19 Feb 1711'. *Brevis Notitia*, 3. The same date is given in the *Journal*, 137, but there is a change to '20 Feb 1710/11 stili veteris' on another page of the same volume. *Journal*, 121. Hence we can take it that Fr. O'Connor died during the night of 19-20 February 1711, not in 1712 as is given in *Necrologium Provinciae Hiberniae, Fratrum S.O.P.*, Dublin 1953, 5. The detail in regard to the place of burial comes from the single page in Burke's hand already mentioned as occurring in AGOP XIV. PP part 1, 389. 'ante Bullae expeditionem obiit Londini 19 Feb. 1711, sepultusque in coemiterio S. Jacobi'.

<sup>172</sup> See above pp. 28-29, 38-41. For the appointment see AGOP IV. 200, p. 1.

a son of the convent of Lorrha in Munster, Callanan had lived from as early as 1674 in the province of Paris to which he was formally transiliated in 1680<sup>173</sup>. O'Heyne mentions his imprisonment for a year in England at the time (December 1688) when King James II was forced to vacate the throne; on his release he returned to Paris where he took a doctorate at the Sorbonne<sup>174</sup>. Subsequently he became a Master in Theology (1691), prior of Blois, vicar of the hospice near Villers-Cotterêts (1703), and prior of Metz from 1707 probably until the date of his appointment as provincial<sup>175</sup>. Edmund Burke and his friends, feeling that the alternation of provincials was an injustice to Connacht (which had as many sons as the other three provinces together) and that the choice of provincial should have been made at a chapter in Ireland, tended to resent the fact that Fr. Cloche should have claimed the right to fill the office by appointment. It did nothing to soothe their feelings when the General's choice fell on a candidate from Munster who on the one hand was a good friend of Patrick Plunkett, the unofficial socius, and on the other had not been in Ireland for close on forty years. Legally speaking, Callanan was not even a member of the province. Nonetheless, the new provincial was a man of high qualities, by no means unworthy of the honour. Long residence abroad had perhaps left him unable or reluctant to face the rigours of the Irish mission, but he did visit it twice during his eight-year term of office and could not on any other score be accused of having neglected his duties.

#### NEW MISSIONARIES FOR IRELAND, 1709

The number of Dominicans in Ireland does not appear to have increased much, if at all, between Ambrose O'Connor's visit in 1702 (when there were about ninety on the mission) and the beginning of

<sup>173</sup> On 5 March 1678 Callanan had already been four years a student at St. Jacques in Paris. AGOP IV. 155, f. 166<sup>v</sup>. On 28 August 1680 he was permitted to transiliate to a convent of the Paris province. IV. 156, f. 316<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>174</sup> O'Heyne, 119. 'peractis studiis profectus est in Angliam, ubi unius anni carcerem sustinuit, quando noster Rex Jacobus, Deo et Ecclesiae gratus, ejectus est e throno. Inde liberatus, regressus Parisiis doctoris lauream obtinuit in facultate Sorboniensi. Institutus fuit prior Blesensis in Gallia per litteras regias, estque [1706] affiliatus in provincia Parisiensi'.

<sup>175</sup> The Mastership was conferred on 13 January 1691. AGOP IV. 182, p. 100. On 8 November 1707 Cloche wrote to the bishop of Metz, thanking him for helping Fr. Callanan, prior of the convent there. IV. 186, f. 139<sup>r</sup>. On 21 March 1708, while

Hugh Callanan's provincialate. Writing to the Internuncio on 6 October 1709, the prior of Holy Cross stated that there were then more than eighty members of the Order in Ireland<sup>176</sup>. The arrival of new missionaries between 1702 and 1709 had probably been offset by the death of older priests and the transportation of others, so that the total number remained stable, or slightly dropped, despite reinforcements. The letter to which we owe this statistic is a long and detailed list of those sent to the mission from Louvain over the previous eighteen years which, in its main lines, repeats the contents of the Louvain petition printed in full above. Unfortunately it neglects to note the years in which those it mentions went, or attempted to go, to Ireland. It is, however, interesting for its comments on two priests who had suffered arrest: James Lynham who in 1708 made his way back to Louvain after escaping from prison in Dublin, and an unnamed priest (thought to be Antoninus Kent) who was captured in Waterford and sent to north Africa to be sold as a slave.

After receiving this report the Internuncio discussed it with Fr. Callanan. The provincial, then fresh from his visitation of Holy Cross, felt that only one of those suggested by the prior was really suited to go to Ireland as a missionary. That was Peter MacCullen who, as we know from the prior's letter, was destined for the northern diocese of Clogher of which his kinsman Hugh MacMahon was bishop: the others, in the provincial's opinion, lacked either sufficient maturity or learning. Consequently Fr. Callanan presented a list of his own for the approval of Propaganda Fide. This document, written in the very first year of his provincialate, evidences his concern to increase the number of his subjects in Ireland<sup>177</sup>.

Nomina Religiosorum sui Ordinis et Provinciae quos Frater Hugo O'Callanan Sorbonae Doctor ac per Iberniam Ordinis Praedicatorum humilis Prior Provincialis ad missiones dictae Iberniae Provinciae judicat proxime destinandos.

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still prior of Metz, he was named Visitor of the convent of Luxembourg. IV. 166, p. 322. He appears to have carried out a visitation in Luxembourg about 1711, during his Irish provincialate. IV. 200, p. 100.

<sup>176</sup> The prior was Michael MacQuillan. There is a copy of this letter in APF, SOCG 570, f. 131<sup>rv</sup>.

<sup>177</sup> The original document, which is to be dated about 20 November 1709, is now APF, SOCG 570, f. 128<sup>rv</sup>. Note that the provincial signs his name 'O'Callanan' here.

R.P.F. Edmundus Burk, Magister.	}	Quinque priores sunt Lovanii.
R.P.F. Michael Maquilin, Magister.		
R.P.F. Petrus MacCullen.		
R.P.F. Daniel MacEgan.		
R.P.F. Joannes Donnelly.		
R.P.F. Thomas Knavin.		Hic degit prope Bruxellas.
R.P.F. Marcus Lyons.		Est capellanus Legionis Valonicae.
R.P.F. Petrus Kyna.	}	Tres immediate praecedentes sunt Castro Sancti Theodoric in Gallia.
R.P.F. Patritius O'Dimane.		
R.P.F. Joannes Morgane.		Prope Parisios.
R.P.F. Petrus Moylin.		Prope Parisios.
R.P.F. Joannes Coghlane.		Prope Valencenas
R.P.F. Patritius Coghlane.		In conventu Vienensi in Galliis.
R.P.F. Jo. Daverin.		Ullissyponae in Portugallia.
R.P.F. Constantinus O'Garavane.		Ullissyponae in Portugallia.
R.P.F. Thomas Kennedy.		Nanetis in Gallia.
R.P.F. Petrus Ferris.		Bilbaoe in Hispania.
R.P.F. Thadeus O'Daly.		Bilbaoe in Hispania.
R.P.F. Dominicus Mulfin alias Mulrunafin.		Bilbaoe in Hispania.
R.P.F. Anthonius Kelly.		Bilbaoe in Hispania.

Hos inter nullum vereor futurum qui illud animabus tam salutiferum opus non libenter sit obiturus, modo erit quae ad iter perficiendum et ad alia quae necessaria erunt comparanda media administrentur. Quapropter, humillime rogo Illustrissimam Gratiam Vestram ut dignetur pro avito suo in fidem Catholicum zelo defendendum nimis istius Regni statum intueri, et ibi missionariorum inopiam S. Congregationi aperire. Quo beneficio aeternum Deo inclina est Illustrissima Gratia Vestra et me et derelictum gregem istum, ut pro incolumitate et S. Congregationis et eiusdem Illustrissimae Gratiae Vestrae in utroque homine impensius simus Altissimum deprecaturi.

fr. Hugo O'Callanan, humilis prior provincialis.

This is a more interesting list than those concerning only the college of Holy Cross<sup>178</sup>. For one thing, its scope is more broad: Fr. Callanan cast his net very wide by attempting to find recruits at Lisbon, at Bilbao, and in the neighbourhood of Paris. It also appears, from the

<sup>178</sup> Apart from the prior's report (6 October 1709) there is another interesting Louvain document of the same type dated 22 August 1715, or at least sent on that date to Rome by the Internuncio. It lists those sent to Ireland from Holy Cross between 1705 and 1715, adding the names of four students who were then preparing themselves for the mission. APF, SOCG 601, f. 206<sup>r</sup>. Those who went in the period 1705-1712 were Andrew Kirwan, Anthony Kent, Peter Ferris, James Stapleton,



history of those he named, that he was trying to force back to Ireland several who had settled down in Europe after their exile in 1698 and others attached to the foreign colleges who had no wish to return home as missionaries though they had long since finished their studies. According to Edmund Burke, who had headed the provincial's list, Fr. Callanan's efforts were not crowned with success, at least so far as Lisbon and Louvain were concerned: 'ibidem diu haerentes repatriare frustra jussit'<sup>179</sup>. Yet on the other hand, the college of SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome was by now sending one or two a year to the mission; the Master General was continually assigning people to Ireland; and it is precisely during the first years of Fr. Callanan's provincialate that one begins to find more frequent traces of Dominican activity outside the province of Connacht<sup>180</sup>.

#### THE VISITATION OF 1711

Since there is no mention in the registers of the General of the visitation carried out by Fr. Callanan at Louvain in the autumn of 1709, it is not clear by whose authority it was done. Fr. Cloché was as firm as ever in claiming immediate jurisdiction over the college, and though Callanan stood high in the General's esteem he was twice rebuked in the summer of 1710 for confirming the election of a new prior at Louvain<sup>181</sup>. Eventually the provincial was given freedom of action

James Lynham, Stephen Egan, Colman O'Shaughnessy, Anthony MacHugo, Thomas Fleming, Martin King, Edmund Burke, William Burke, and Thomas Burke. Only two (Thomas Kelly and John Baptist Fitzgerald) set out between 1712 and 1715, though John MacGhee and Michael MacEgan had been deputed to do so. The four students (presumably the four in receipt of the Propaganda subsidy) were James Dillon, Hyacinth Watson, Thomas Burke, and Laurence Cusack.

<sup>179</sup> *Dissertatio*, LVIII.

<sup>180</sup> Two examples must suffice. On 25 October 1710 an attestation in favour of John Verdon, Vicar-General of Armagh, was signed as follows by a prior of Drogheda: 'fr. Patritius Matheus prior conventus ordinis fratrum praedicatorum in villa Pontanensi, qui per 10 annos agens fui Eminentissimi Cardinalis Norfolciae, et capellanus Regis Jacobi per 20 annos'. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 466<sup>rv</sup>. On 7 August 1713, an attestation declaring that the Franciscan nuns of Dublin had always been subject to their Franciscan provincials and that their confessors required his approbation alone was signed by Peter MacDermott O.P., and three priors from Leinster and Munster: Stephen Egan prior of Dublin, Thomas Burke prior of Waterford, and James Lynham, prior of St. Dominic's, Naas. APF, 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 185<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>181</sup> 12 Jul 1710. P. M. Provincialis Hiberniae. Inculpatur a Reverendissimo quod praesumpserit P. Regentem Lovaniensem Joannem Maghe electum in priorem Lo-

when Fr. Cloche, in November of the same year, appointed him Commissary General both for Louvain and Lisbon<sup>182</sup>. One would like to know to what use he put this authority; the General's records throw no light on the point save to suggest that it may have helped the provincial to control the finances of Holy Cross, Louvain. In August 1710 there had been a dispute between Fr. Callanan (then living at Paris) and Michael MacQuillan the out-going prior of the college over money belonging to Fr. Daniel MacEgan — a dispute which required the intervention of Melchior d'Ermite, ex-provincial of Toulouse<sup>183</sup>. The status of Commissary General, acquired by Fr. Callanan three months later, probably put an end to such embarrassments.

More than a year had now passed since the new provincial's appointment and his subjects in Ireland were beginning to grow impatient over Fr. Callanan's absence. There were decisions to be taken, business to be done, which the provincial alone had the necessary authority to settle. In the summer of 1710 the Master General had to issue two special commissions so that priests in Ireland could attend to matters belonging by right to the provincial: Nicholas Blake, ex-prior of Galway, was authorized *in tanta P. M. Provincialis distantia* to confirm the election of the Dominican prioress in that city, while Peter MacDermott was named Vicar General of the Order in Ireland *in continua absentia P. M. Provincialis*<sup>184</sup>. Clearly the missionaries of Connacht had informed the General of their needs.

Another son of Connacht, Ambrose MacDermott bishop of Elphin, who by this time had safely reached his diocese, lent his support to the

vaniensem, sine expressa licentia Reverendissimi, confirmare, cum tamen confirmatio Prioris Lovaniensis, sicut et Rectoris Ulissiponensis a solo Reverendissimo immediate dependeat. AGOP IV. 200, p. 17.

30 Aug 1710. P. Praesentatus Joannes Maghee confirmatur in priorem conventus Lovaniensis S. Crucis, et inculpatur P. Provincialis Hiberniae quod ausus sit electum confirmare, cum tamen praefatus conventus, sicut Ulissiponense Collegium et conventus Monialium de Bono Successu, soli Magistro Ordinis immediate subjaceant. AGOP IV. 200, p. 20.

<sup>182</sup> 15 Nov 1710. P. M. Provincialis Hiberniae Instituitur in Commissarium Generalem conventus Hibernorum Lovanii, et duorum conventuum fratrum scilicet et sororum Ulissiponae, eique conventus isti immediate subjiciuntur. AGOP IV. 200, p. 23.

<sup>183</sup> AGOP IV. 200, pp. 16-18.

<sup>184</sup> Blake's authorization was dated 19 Jul 1710 and MacDermott's appointment on the 2nd of August. AGOP IV. 200, pp. 18, 19.

complaint of his confrères in two letters to the Internuncio<sup>185</sup>. On 25 June 1710 he wrote that the Dominicans, lacking a leader, keenly felt the need of direction and encouragement. They knew of Fr. Callanan's appointment, but he chose to remain on the continent rather than come to console them, despite the wish of the Master General that provincials should repair to Ireland immediately after assuming office. They had asked the bishop to bring the matter to the Internuncio's attention. Other religious elected their provincials at home, so if Fr. Callanan did not wish to return he should resign, and the missionaries in Ireland could easily choose a worthy successor from among themselves. The bishop's second letter, written on 30 August 1710, reverted more briefly but with no less force to the same topic: 'let him either come or resign'.

These and other representations both to Propaganda and to Cardinal Imperiali, protector of Ireland, as well as letters to Fr. Cloche himself, seem to have had their effect<sup>186</sup>. Fr. Callanan left Paris about the beginning of 1711, and reached London in time to assist at the death-bed

<sup>185</sup> 25 Jun 1710. 'Thomas de Witt' (an assumed name) to Grimaldi. Quelli del Signore Edmundo Burghesio suo servitore [the Irish Dominicans] sono senza capo. Questi signori si lamentano assai, avriano un poco piu ordine, et anco piu animo. Sanno vi e nominato qualcheduno [the provincial], et anco che sta in quelli Paesi perche non viene a consolarli. Sanno che l'intenzione del Signore Cloche che ognuno tale subito fatto deve venire. Mi hanno pregato di toccar questo testo e di avvisare V.S.I. La dimanda e molto ragionevole. Gli altri *marinai* [regulars] di altra sorte fanno bene; fanno loro capi qui, e se quel Signore non vuole venire, dovrebbe lasciare il titolo, e questi Signori si provvederanno nel Paese, dove hanno Persone assai di garbo. From a copy in APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, ff. 288<sup>r</sup>-289<sup>r</sup>. The code is on f. 291<sup>r</sup>. For a calendar of the full text see Coll. Hib., No. 5 (1962) 25-27.

30 Aug 1710 o.s. Ambrose MacDermott to Grimaldi. De religiosi Domenicani posso dire del bene assai; con summa prudenza fanno li fatti loro; si sono lamentati con me che il Provinciale loro resta in quelli Paesi, e non viene a consolarli. In questo hanno mille ragioni. Doveva venire o lasciare il comando. From a copy in APF, CP 34<sup>a</sup>, f. 413<sup>rv</sup>. For a calendar of the full text see Coll. Hib., No. 5 (1962) 28-29.

<sup>186</sup> The best source of these interventions is the letter of Edmund Burke to Cardinal Imperiali, written on 21 August 1713. The full text is published on pp. 69-71. Propaganda acted immediately on receiving the bishop of Elphin's first letter (dated 25 June 1710). The secretary showed it to Cardinals Imperiali and Fabroni on 14 August. On the 16th he wrote to Fr. Cloche, quoting from the letter and enquiring what remedies the General proposed to apply. APF, Lettere 99, ff. 295-296<sup>v</sup>. Cloche replied on the 18th, saying that he had already taken steps to make up for the provincial's absence, even before the secretary wrote, by naming Peter MacDermott Vicar-General. APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, f. 292.

of Fr. Ambrose O'Connor on 19 February <sup>187</sup>. By April he had reached his subjects in Ireland and remained on the mission until the following September. Lacking a report on his work there, we must be content with the following meagre extracts from the *Liber Provinciae*; with one exception they all refer to Connacht <sup>188</sup>.

9 June 1711. The provincial accepted the resignation of Peter MacDermott, prior of Roscommon.

Peter MacDermott was appointed prior of Clonshanville and visitator of Dominican convents in the counties of Mayo, Sligo, and Roscommon.

Thomas Burke was appointed Master of Novices in his native convent of Roscommon.

(signed) f. Callanan, prior provincial.

5 July 1711. Colman O'Shaughnessy was elected and confirmed prior of Athenry.

Anthony MacHugo junior was appointed prior of Lorrha.

24 July 1711. Anthony MacHugo, P.G., and prior of Portumna, was appointed Vicar General for Connacht.

This is surely not a complete balance-sheet of the provincial's activities during his six months on the mission, but the entries are not sufficiently brief to hide the fact that he was not prepared even to visit all the struggling communities of Connacht. Peter MacDermott, whose commission as Vicar General ceased on Fr. Callanan's arrival, was deputed to visit most of them <sup>189</sup>. The only convent outside Connacht mentioned above is the provincial's native convent of Lorrha in north-west Munster, of which Fr. MacHugo, a recent arrival from Louvain, was named prior <sup>190</sup>. Fr. Callanan left for France in September, ex-

<sup>187</sup> This is mentioned by Antoninus Maguire in a document dated November 1722. SCAR, Miscellanea (Shelf-number, 22), doc. 37.

<sup>188</sup> TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 30<sup>rv</sup>. The extracts given above are in my translation of the original Latin. Note that the provincial signs his name 'Callanan' without the prefix O.

<sup>189</sup> MacDermott's cessation from office on the provincial's arrival is known from his own statement to that effect in a letter dated c. 24 Sept 1713 to Cardinal Imperiali. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 197-198.

<sup>190</sup> Fr. Anthony MacHugo junior died on 4 April 1713 and was buried in Kilcorban beside Thaddaeus Keogh, the Dominican bishop of Clonfert (d. 1685). TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 12<sup>rv</sup>. Fr. Anthony MacHugo senior, prior of Portumna, whom Fr. Callanan appointed Vicar-General for Connacht, died two months later (28 Sept 1711) and was buried in Athenry. *ibid.*, f. 12<sup>r</sup>.

plaining that after almost forty years abroad he could not eat the rough fare of the missionaries, and left behind him the elder Fr. MacHugo as Vicar General for Connacht.

#### THE ATTEMPTED FOUNDATIONS AT JÁTIVA, 1712

In the summer of 1705 the English and Dutch fleets made a joint descent on the south-eastern coast of Spain in support of the Austrian claim to the Spanish throne: they were enthusiastically received in the old kingdom of Valencia where the very priests and friars took up arms in the cause of the Archduke Charles. Two years later, after the rebellion had been suppressed, Philip V decisively reasserted his authority over Valencia, singling out the city of Játiva (which had rejected even his offers of pardon) for special punishment. Its inhabitants were exiled from Valencia for life, their goods were confiscated, while the very buildings of the city (the churches alone excepted) were reduced to ashes. Among the victims of the royal anger were the friars and nuns of Játiva belonging to the Dominican province of Aragon<sup>191</sup>.

Intending that the very name of the city should be forgotten, King Philip ordered a new city called San Felipe to be built on the same site. When word of these developments reached the ears of the Master General, Fr. Cloche wrote on 11 August 1708 to the King asking that his subjects, not all of whom had been disloyal, might be allowed possession of two convents in San Felipe to replace those they had lost in the destruction of Játiva. He repeated the request in May 1711, but with no greater success<sup>192</sup>. Seeing that the very friars had taken arms against him, Philip V had no reason to treat the Dominicans any more leniently than he had the other inhabitants. It was at this stage of events, presumably in 1712, that Fr. Edward Fitzgerald, procurator of the Irish province at the court of Madrid, conceived the possibility

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<sup>191</sup> For the background to these events see Don Juan Valera, *Historia General de España por Don Modesto Lafuente*, continuada, Vol. III, Barcelona 1879, 471-512.

<sup>192</sup> The letter of 11 Aug 1708 is known only from a reference to it in a draft of a later one from Cloche to the King. AGOP XI 13750. It should be, and probably is to be, found in AGOP IV. 196, a register of Spanish letters from 1706-1713, but that volume was for the greater part in fragments when I found it and has since been removed from the archives for repair. There is a full copy of the letter of 30 May 1711 in AGOP IV. 199, f. 54<sup>r</sup>.



(by circumventing the province of Aragon) of obtaining two new convents at San Felipe for Irish priests and nuns of the Order<sup>193</sup>.

The procurator's plan is fully set out in an undated petition to the King drawn up, not by Fitzgerald himself, but by some friend who had already spoken to the King about the project<sup>194</sup>. The opening paragraphs dwell on the justice of Játiva's destruction, on the priests who have scandalously urged the people to take up arms against their sovereign, and on the way in which the magistrates of San Felipe were helping religious of all Orders to build new convents there, despite the royal commands to the contrary. The petition then refers to the fact that the Irish province had long been in possession of papal bulls and letters from Master Generals calling on the Spanish provinces to put one or two of their foundations at the disposal of its friars and nuns. Now was the time to act on these requests. The other reasons offered in support of Fitzgerald's petition may be given *in extenso*. It will be noticed that the document is merely a copy in French acquired by Fr. Cloche.

Ils resulteroiẽt plusieurs biens de cette permission.

1. Votre Majesté satisferoit a la prière du General qui sans doute ne demanderoit pas qu'on etablisse a St. Philippe les moines qui ont été Rebelles a Xativa — ayant lieu d'être content, puisque ce seroit des religieux et des religieuses de son même Ordre.

2. Le couvent des Religieux serviroit d'azile au pauvres religieux persecutés dans leur pays pour la religion, et de Seminaire pour y elever de nouveaux missionnaires qui seroient d'un grand secours pour les Catholiques d'Irlande.

3. Comme la nouvelle colonie et en partie composée d'étrangers, un couvent de religieux comme ceux-là, qui parlent plusieurs langues seroient d'un grand secours pour l'administration des sacrements, et d'une grande consolation a ces nouveaux habitants, d'ailleurs il seroit bien composé, car je connois six ou sept religieux Irlandais de cet Ordre actuellement en Espagne qui viendroient s'établir a St. Philippe, qui sont de très dignes sujets par leur

<sup>193</sup> Fitzgerald appears to have studied in Spain, for he was ordered in December 1707 to proceed to Lisbon and thence to Ireland. AGOP IV. 166, p. 115. Instead, however, of going to the mission, he was taken onto the staff of Corpo Santo where in April 1709 he was appointed second lector of theology. IV. 200, p. 2. In February 1710, being then second Regent, he was promoted to the Praesentatura in theology. IV. 200, pro provincia Teutoniae, p. 23. On 14 Feb 1711 he was made procurator at Madrid. IV. 200, p. 31.

<sup>194</sup> This memorial is now in AGOP XI. 13750.

piété, leur doctrine, et leur zele pour le service de votre Majesté, et qui seroient tres propres a maintenir la fidelité qui convient a une nouvelle colonie.

4. Le couvent des Religieuses Irlandoises seroit une utile et honorable restraite pour les veuves et les orphelines des officiers de cette nation qui ont perdu la vie au service de V.M. et serviroit a donner une bonne et chretienne education aux filles et habitans de la nouvelle colonie.

Clearly the Irish province would have been glad to possess a convent of its own in Spain — a house which could serve as a retreat for those expelled from Ireland and as a centre of formation for those preparing for the mission. Their hospice at Bilbao on the northern coast was little more than a temporary shelter for those coming and going between Ireland and Spain. Besides, the students of the province, scattered in ones and twos throughout the peninsula, missed the benefits of a common training. Fr. Edward Fitzgerald was thinking too of the nuns of Galway — those nuns whom O'Heyne had advised in 1698 to remain in Ireland, but whose position was becoming more impossible year by year. If a Spanish convent could be found to receive them, the entire Galway community could be transferred from Ireland until conditions there favoured their return.

The King's four-year delay in acceding to the wishes of the General may have encouraged the procurator's hopes in 1712, but his petition was not ultimately successful. The friars of Aragon had powerful friends, the authorities in Valencia were on their side, and the Master General (hearing of Fitzgerald's plan) wrote once more to the King on 12 November 1712 urging the claim of their province<sup>195</sup>. In what appears to be a draft of this letter, more detailed even than the full copy entered in the registers, Fr. Cloche set out his reasons why the Irish petition should be rejected. Spanish friars could better serve the people; the Irish could neither afford to build the convents, nor could they provide the great number of priests habitually called from the convent of Játiva to preach missions; the Irish had never before been granted a priory belonging to another province; at Lisbon and Louvain they had merely been permitted to build new convents for themselves<sup>196</sup>.

These reasons at length prevailed, so that on 21 August 1714 Fr. Cloche was able to inform the provincial of Aragon that the King had graciously agreed to permit the erection of a Dominican convent for

<sup>195</sup> AGOP IV. 199, f. 93<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>196</sup> AGOP XI. 13750.

twelve religious of his province in the new city of San Felipe <sup>197</sup>. Fitzgerald's plan had failed, but he was to make yet another attempt to find a Spanish refuge for the nuns of Galway.

#### CONNACHT CALLS FOR A NEW PROVINCIAL, 1713

One gets the impression from the registers of the General that Fr. Callanan scarcely corresponded with him at all. Between October 1712, when his patents as Commissary General were renewed, and May 1717, when he was informed of the General Chapter it was intended to convene in the following year, Fr. Cloche appears to have written to him twice: once in regard to the new feast of Blessed Ceslaus, and once (on 15 July 1713) to tell him that his provincialate was extended *ex concessione Pontificis* for four years <sup>198</sup>. Perhaps the provincial corresponded more frequently with Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva, using him as a trusted intermediary in his relations with the Master General: such a possibility is underlined by the fact that the many members of the province promoted to the Mastership or Preacher Generalship in these years are almost invariably described in the General's registers as having owed their degrees 'to the recommendation of the Provincial and of Master Plunkett'. The first among them was Fr. Edward Fitzgerald, promoted to the Mastership on 7 October 1712, perhaps a mark of Fr. Callanan's gratitude for his work in Spain <sup>199</sup>.

The registers do indeed refer to a visitation carried out by Fr. Callanan at Lisbon in 1713, but we would know little even of this were it not that Edmund Burke briefly described the result in his *Dissertation on the history of the province*: 'Serenissimus Portugalliae Rex edidit decretum quo vetuit ne ille vel alius quicumque sibi non subditus, Col-

<sup>197</sup> AGOP IV. 199, f. 144<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>198</sup> 7 Oct 1712. P. M. Provinciali Hiberniae f. Hugoni Callanan, Renovatur Commissio Generalis iuxta folium 23 supra [= first issue on 15 Nov 1710] quia patentes priores fuerunt deperditae. AGOP IV. 200, p. 39.

15 Jul 1713. P. M. Hugoni Callanan Provinciali, Ex concessione Summi Pontificis extenditur provincialatus ad aliud quadriennium, eo quod vocales PP. Hyberni non possint convenire ad celebrandum capitulum. *ibid.*, p. 41.

7 Apr 1714. The decree concerning Bl. Ceslaus' feast was sent to him. *ibid.*, p. 44.

8 May 1717. Provincialis Hiberniae, Mittitur epistola Reverendissimi invitatoria ad Capitulum Generale Definitorum secundum anno sequenti Romae ad festa Pentecostalia celebrandum. *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>199</sup> AGOP IV. 200, p. 39.

legium nostrum visitare valeat' <sup>200</sup>. Though such a decree excluding the provincial may have been issued, it would appear to have followed rather than preceded the visitation <sup>201</sup>. One of his objects in going there had been to urge some of the priests at Lisbon to go to Ireland. Those he chose cannot have been enthusiastic, for we find the General ordering them to the mission in June 1714 under pain of forfeiting both active and passive voice <sup>202</sup>.

These meagre details would summarize our knowledge of Fr. Callanan's affairs in 1713 were it not that his subjects on the mission appealed both to Cardinal Imperiali and to Propaganda Fide in an attempt to replace him by a provincial elected in Ireland. No less than five interesting letters survive to illustrate the episode; three from Ireland, another from the Regent at San Sisto, and a fifth from Fr. Cloche to Propaganda in defence of the provincial <sup>203</sup>. Though the fullest and most detailed of these, written at Athenry by Edmund Burke, will be given in full below, the main elements of the dispute may first be briefly stated for the sake of clarity. Callanan himself had played a leading role in securing the alternation of provincials at the Chapter of 1706, and since he had been appointed provincial in 1709, the time had now come for his place to be taken by someone from Ulster. The persecution had abated somewhat in Ireland, there were enough priors and subjects on the mission to hold a provincial chapter, and it was felt by many (particularly in Connacht) that the General should cease to appoint provincials and let his Irish subjects elect their own superior as the Franciscans had been doing for several years. One gets the impression

<sup>200</sup> 15 Dec 1713. Cloche to Luke Hackett, Rector of the Irish college at Lisbon. Nothing can be gleaned from this letter save that the provincial had carried out the visitation of the college, and that the King had subsequently expressed his wishes to the Rector. AGOP IV. 196, under date. The phrase from Edmund Burke quoted above occurs in his *Dissertatio*, LVIII.

<sup>201</sup> Fr. Cloche expressly referred on 26 Jan 1717 (in a letter to Luke Hackett, Rector at Lisbon) to one of the ordinations made by Fr. Callanan four years previously during his visitation of the monastery of Bom Successo. Quibus sororibus Lusitanis spirituali earum consolationi provisuri alias jam a nobis factam et in actis visitationis Commissarii et Visitatoris nostri Generalis P.M.F. Hugonis Calanan ante quadriennium fundatam concessionem innovamus alicui suae nationis Confessario S. T. Magistro et non alteri, ex conventu S. P. Dominici Ulissiponensi assumendo semel in mense sacramentaliter confitendi. AGOP IV. 200, p. 68.

<sup>202</sup> 26 Jun 1714. The names of those concerned do not appear, AGOP IV. 200, p. 46.

<sup>203</sup> All five letters are in APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 196-205<sup>r</sup>.

from these letters that the missionaries were prepared to hold a chapter with or without the General's approval. The only thing preventing them was that since no-one in Ireland knew precisely the date of Fr. Callanan's appointment, they were unsure as to the date on which he would go out of office. Letters to Fr. Cloche in 1712, asking specifically for this information, had gone unanswered. Consequently, were a provincial chapter to be held before that date the General would declare it null, while if it were delayed until afterwards the General could appoint whom he wished on the score that the missionaries had neglected to provide a provincial for themselves.

While pressing for a provincial chapter, the appellants were realistic enough to foresee that Fr. Cloche would make his own appointment, and that he would in all probability continue Fr. Callanan in office as he had continued Fr. O'Connor before him. Consequently, their letters dwelt on the difficulties created in Ireland by the provincial's absence, and on the pressing need of a superior (whether elected or appointed) who would actually come and live among them. Writing to Imperiali on 24 September 1713, Thomas Burke, prior of Waterford, complained of the uselessness of the Vicar-Provincial, an old parish priest, left by Fr. Callanan on his departure in 1711, and stressed how great was their need of direction and encouragement: '*nec superiorem, directorem, visitatorem, aut consolatorem habemus, sed ut milites sine duce, sine consilio, sine regimine confusi*'<sup>204</sup>. Peter MacDermott, the former Vicar General, likewise explained the position to the Cardinal. He had written more than once to Fr. Cloche on their need for a true leader. The old Vicar-Provincial lived in so remote a place that he could be reached only by express post. And what was worse, there were now twenty professed novices in Connacht alone who could not leave for their studies in Europe unless the provincial authorized their departure<sup>205</sup>. If Edmund Burke is to be believed, Fr. Callanan had never even written to the priests in Ireland during the two years between

<sup>204</sup> 24 Sept 1713. Burke to Imperiali. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 196, 199. The writer mentions that he had come 'here' (to Waterford?) three years previously from Louvain; that it was now time to appoint a superior from Ulster; and that the brethren in Ireland were deceived, not knowing the date of Fr. Callanan's appointment, and hence unable to hold an election.

<sup>205</sup> This letter is to be dated about 24 Sept 1713 since it is on paper of the same type and format as the letter of that date from Thomas Burke. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 197-199<sup>v</sup>. MacDermott mentions that during his time as Vicar-General he had appointed many priors, instructing them to receive novices.



his departure in September 1711 and 21 August 1713 when the following letter was sent from Athenry to Cardinal Imperiali. For power of thought, precision of detail, inside knowledge of affairs, and clarity of expression, Burke's letter is unsurpassed by any others so far encountered in this period <sup>206</sup>.

Eminentissime Domine Patrone Colendissime,

A biennio quo huc appuli ruri (mea pro posse munia peragens) dego: unde vobis scribere non adeo facile erat: vigent enim leges contra tales hic latae, licet per intervalla sit tolerabilior executio. Plura nuper scripsi Eminentissimae Vestrae per quemdam amicum de rebus huius Missionis in communi. Nunc autem (quod tunc omisi sperans rerum emendationem) miserimum Fratrum Praedicatorum in hoc Regno statum (a pluribus requisitus) Eminentissimae Vestrae humiliter represento.

Novit, credo, Eminentia Vestra quod Reverendissimus Praedicatorum Generalis (sibi relictus) vir sit integerrimus et profectus filiorum amator; at cohabitant ei (etiam ex Nostratibus) qui bonum huius Missionis prorsus enervant. Hinc instituit Reverendissimus Provinciale Hiberniae P. Hugonem Calanan filium conventus *Metensis* in ditionibus Regis Christianissimi et Doctorem Parisiensem. Hic autem in Gallia annis ferme quadraginta degens, res Hibernicas cordi non habens eas neglexit, nec in Hiberniam venire voluit donec Eminentia Vestra, hac de re informata, dignata fuerat Reverendissimo Generali desuper loqui: tunc enim astute egerunt assistentes Generalis. Persuasum vobis voluerunt quod P. Magister Petrus MacDermot fuerit per Reverendissimum P. Generalem institutus Vicarius Hiberniae in absentia Provincialis, sed institutionem illam tunc tantum missam scimus quando Eminentia Vestra desuper sermonem habuit cum Reverendissimo Generale.

Provincialis autem mense Aprilis 1711 venit in Hiberniam, sed mox mense Septembris proxime sequentis discessit in Galliam, unde nihil ab illo exinde recepimus. Allegabat enim se non posse in Hibernia vivere, quia multis annis fuit in Gallia, delicate nutritus, etc.

Nonnulli ea de re querelas ante Reverendissimum P. Generalem deposuerunt, et incommoda absentiae Provincialis (sub fictis quibusdam praetextibus quod ardua haberet extra Hiberniam negotia peragenda) Reverendissimo Generali significaverunt, rogaveruntque suam Reverendissimam Paternitatem (ferme ab anno) quatenus dignaretur rescribere quando finiret Provincialis ille suum (non enim novimus tempus quo fuit institutus) Provincialatum, ut vocales in Hibernia existentes (qui plures sunt) alium eligerent aliquem hic existentem in rebus Missionis practicum, socium tribulationum, et Catholicis saecularibus gratum. Sed praevaluerunt apud Reverendissimum qui ei assistunt, ut ne quidem minimum dederit Reverendis-

<sup>206</sup> APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 200-201.

simus reponsum (licet certum sit quod litteras illas receperit) eo indubie fine ut vocales hic, ignorantes diem aut tempus quo Provincialis finivit, eligere alium non possint, donec bimestre ab vacantiae pro electione facienda transiret, et sic electio seu institutio, aut continuatio Provincialis devolveretur ad Reverendissimum.

Haec enim illa est astutio. Si enim (inquiunt) vocales eligant, annullabitur electio quia facta antequam diceretur alterum expirasse officio. Si enim non eligant vocales ante tempus praefixum a legibus nostris, tum diceretur quod electio ad Generalem sit devoluta; et sic quodcumque fecerint vocales, electio aut institutio Provincialis ad solum spectabit Reverendissimum. Sic contra miseros vocales utrimque concludunt, qui coram Reverendissimo Generale res pulchre pingunt, et tamen Missionis bonum vendunt aut produnt. Certe, si Magister *Plunquettus*, Cassanatensis Theologus vellet res Missionis cordi assumere, Reverendissimo Generali facile persuaderet, aut liberam vocalibus relinquere electionem, aut saltem aliquem instituere omnibus gratum intra Hiberniam commorantem.

Eminentia Vestra nullo negotio perspicere valet, quantum cadunt animo Dominicani huius Missionis, quando sic suo jure privantur, quando se a superioribus vident derelictos, quando sine Provinciale grato et laboris consorte quisque quod voluerit aget. Quid enim oves sine pastore? Quid pigri sine stimulo? Quomodo finito unius prioratu alter eligetur aut confirmabitur? Quomodo juvenes hic professi, mittentur ad studia extra Regnum? Quomodo animabuntur zelosi Missionarii aut stimulabuntur vecordes? Etc.

Eminentissime Domine, possem coram Deo declarare quod ad haec vobis fiducialiter scribenda, non ullius livore, non ambitione, vel alio interesse ducor, sed solius Dei, Missionis, et Patriae amore: imo declaro quod, quantum ad meam attinet personam, perinde mihi sit quis eligatur Superior cuius obtemperem mandatis. Nam etsi nullus sit Superior, tempus mihi est sciendi quid ut privata persona pro animarum lucro agere debeam. Unde, si sic visum fuerit Eminentiae Vestrae totus contentus sum, ne quidquam hac in re moveat.

Audeo tamen suggerere quod mihi videtur pro communi bono expedire. Unum e duobus punctis poterit (si visum fuerit) Eminentia Vestra efficere; nempe, quod mandata inde mittantur ad P. Magistrum fr. *Petrum MacDermot* (quem Reverendissimus P. Generalis iam antea censuit dignum, et quem ego non vidi ex quo in Hiberniam veni) ad hoc ut vocales convocet ad Provincialis electionem, et ipse praesit libere electioni tempore ab ipso praefigendo; vel quod Reverendissimus P. Generalis aut Sacra Congregatio aliquem hic existentem instituat Provinciale, v.g. Magistrum fr. Joannem Dillon, aut Magistrum Petrum MacDermott, aut Patrem Regentem Dominicum Mulfin (qui omnes tres Romae habitaverunt, fueruntque priores ad S. *Xistum* de Urbe), vel P. Lectorem Colmanum O Shaughnessy Priorem *Athenriensem*, vel P. Dominicum Brulaghan Priorem *Cubraniensem* et zelosum missionarium, vel quaecumque alium in rebus nostris expertum. Longa enim nos

docet experientia subditos libentius operari cum Superiorem habent gratum et omni exceptione majorem. Sic (sub correctione) censet bono Missionis rite providendum, sic serio commendat, sic demisse supplicat, qui assidue Deum O. M. pro Vestra incolumitate precatur, et est

Eminentissime Domine,

Eminentiae Vestrae

obsequentissimus et devotissimus famulus,

Athenriae 21 Augusti 1713 fr. Edmundus de Burgo, S.T.M., Ord.Praed.

It could, of course, be objected that this appeal to Rome was an attempt by priests of Connacht to force the holding of a provincial chapter at which, thanks to their superior numbers, they could achieve the election of one of their own as provincial. The three who wrote to Rome — Edmund Burke, Thomas Burke, and Peter MacDermott — were all of that province. Of the five candidates Edmund Burke put forward only one belonged to Ulster from which the next provincial should have been named, and his name was the last of the five. Dominic Dogherty, the only priest in Ulster put forward by Peter MacDermott in a list of five candidates, was in fact a son of Roscommon in Connacht<sup>207</sup>. One might even suspect the Connacht party of wishing to have Edmund Burke himself named provincial: both Thomas Burke and Peter MacDermott included him among those eligible for the honour. On the other hand, Thomas Burke expressly stated Ulster's rights, while at least three of his first four candidates were from that province. Among them was the name of Anthony Maguire, eventually to be Callanan's successor.

The one great and fatal weakness in these three letters was that they were written a month or two after the General had re-appointed Fr.

<sup>207</sup> O'Heyne speaks of a Dominic O'Doherty, a son of Derry, who remained in Ireland despite the exile and in 1706 was prior of that convent. Edmund Burke, however, describes him as a son of Roscommon. O'Heyne, 7; Journal, 135. Perhaps, though a native of Derry, Fr. O'Doherty received the habit at Roscommon as Patrick Plunkett had done, though a native of Leinster.

Peter MacDermott's candidates were John Dillon, S.T.M., Edmund Burke, S.T.M., Colman O'Shaughnessy, S.T.L., Dominic Dogherty, prior of Derry, and Dominic Mulfin, S.T.M. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 197<sup>v</sup>. Thomas Burke's list began with four from Ulster: Michael MacQuilin, S.T.M., Anthony Maguire, Dominic Dogherty, prior of Derry, Dominic Brullaghan, prior of Coleraine, Edmund Burke, S.T.M., John Dillon, S.T.M., Peter MacDermott, S.T.M., and Dominic Mulfin, S.T.L. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 196<sup>r</sup>.

Callanan for four years on 15 July 1713<sup>208</sup>. Thus when they were handed to Cardinal Imperiali by Humbert Burke (also of Connacht), regent of studies at San Sisto, in the closing days of November, it was already too late to prevent Callanan's reappointment, not to speak of holding a provincial chapter<sup>209</sup>. When Imperiali asked whether the provincial should be deposed, Burke replied that such a step might be excessive: it would suffice if he were ordered by Propaganda to go at once to Ireland and remain there until the end of his term of office. Some days later, however, having talked the matter over with his friends, Burke wrote at length to the Cardinal (1 December 1713) to say he had changed his mind: Fr. Callanan should be deposed and the missionaries allowed to choose one of their number as provincial; the superior of their choice should be commanded never to leave Ireland during his term under pain of removal from office<sup>210</sup>. The reason offered for this advice was that there was little hope that Callanan would ever go to Ireland. In five years he had only gone there once, for as many months, and then only lest he should be deposed by the Congregation. From Ireland he had passed to France and Spain, probably to collect and turn to his own use the money left by Irish friars who died as army chaplains. Leaving Spain he had returned through Portugal to France where he was then living. None of the foreign colleges had received a penny from the provincial: none of them, being immediately under the General, was subject to his control. There was, in consequence, no business to detain him on the continent where his continued presence merely gave bad example to those he ordered to the mission. The rest of Humbert Burke's letter answered such counter-arguments and objections as could be put forward by Callanan's friends.

Cardinal Imperiali, in his capacity as Protector of Ireland, put the matter before the Congregation of Propaganda, entrusting to its secretary the four letters we have just described. Before a decision was reached, Fr. Cloche (who had been asked to state his position in the case) sent in a document justifying his re-appointment of Fr. Hugh Callanan<sup>211</sup>. Compared with the masterly indictments composed by Edmund and Humbert Burke, the Master General's defence was a

<sup>208</sup> AGOP IV. 200, p. 41. The entry in the registers attributes the re-appointment to the fact that the Irish vocals could not convene for a chapter!

<sup>209</sup> This first meeting between Humbert Burke and the cardinal is referred to by the former in a letter of 1 December 1713. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 202-203<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>210</sup> 1 Dec 1713. Humbert Burke to Cardinal Imperiali. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 202-203<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>211</sup> APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 204-205<sup>r</sup>.

colourless and unconvincing thing, devoid of any telling element which the appellants had not anticipated and exposed. It is so poor that Fr. Cloche can scarcely have written it himself. The opening paragraph stated the General's constitutional right to name a provincial whenever a province failed to hold an elective chapter in due time. The General had first named Fr. Callanan provincial because such a chapter had not been held<sup>212</sup>, and later re-appointed him with the Pope's permission on hearing from 'many grave Fathers' that he had done much good for the province. Edmund Burke's description of Fr. Callanan as 'a son of the convent of Metz and a Doctor of the Sorbonne' must have given Propaganda the impression that the provincial of Ireland was a Frenchman of dubious orthodoxy, for the General felt called upon to insist that he was actually Irish by birth and professed in the Irish province. He was, besides, much admired by James III and his royal father, having suffered imprisonment for more than a year in the Tower of London. What one would expect to find, and would like to find, in this defence of the provincial, namely some account of his activities on behalf of the province, was scarcely attempted by the writer. All he has to say of Fr. Callanan's first term is that he was ordered to visit the colleges at Louvain and Lisbon and to search Europe for new missionaries. Since the beginning of his second term Callanan had the General's instructions to visit Ireland, bringing some more religious with him. The claim was made in the two final paragraphs that none of those named for the provincialate in the letters from Ireland was either old or experienced enough for the task, and that in the whole affair the General had followed the advice of wise and disinterested members of the Irish province. The first of these two statements would have been utterly untrue even if Fr. John Dillon had been the only candidate proposed<sup>213</sup>.

At the foot of Fr. Cloche's letter is a scribbled comment from the secretary of the Congregation, expressing dissatisfaction with the reply: apparently the note was written for the benefit of Cardinal Imperiali:

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<sup>212</sup> One should refer here to Fr. Cloche's letter of 3 mar 1708, revoking his order of 25 Feb 1708 that the provincial chapter should be held before June 1709. AGOP IV. 166, p. 117. Thus the General forbade the holding of a chapter before June 1709, and appointed Fr. Callanan provincial in February of that year. See above pp. 47-49.

<sup>213</sup> Fr. Dillon had been prior in Ireland before the exile, then served in turn as an army chaplain, first regent at Holy Cross, prior of Holy Cross, prior of San Sisto in Rome, and (from 1711) again a missionary in Ireland. A fuller notice of his career is given in *Riocht na Midhe*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (1968) 26-27.



Non vedo che il P. Generale risponda al motivo dell'assenza del Provinciale, poco rilevando, che *due* conventi sieno in Fiandra<sup>214</sup> essendo la Provincia in Ibernica, ove è maggior bisogno dell'assistenza del Provinciale, il quale non supplisce con una sola visita.

V.S. Illustrissima si compiaccia rimandarmi tutti i fogli unitamente col presente, perché io ne parlerò col P. Procuratore Generale, il quale è più capace della ragione.

li 19 Gennaio 1714. Ho poi parlato al P. Procuratore Generale, il quale mi ha risposto che il P. Generale rimanda al Provinciale, però stimo bene anche parlarne in Congregazione.

The result of Propaganda's intervention was that Fr. Callanan set out soon afterwards on his second visit to Ireland. In a gesture of conciliation, he named Fr. Edmund Burke Vicar-Provincial, a position he held until 1717 when Fr. Callanan ceased to rule the province<sup>215</sup>.

#### THE VISITATION OF 1714

Prior to his departure for Ireland, the provincial paid a visit to the Internuncio at Brussels at the end of April 1714. Mgr. Santini took the opportunity thus presented of conveying a message to the Irish bishops in regard to the recent papal decree *Unigenitus*, and Fr. Callanan agreed to tell the bishops that they should inform the Internuncio of their acceptance of it<sup>216</sup>. In the unsettled state of the country there was no question of full promulgation, but the Internuncio was anxious to have some definite evidence that the decree had been willingly received. On his return to Brussels, Fr. Callanan was to inform Santini minutely on all aspects of the question. They also spoke of the Dominicans, whose numbers the provincial hoped to increase. He had already persuaded many to set out for the mission and could easily send more

<sup>214</sup> A slip on the part of the secretary. Of the two formal convents mentioned in the context, one was at Louvain and the other in Lisbon. A third such convent, San Sisto in Rome, was not mentioned because it had not been visited by the provincial.

<sup>215</sup> Fr. Burke's appointment is mentioned in 'TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 117.

<sup>216</sup> 3 May 1714. Santini to Sacripante. APF, SC *Irlanda* 7, ff. 352-353. From another letter written by Santini on the same day it appears that they also spoke about Malachy Dulany, bishop of Ossory (1713-1731), and about the fact that he had once been a Capuchin. Callanan knew Dulany and spoke well of him. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 364-365.

if only Propaganda would provide them with money to pay for their passage and buy secular clothes. The conversation then turned on the vacant primatial see of Armagh, wherewith Fr. Callanan proposed Fr. Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva as an ideal candidate. He had all the necessary personal qualities, he was of noble birth, while he had a brother sufficiently wealthy to ensure his proper support. Santini dutifully reported all this to Cardinal Sacripante of Propaganda, making no comment of his own save the shrewd one he made to the provincial himself by asking whether Fr. Plunkett was a native of Ulster. Had Fr. Plunkett ever gone to Ulster as archbishop of Armagh he would have been triply unwelcome as a Leinsterman, as a religious, and as a member of the family to which Oliver Plunkett, the martyred Primate (d. 1681), had belonged, Fr. Callanan was not the first to suggest Fr. Patrick Plunkett for this honour. Fr. Cloche, about December 1712, had asked Cardinal de Noailles to use his influence with James III in the same cause: de Noailles had replied on 30 January 1713 saying that the king politely refused to nominate him or anyone else, since he was not then on good terms with the Pope<sup>217</sup>.

Some weeks later, about the 20th of May, Fr. Callanan set off on his visitation<sup>218</sup>. We know of only one thing he did in the course of it, but after hearing so much of the complaints made against him, it is a pleasure to be able to say that the good effects of that sole recorded achievement are still being felt at the present day. Finding the nuns of Galway sheltering with friends, for soldiers had taken over their convent, the provincial persuaded some of them to go to Dublin. Edmund Burke has left a note of the event<sup>219</sup>.

fuerant sub provincialatu Magistri Calanan per gubernium coactae domum deserere et apud amicos habitare per sex ad minus menses. Tunc Provincialis quatuor ex illis Galviensibus Mariam Bellew, Elizabetham Wiver, N[ora] Vaughan et Julianam Brown Dublinum tulit et primam Priorissam

<sup>217</sup> The cardinal's letter is preserved in AGOP XIII. 157. It is worthy of notice that on 9 Nov 1713, Ambrose MacDermott O.P. wrote to Grimaldi the Internuncio to recommend Hugh MacMahon, bishop of Clogher, for Armagh. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, ff. 210-211. MacMahon had already been transferred to Armagh before the bishop wrote. Plunkett was also considered for the see of Dublin in 1724. On that occasion the internuncio Spinelli said he was a good candidate 'but unfortunately a religious'. Brussels, 16 June 1724. APF, SC *Olanda* 9, ff. 280-282.

<sup>218</sup> Writing on 23 May 1714, the Internuncio referred to the fact that the Dominican provincial had left for Ireland a few days before. Coll. Hib., No. 5 (1962) 81.

<sup>219</sup> Journal, 146.

creavit, quae viginti recepit moniales et pie obiit 24 Augusti 1726. Unde mirabiliter nunc (sub Wiver) florent. Hinc postea Pontanam missae duae moniales ex familia *Plunket*, una Dublini obiit, altera *Pontanae* Priorissa facta alias recepit quae ibidem cohabitant. Sic ex Galviensi conventu alii duo prodierunt.

From the more detailed account given by Thomas Burke in *Hibernia Dominicana* <sup>220</sup> it appears that Fr. Callanan became aware of the problem during his visitation in 1714 and obtained the permission of Edmund Byrne, archbishop of Dublin, to transfer some of the nuns from Galway to the capital. According to this author the first eight nuns (not four, as Edmund Burke wrote) reached Dublin only in March 1717, so that it must have taken three years to arrange the new foundation. Perhaps the four named by Edmund Burke went to Dublin before 1717, to be later joined by the others when everything was ready for the formal erection of the community. During that three-year interval the nuns in Galway were also exploring the possibility of moving their entire community of thirty-nine to the peace and safety of the continent.

The sufferings of the nuns in Galway are vividly described in a letter (30 December 1714) to Fr. Cloche from Fr. Thomas MacDermott, a missionary who had gone from Rome to Ireland a little later than the provincial <sup>221</sup>. On arriving at Galway he was betrayed by one of the sailors who showed the port officials where he had hidden his papers. After a rigorous examination he was imprisoned for two months and finally transported to Spain in October. During his trial, the magist-

<sup>220</sup> 353-354. Writing in Dublin forty years after the foundation, Thomas Burke had the advantage of being able to use the conventual records and speak to members of that community. See also the anonymous but excellently produced *Annals of the Dominican Convent of St. Mary's, Cabra*, with some account of its origin, 1647-1912, Dublin 1912, 21-23.

<sup>221</sup> The original letter, written at San Lucar de Barreda shortly after his ship ran aground on the sands, is preserved in AGOP XIII. 157. Fr. Thomas MacDermott is probably identical with the young man of the same name who received the habit at San Sisto on 25 Feb 1703 and was professed there a year later. SCAR, Book of Receptions and Professions. In Jan 1712 he was a lector at San Sisto and was ordered thence to Ireland in Feb 1714. AGOP IV. 200, pp. 35, 44. He then applied to Propaganda for the money to go to Ireland. APF, Atti 84, f. 28r; SOCG 591, ff. 148-149. Details of his trial and conviction are in W. P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 415. Shortly after his return to the continent he again applied to Propaganda, and with as little success, for the money to return to the mission. APF, Atti 85, f. 130v; SOCG 598, f. 70v.

rates had publicly read (and later published in the newspapers) the documents authorizing him to receive heretics to the faith and even to absolve sins reserved to the Pope. This had the unintended result that crowds flocked to visit him in prison, so that he felt free to boast that he had done more good for souls as a prisoner than other priests who were at liberty but dared not even console the dying. Some of the Dominican nuns of Galway, who came to visit him in gaol, appear to have suggested to him that their community should retire *en bloc* to Spain.

Nos pauvres Religieuses a Gallway sont au desespoir. Elle voudroient trouver quelque endroit pour sortir d'Irland, affin d'y pouvoir servir le bon Dieu comme elle voudraient. Il y en a 39. En tout, elles feroient plaindre les pierres de les voir comme elles sont contre leur gré vestié toujours en secuières, et toujours voyant les officiers et soldats entrer parmi elles pour chercher des prestres ou religieux. Dans le temps de mon emprisonnement a Gallway elles furent dispersés trois fois. Ce seroit un grand act de charité et heroique de leur procurer quelque couvent ou en Espagne ou France. Elles se fient tant en la personne de vostre Reverendissime touchant cet effet.

#### THE ATTEMPTED FOUNDATION AT MARCHENA, 1715-1718

Not content with putting this suggestion before the General, Fr. Thomas MacDermott also applied to Edward Fitzgerald, the provincial procurator at Madrid. Despite his earlier failure to establish the Irish nuns at Játiva, the latter lost no time in acting on the appeal from the community of Galway. In the early months of 1715 he put the case before Fr. Cloche, explaining what he planned to do in the emergency<sup>222</sup>. The nuns had been forced to abandon their religious dress and did not

<sup>222</sup> There are two of Fitzgerald's letters in AGOP XIII. 157. The one referred to here is undated. The other (Madrid, 20 Jan 1715) has nothing to do with the nuns, save for a passing reference to their sufferings. Its main burden was to secure the removal from the Spanish court of a recent arrival, Dominic Dillon, a son of the province of Lombardy, whom Fitzgerald said was mad. The writer also mentioned that the socius of the provincial of Spain was biassed against the Irish (though there were only four Irish students in that province) on the grounds that they reported the affairs of the province to the Master General.

Fitzgerald's undated letter contains a description of the convent of Marchena. J'assure Vostre Rev<sup>me</sup> que cette la mellieur fondacion, et le mellieur couvent que nous pouvions trouver dans toute l'Espagne. Il a un tres bon cloistre, quelques salles et cinquantes chambres, avec un beau jardin, une eglise, un cour, et tout ce qui est necessaires pour des Religieuses: puisqu'il a couté cent mille escuts a son Excellence le faire batir.

know where to turn to escape the persecution. Since no priest could say Mass for them or hear their confessions, many had gone in disguise to be absolved by Fr. MacDermott while he was in prison. Their plight had touched the heart of the Duchess d'Aveiro, a great benefactress of the Order, who had decided to grant them the convent of Marchena, nine leagues from Seville. This was a new foundation recently built on her family estate for the benefit of poor girls, but since there were only ten such girls in residence, the Duchess (with the approval of her sons, the Dukes de Arcos and de Baños) was prepared to settle them in other Andalusian convents and grant full possession of Marchena to the nuns of Galway. Matters were so far advanced that he expected the nuns to arrive at Cadiz with some young Irish ladies in June.

The sole difficulty, Fitzgerald went on to explain, was that the Cardinal Archbishop of Seville did not look kindly on the idea of dispossessing the ten girls at Marchena to make room for strangers. A letter from the General to the Cardinal, reconfirming the old decrees whereby the procurator was authorized to found a convent for Irish nuns would probably smooth this difficulty over and thereby remove the only obstacle to the happy conclusion of the whole plan. On 7 May 1715 Fr. Cloche wrote accordingly to Cardinal Arias of Seville, though without mentioning the papal permission granted for such a convent in the previous century<sup>223</sup>. Another letter went by the same post to the Duke de Arcos, thanking him for his generosity.

Despite Fitzgerald's earnest efforts over the next few years, the Marchena foundation was never actually made. In January 1716 the General wrote again to encourage the Duke in his pious intentions, and in April 1717 told Fitzgerald how pleased he was that the Duke was establishing the nuns at Marchena<sup>224</sup>. The procurator must have felt certain of victory, for in the autumn of 1717 (the year in which the Galway nuns established themselves at Dublin) six of the Galway community arrived in Madrid, expecting to proceed to their new convent<sup>225</sup>.

<sup>223</sup> AGOP IV. 199, f. 160<sup>v</sup>. On the question of 17th-century foundations see Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 450. The letter to the Duke de Arcos is noted on AGOP IV. 199, ff. 160<sup>v</sup>-161<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>224</sup> 5 Jan 1716. Cloche to Duke. AGOP IV. 199, f. 186<sup>r</sup>. 20 Apr 1717. Cloche to Fitzgerald. AGOP IV. 200, p. 70.

<sup>225</sup> 9 Nov 1717. Cloche to the Duchess de Arcos at Madrid, thanking her for her kindness to 'la pobres religiosas nostras venidas de Hibernia'. AGOP IV. 199, f. 252<sup>r</sup>.

4 Jan 1718. Cloche to the prioress of San Domingo el Real, Madrid. 'Ya tenia



They were hospitably received in the royal convent of St. Dominic, but by January 1718 it was becoming only too clear that there was little hope of their ever obtaining a convent for themselves. In February a conference was held in St. Dominic's at which the Duke explained to the Dominican prior of Atocha, another Spaniard named Fr. Thomas de Zumarraga, and the hapless Fr. Fitzgerald, that he could no longer honour his original offer to the nuns but was willing to make some alternative arrangement: what the new arrangement was does not appear. On hearing this, Fr. Cloche asserted his authority<sup>226</sup>. The Duke's proposal was to be accepted; Fr. Fitzgerald was to refrain from doing anything for the nuns save to provide for their support; while the six who had come from Galway were henceforth to be subject to the prior of Atocha alone. The General felt that Fr. Fitzgerald, apart from bungling the whole affair, had put him in an embarrassing position.

So matters dragged on into 1719. The Irish nuns at Madrid were discontented with the treatment they received; their Spanish sisters could not easily pay for their support; Fitzgerald himself, accused of some misdemeanour, was ordered to return to Ireland<sup>227</sup>. Only in 1723 do we learn that the charges against him were proved false and that the nuns lost the foundation promised them by the Duke de Arcos because a young Irish associate of Fr. Fitzgerald's had behaved badly at court<sup>228</sup>. The six nuns appear to have dispersed into various Spanish convents and there finished out their lives<sup>229</sup>.

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noticia della gran caridad que han encontrado en esse Monastero las seis Religiosas venidas de Irlanda'. AGOP IV. 199, f. 258<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>226</sup> On this conference and the General's subsequent decision there are two long letters in Spanish (both dated 8 Mar 1718). One is to the prior of the convent de Atocha (AGOP IV. 199, f. 268<sup>r</sup>) and the other to Fitzgerald (AGOP IV. 200, p. 78).

<sup>227</sup> 3 Jan 1719. Cloche to the prioress of St. Dominic's, Madrid, on the dissatisfaction of the Irish nuns, who could not easily be sent back to Ireland or to another Spanish convent. AGOP IV. 197, ff. 2<sup>v</sup>-3<sup>r</sup>.

5 Dec 1719. Cloche to the provincial of Spain, saying that Fitzgerald was giving scandal at court and that a new procurator should be named. AGOP IV. 197, f. 33<sup>v</sup>.

5 Dec 1719. Cloche to Fitzgerald, ordering him from Madrid to Ireland. AGOP IV. 200, p. 97. This order did not take effect.

<sup>228</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 116.

<sup>229</sup> In the book of clothings and professions still preserved by the nuns of Galway there are obituary notices beside some of the names referring to the death in Spain of some of the Galway nuns. Presumably these were of the group who went to Madrid in 1717.

## FR. CALLANAN'S LAST YEARS, 1717-1728

A new provincial was appointed on 26 June 1717, some months after the nuns' monastery at Dublin had been finally established. Fr. Callanan probably returned to Metz, the convent of his affiliation. It is not unlikely that he was named prior there in 1723, for he was to be re-appointed to that office in April 1726<sup>230</sup>. During 1725 he paid a visit of some months to Rome, returning thence to Paris where in October 1726 he was busily occupied soliciting the help of the Pope, of Cardinal Fleury, and of the Nuncio in Paris regarding the dispute between the Dominicans and Benedictines of Metz<sup>231</sup>. Thomas Burke, then a young man, saw him on his last Roman visit<sup>232</sup>.

Eundem egregium virum, statura procerum et pulchrum, ipsemet novi Romae in caenobio nostro S. Clementis, quo venerat a Comitibus Generalibus Bononiae anno Jubilaei 1725, ibique moratus est per quatuor circiter menses. Dein in Gallias recta regressus est, pieque obiit Metis in Lotharingia anno 1728.

## ANTHONY MAGUIRE, 1717-1721

As the end of Fr. Callanan's second term approached, the missionaries in Ireland prepared themselves once more to attempt an elective provincial chapter. Unfortunately for their plans they were under the impression that Fr. Callanan, having received his letters of appointment at Paris in December 1713, would not go out of office until December

<sup>230</sup> AGOP IV. 202, f. 233<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>231</sup> See AGOP XIV. Y part 1, ff. 31-35 for two letters in Fr. Callanan's hand bearing on his activity in Paris. One (Paris, 5 Oct 1726) asks the Master General to solicit the help of Cardinal Fleury and of the Nuncio in Paris, and sends the writer's best wishes to Fr. Patrick Plunkett. The other (Paris, 3 Oct 1726) is a petition to the Pope, also in regard to the dispute at Metz. For the basis of the controversy see G. Thiriot, *Recherches sur l'ordre des Dominicains à Metz*, part II, Le 'Relogement' des Bénédictins de St-Arnould dans le couvent des Dominicains à Metz, in *Jahrbuche der Gesellschaft für lothringische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, Jahrgang V, 2, (1893) 108-151. Also Dalmace Saget, *Notice Historique sur le Couvent des Frères-Prêcheurs de Metz*, Liège-Paris, no date, 35-38. Another Irish Dominican, Michael Corcoran, was associated with the convent of Metz at this period. Two letters written by him there to the General have been preserved. One dated 28 Apr 1712 is in AGOP XIII. 153, the other dated 6 Mar 1717 is in AGOP XIII. 392.

<sup>232</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 529.

1717. For that we have the testimony of Edmund Burke<sup>233</sup>. Until fresh evidence comes to light it will remain a mystery how the patents re-appointing Fr. Callanan as provincial, made out at Rome on 15 July 1713, could have taken five months to reach Paris, unless it was that the agitation in that year for Fr. Callanan's deposition delayed their delivery. At all events, when Fr. Cloche appointed Fr. Anthony Maguire provincial on 26 June 1717, Edmund Burke and his followers, thinking that Fr. Callanan's term of office had still six months to run, felt they had been outwitted yet again<sup>234</sup>.

While Fr. Cloche admittedly preferred to appoint a new provincial rather than permit an election, the registers do not bear out the accusation that he stole a march on those who objected to his policy. Fr. Callanan had been re-appointed on 15 July 1713. Fr. Maguire was appointed on 26 June 1717 and accepted the provincialate at Douai on 15 July, four years to a day from the re-appointment of his predecessor. There were other elements too in the question which should be put down to the Master General's credit. He respected the alternation of provincials by naming a candidate from Ulster. He urged Fr. Maguire to go to Ireland and devote himself to the mission. Not least, his policy succeeded in preventing the Dominicans of Connacht from dominating the Irish scene, maintained the parity of the four 'provinces', and thus saved the peace and harmony of the mission. How real the danger of conflict was may be judged from an Irish Augustinian report of 1722:

<sup>233</sup> Aliquot mensibus antequam absolvit Provincialatus octennium Magister Calanani cogitaverunt Provinciae Patres (dum ille finiret) capitulum Provinciale electivum celebrare. Sed praevenit Reverendissimus, agente Plunketto, et institutio Provincialis ad Magistrum Antonium Maguire Ultoniensem missa est Duacum in Belgio, sed cum haec clausula: quod hic Provincialatus tantum inciperet finito officio Magistri Calanani. Patentes Magistri Maguire mense Junii 1717 datae sunt, et Duaci acceptavit die 15 Julii 1717, ideo capitulum electivum Magistri Egani habitum fuit 27 Julii 1721, quia Patres computaverunt non a data litterarum patentium Romae, sed a die qua Magister Maguire Duaci acceptavit. Eodem jure, Provincialatus Magistri Calanani non expiravit ad mensem Decembris 1717, quia mense Decembris 1713 institutionem Parisiis acceptavit. Adeoque omnia acta Provincialis Calanani et eius Vicarii [Edmund Burke, the writer] stabilia fuerunt et valida toto tempore intermedio, saltem donec de institutione et acceptance Magistri Maguire innotuit Provinciae. *Journal*, 136.

<sup>234</sup> P. M. Antoninus Maguire instituitur a Reverendissimo P. M. Generali post terminatum offitium provincialatus P. M. Hugonis Calanan provincialis Hiberniae, cui praecipue missionis studium et exercitium recommendatur. AGOP IV. 200, p. 71. I have followed O'Heyne and Edmund Burke in calling the provincial Anthony; both Anthony and Antoninus occur in AGOP IV.

most of their priests too belonged to Connacht, and their domination over provincial affairs was bitterly resented by the others <sup>235</sup>.

We know little of Fr. Anthony Maguire's earlier career <sup>236</sup>. All agree in describing him as a son of the Ulster convent of Gola. O'Heyne would have it that he studied in Italy <sup>237</sup>. In 1678 he was assigned to the convent of Rennes in Brittany <sup>238</sup>. From 1687 to 1689 he was provincial procurator in Ireland, resident apparently at Dublin <sup>239</sup>. During the Jacobite war he seems to have become an army chaplain, and since he does not re-appear in the *Liber Provinciae*, probably left for France from Limerick with the Irish troops in 1691 <sup>240</sup>. In 1702 he was chaplain to the French regiment 'de Marinis', and in 1706 still an army chaplain in Italy <sup>241</sup>. Edmund Burke asserts that he was with Patrick Plunkett at the General Chapter of 1706 at Bologna where he played a part in having the alternation of provincials restored <sup>242</sup>. There is no further trace of his movements until 15 July 1717 when he accepted the provincialate at Douai.

Fr. Maguire's work on the mission opened with an adventure which served to show that there was more than a little wisdom in his predecessor's reluctance to visit Ireland. 'Taking the General's advice to heart, he set out for Dublin and was denounced as a missionary before even setting foot on the shore. He was brought to trial, convicted by

<sup>235</sup> Rome, 30 Nov 1722. Fulgentius Butler O.S.A., provincial procurator of Ireland, *De Partialitatibus Provinciae Fratrum Eremitarum S.P.N. Augustini per Hiberniam constitutae, atque conventibus deque gravaminibus eiusdem provinciae ac eorum remediis*. Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, Mss. Bibl. Palatina 7239, fasc. 20. I am indebted to the Rev. Professor F. X. Martin O.S.A., of University College Dublin for putting a copy of this document at my disposal.

<sup>236</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 157, 161, 529-530.

<sup>237</sup> O'Heyne, 17. *Studuit in Italia, et redux in patriam servivit ut capellanus in exercitu, et cum eodem vivit adhuc in Italia*.

<sup>238</sup> AGOP IV. 156, p. 256.

<sup>239</sup> TA, *Liber Provinciae*.

<sup>240</sup> An 'Anthony MacGwyre' is third on the list of chaplains forming part of the 'List of all the men of note that came with King James out of France or that followed him after' published by John O'Hart, *Irish Pedigrees*, 5th ed., Vol. II, 776. For this reference I am indebted to Fr. Conleth Kearns O.P.

<sup>241</sup> 8 Jul 1702. P. Antonius Maguier declaratur legitime factus capellanus campestris Legioni Galliae de Marinis. AGOP IV. 182, p. 408. On his presence in Italy as a chaplain in 1706 see O'Heyne, 17.

<sup>242</sup> See the section on that Chapter above, pp. 38-41. Fr. Maguire was raised to the rank of Master of Theology by the same General Chapter. Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 157.

his own papers and admission of being the Dominican provincial, sentenced to indefinite imprisonment, and lodged in the infamous Blackdog Gaol. Thanks to the intervention of the Catholic ambassadors at London, the sentence was quickly changed to that of transportation and Fr. Maguire was shipped back to the continent; not, however, before he had time to appoint Fr. Stephen MacEgan of Dublin Vicar-Provincial. Such is Edmund Burke's account of the incident <sup>243</sup>.

Thomas Burke puts a slightly different aspect on the story in his *Hibernia Dominicana* by ascribing the provincial's capture (in company with two Jesuits, a Franciscan, and three diocesan priests) to the activities of a Portuguese Jew named Garzia <sup>244</sup>. Since Burke put this down as a vivid memory of his Dublin boyhood, he has been followed unquestioningly by such authorities as W. P. Burke <sup>245</sup>. More recently, Mr. Kevin MacGrath has proved Thomas Burke mistaken in associating Garzia with Fr. Maguire's arrest. Thanks to a memorandum of the meetings of the Lords Justices, discovered by Mr. MacGrath in Trinity College library, we know that Fr. Anthony Maguire's transportation was ordered on 2 August 1718. Another Dominican named James French, perhaps the provincial's companion, was similarly sentenced on the 16th of August <sup>246</sup>. If Edmund Burke were our sole authority on this episode, we would presume that Fr. Maguire reached Ireland within weeks of his appointment, and not a full year later as now appears to have been the case. The date is corroborated by a letter of 18 August 1718 from Santini, Internuncio at Brussels, to the secretary of Propaganda, referring to the 'recent exile of Fr. Maguire, the Franciscan provincial': this can have been none other than our Fr. Maguire, for the then Franciscan provincial was Anthony MacNamara <sup>247</sup>.

<sup>243</sup> Praevenit rursus Reverendissimus, et Magistrum Antonium Maguir, Ultioniensem ex Gaula Provinciale instituit per patentes datas in Junio 1717, quas Duaci acceptavit 15 Julii immediate sequentis, et in Hiberniam properavit. Sed proditus ante egressum ex Navi, Dublini captus, carcere de Blackdog mancipatus, per suas patentes et propria confessione in publica curia justitiae convictus est et sententiat; sed mediantibus Catholicis Londoni legatis, Georgii Regis conniventia in exilium mutata sententia fuit. *Dissertatio*, LIX.

Ante egressum e navi captus Dublini, incarceratus, et tandem in publica curia convictus quod Provincialis Dominicanorum esset, exilio mulctatus est. (Vicarium reliquit P. Magistrum Stephanum MacEgan, sequentem Provinciale). *Journal*, 122.

<sup>244</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 160-161.

<sup>245</sup> *Irish priests*, 220.

<sup>246</sup> Kevin MacGrath, John Garzia, a noted Priest-Catcher and his activities, 1717-23, in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 72 (1949) 494-514.

<sup>247</sup> Mi dice infine che il P. Maguire Provinciale de Padri Recolletti essendo stato



## THE IRISH PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF AUGUST 1720

After carrying out a visitation at Louvain<sup>248</sup>, Fr. Maguire returned to Ireland from France in 1719 under an assumed name and went about his business undisturbed. When he reached Athenry, Fr. Edmund Burke prevailed on him to call an elective chapter so that his successor might be chosen by the province<sup>249</sup>. Some of the Fathers went so far as to refuse to recognize him as provincial until he had formally called an elective chapter to be held in June 1721. This Fr. Maguire being quite happy to do, the chapter was duly called<sup>250</sup>.

The chapter of 1721 would, therefore, have been the first to mark the recovery of the Irish province had it not been unexpectedly preceded by another in 1720. After a generalate of thirty-four years, Fr. Antoninus Cloche died at Rome on 26 February of that year. On 9 March a letter was sent to the Irish provincial informing him both of the General's death and of the Pope's appointment of Angelus William Molo as Vicar-General of the Order<sup>251</sup>. A second letter dated the 3rd of August summoned him to the elective General Chapter to be held in Rome at Pentecost 1721<sup>252</sup>. It was, accordingly, necessary for the province to elect two definitors to go with the provincial to Rome and take part in the election of Fr. Cloche's successor. Fr. Maguire must have convened the required provincial chapter before ever receiving the letters of convocation, for the chapter opened at Dublin on the 17th of August and continued to the 21st. Not content with merely electing the

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riconosciuto per missionario a avuto l'esilio da tutto il Regno. APF, SOCG 615, f. 298r. On Fr. MacNamara, O.F.M., see Canice Mooney, *Irish Franciscan Provincials*, in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 56 (1963) 3-11.

<sup>248</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIX. There is no trace of the visitation in AGOP IV.

<sup>249</sup> Sed anno sequenti rediit, et dum refugium Athenriense visitaret, praevaluit cum eo praefatus Magister Edmundus de Burgo, ut Capitulum successoris electivum indiceret, quod tamen fecit per instrumentum publicum Vocalibus intimandum. Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 122. There is another trace of this visitation in the account books of the nuns of Dublin, signed by Fr. Maguire in 1720. *Annals of the Dominican convent of St. Mary's Cabra*, 32.

<sup>250</sup> At ille rursus ex Gallia, visitato Lovaniensi Collegio, in patriam rediit. Illius patentes admittere noluerunt quidam Patres nisi prius in scriptis citaret et convocaret Vocales ad capitulum successoris electivum die 27 Junii 1721, quod prompte fecit. Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIX.

<sup>251</sup> The letter was sent to Holy Cross, Louvain. AGOP IV. 200, p. 99.

<sup>252</sup> AGOP IV. 200, p. 101.

definitors, the chapter produced a set of twenty-one ordinations to regulate the running of the province.

The names of the four definitors who signed the acts at Dublin are interesting in their own account. Edmund Burke emerged as definitor for Connacht and Stephen MacEgan for Leinster. Both had been Vicar-Proprials in the recent past, the former under Fr. Callanan (1714-1717), the latter under Fr. Maguire (1718-1719). Fr. MacEgan, as prior of Dublin, had helped the nuns of Galway to settle there in 1717 and was to be elected provincial in 1721<sup>253</sup>. Peter MacDermott, definitor for Munster, had been Vicar-General of the province from August 1710 to April 1711, but it is more interesting to note the weakness of Munster where only seven natives of that province were then working<sup>254</sup>, and which had to be content with the election of Fr. MacDermott, a son of Connacht, as its representative at the chapter. The Ulster definitor was Patrick Diamond, prior of Drogheda. The two Definitors-General elected to attend the General Chapter were Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva<sup>255</sup>, already in Rome, and Dominic Daly of Athenry who engaged to travel out at his own expense<sup>256</sup>. The province was clearly in no position to pay for the passage of definitors to Rome. To meet the cost of the provincial's journey, each priest of the province was ordered to say ten Masses for his intentions if asked by him to do so<sup>257</sup>.

The surviving text of the ordinations made at Dublin in August 1720 is a somewhat unsophisticated document — a mere list under the heading 'Ordinationes Provinciales factae in Capitulo Provinciali Dublini', signed by the provincial and the four definitors<sup>258</sup>. They are not even styled *acta*, nor divided properly into *Denuntiationes*,

<sup>253</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 354.

<sup>254</sup> Edmund Burke, *Dissertatio*, LIX. This statistic is also given in the letter from the provincial chapter of 1720 to the General Chapter of 1721, of which there is a copy by E. Burke in his *Journal*, 123-125. The full document is given below, pp. 87-89.

<sup>255</sup> Plunkett, previously a definitor at Bologna in 1706, was permitted to act in the same capacity in 1721 only by means of a privilege granted to the 'desolate province of Ireland'. AGOP IV. 200, pro provincia Hungarico-Austriaca, p. 75.

<sup>256</sup> Elegerunt diffinitorem Magistrum Patritium Plunkett (quia Romae exstitit theologus Cassanatensis)... et electorem seu socium P. F. Dominicum O'Daly Atheniensem... qui propriis expensis ivit Romam. Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 122.

<sup>257</sup> TA, Provincial chapter acts, 1720, ordination 20.

<sup>258</sup> The only surviving copy is in the provincial archives, Tallaght, Co. Dublin (TA). For a complete transcript of the document I am indebted to the Rev. Brs. Eugene Flynn and Mark Kehoe.

*Declarationes*, etc. No words are wasted: each ordination comes quickly to the point. Under the thin disguise of a humble acceptance of papal bulls, the very first ordination mentions the decrees subjecting the foreign colleges to the provincial's jurisdiction. The fourth announces the elective provincial chapter to be held at Dublin on 29 July 1721<sup>259</sup>. These two rights, control over the colleges and the power to elect a provincial, had been sought by the province for more than twenty years: now that Fr. Cloche had passed away, it was thought the time had come to attempt their recovery. The remaining ordinations were of a disciplinary nature, aimed at restoring conventual life and eliminating the abuses which were the natural offspring of civil persecution. Examiners were appointed to interview candidates for the Order (ord. 13), while the superiors of the foreign colleges were forbidden to receive novices without the provincial's permission (ord. 14). Other laws determined to what convents missionaries should report on arrival (ord. 7, 8), by whom they should be examined before hearing confessions (ord. 6), and what authorization they required before administering the sacraments (ord. 5). No less than five ordinations concerned the financial aspects of missionary work. Money collected on the quest was to be given entirely to the superior of the convent (ord. 17). Inventories listing the goods of each friar were to be kept safely in every house (ord. 15) so that they could be properly divided, according to the norms set out by the chapter (ord. 9, 10) when their owners died. Another ordination (18) determined the minimum amount required as a dowry by those entering the monasteries of Galway and Dublin. The work of restoring the convents in Ireland is evidenced by the chapter's recognition of the full conventual status of Dublin (ord. 19), and by the ordination (16) requiring the provincial to appoint superiors in the then destitute convents of Cavan, Clonmel, Castlelyons, Thomas-town, Tulsk, and Tombeola.

From a purely historical viewpoint, the most interesting of all these ordinations is that (11) commanding the superiors of convents to bring to the provincial chapter of 1721 (under penalty of deposition from office) a full list and description of all lands and goods belonging to their priories before the Reformation. The priors at Louvain and Rome,

<sup>259</sup> Edmund Burke showed to the Fathers at the Chapter the original letter of 25 Feb 1708 in which Fr. Cloche had commanded the then provincial, Fr. Ambrose O'Connor, 'infallibly' to hold an elective chapter by the end of June 1709. Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 132. See above, p. 48.

and the Rector at Lisbon, were to seek similar information from the exiles, make copies of papal bulls concerning the province, and send their findings to the chapter in a bound volume. All these papers were then to be brought to Holy Cross, Louvain, designated by the chapter of 1720 as the place where the archives of the province should be kept.

Besides making these ordinations, Fr. Maguire and the four definitors wrote the following letter to the Master General (still to be elected) and the Fathers of the General Chapter to be held in 1721<sup>260</sup>.

Reverendissime Pater Magister Generalis et Venerabile Diffinitorium.

Humillime exponunt Provincialis et Diffinitorium Hiberniae Dublini in Capitulo electivo Diffinitoris Generalis et Socii, quod ab anno sui universalis exilii 1698 usque modo capitulariter (quamvis potuerint ut alii fecerunt Ordines Mendicantium) non convenerint, eo quod semper fuerint praeventi, et de Provinciali ipsis a Reverendissimo provisum fuerit, non sine maximo Provinciae et missionis damno, quamvis Vocalibus in patriam reducibus, iterato declaraverit *se non velle Provinciam amplius suo jure privari*. Gravamina quae interea passi sumus prolixius foret enarrare; ea tamen quae nos intimius angunt per Eximium P. Provincialem nostrum fr. Antoninum Maguire, et per Eximium P. Patritium Plunket a nobis in Diffinitorem nostrum Generalem canonicè electum, vobis suppliciter repraesentari cupimus.

Imprimis, ut nulla ratione se sinat Reverendissimus induci ut nobis ullum praeficiat nisi per nos canonicè electum, virum, scilicet, nostrorum laborum participem, et in nostris rebus expertum; quandoquidem futurae electionis Provincialis capituli dies sit ex nunc juxta leges determinatus.

Item, Collegia ultramarina, Lovaniense, Ulisiponense, et Romanum, sub solius Provincialis Hiberniae jurisdictione (salva semper suprema Reverendissimi auctoritate) juxta primaevam eorundem Collegiorum foundationem sint et permaneant. Inde enim Provinciae, missioni, et dictis Collegiis non exiguum acquireretur commodum, Provincia enim vires in ultramarinis partibus delitescens ad se compellet ut in vinea Domini, propter operariorum penuriam pene inculta, strenue ac indefesse laborent, quod aliter frustra operari flebili didiscimus experientia. Constat etiam dicta Collegia primo fundata et instituta fuisse sub jurisdictione Provincialis et Provinciae Hiberniae, et ita acceptata, ut apud *Fontanam* videre est, et sic permansisse ad annum 1650 quo in tribus Regni Britannici Coronis crudelis rexit *Cromwellus*, qui in tan-

<sup>260</sup> This important text appears to survive only in Edmund Burke's copy. Journal, 123-125. In the course of this long chapter we have had to rely greatly on Burke's recorded opinions, thereby running the risk of falling victim to his party spirit. Not the least important aspect of the letter set out above is that it is a full endorsement of his views on the part of the provincial chapter.

tum saeviit ut plurimi etiam ex nostris (ut patet ex actis Capituli Generalis eiusdem anni) ultimo supplicio pro Deo, pro rege et patria fuerint affecti. Caeteri vero (huius praesertim nationis) bonis, terris aliisque possessionibus spoliati, ut aut domi fame perierint, aut in terra aliena perpetuum subierint exilium. Quo tempore dicta Collegia solius Reverendissimi jurisdictioni subiecta fuerunt, ne exterarum nationum Provinciales (ut praetendebant) dictorum Collegiorum jurisdictionem usurparent, dum nostri religiosi fuere dispersi, aut carceribus mancipati. Cuius rei irrefragabile argumentum sit, quod in prima post dispersionem Congregatione *Urlariae* Magister Provincialis fr. Joannes O Hart cum caeteris ibi congregatis supplicaverint Reverendissimo de Marinis, eadem Collegia jurisdictioni Provincialis submittere, ne praefata Acta anni 1650 decursu temporis in praejudicium cederent Provinciae, annuit benigne dictus Reverendissimus per litteras patentes datas Romae quinto idus Junii 1655 et registratas pag. 140. Constat etiam Clementem IX et X postea per bullas Apostolicas (apud S. Xistum in Urbe custoditas) jurisdictioni Provincialis Hiberniae eiusque successorum, omnes conventus, collegia, domos, terras, et bona in exteris Nationibus a nostris acquisita aut acquirenda in perpetuum submisisse, quibuscumque in contrarium non obstantibus.

Exponet vobis suo et Provinciae nomine Eximius Magister Provincialis (qui iterato nec ita pridem totam hanc visitavit nationem) messem hic esse multam, operarios vero paucos; imo plures esse conventus omnino desertos, quorum filii se extra patriam alibi recreant, dum suorum conventuum memoria deletur, et fidelis populus spirituali alimonia privatur, maxime in vastissima Momoniae natione, ubi undecem habuimus conventus, nec sint ex nativis fratribus plusquam septem; cum tot graduatos habeant Ulissipone et alibi, viros ad missionis opus vere idoneos <sup>261</sup>

Quandoquidem in ultimo Capitulo Generali Bononiae celebrato anno 1706 ordinata fuerit quaedam alternatio quoad Provinciales et superiores conventuum et Collegiorum nostrorum Lovanii, Romae, et Ulissipone, quam incompletam adhuc esse comperimus; ideoque enixe supplicamus huius alternationis extensionem ad Regentes, Lectores, aliosque Officiales et Studentes in praefatis conventibus; addentes nos summopere pro Regularis observantiae introductione, pro pietatis incremento, et studiorum promotione, optare ut Collegium nostrum Ulissiponense in Prioratum et conventum erigatur.

Catalogum Personarum quarum labores praemiatos volumus ad Diffinitorem Generalem mittimus <sup>262</sup>.

<sup>261</sup> This phrase confirms the impression given by the General's registers that a large proportion of the staff and students at Lisbon came from the province of Munster.

<sup>262</sup> Unless Burke omitted the names in making his private copy, they must have been sent as a separate document. See below p. 91.



Haec sunt, Reverendissime Pater ac ter venerabile Capitulum, quae pro Dei gloria, Ordinis honore, et patriae emolumento repraesentamus. Quae omnia in afflictorum solatium nobis concedere non graventur. Quo facto, humillimos vestros filios devinciatis, ut pro Spiritus Sancti in vestro venerabili coetu assistentia, et ter felice novi regimis auspicio incessanter sint oraturi,

Reverendissimae Paternitatis Vestrae et Venerabilis Diffinitorii obsequentissimi filii et clientes,

fr. Edmundus de Burgo, S.T. Magister, diffinitor pro Conacia.

fr. Petrus MacDermot, S.T. Magister, diffinitor pro Momonia.

fr. Patritius Diamond, diffinitor pro Ultonia.

fr. Stephanus MacEgan, Praedicator Generalis, diffinitor pro Lagenia.

fr. Jacobus Cormick, secretarius Capituli.

The province obviously hoped to obtain from the Chapter of 1721 and from the new Master General what Fr. Cloche had long refused to give. Meanwhile there was no change of policy in the Dominican curia. In the summer of 1720, Fr. Maguire incautiously assigned seven novices to study philosophy at Lisbon, only to have the assignments declared invalid by Fr. Molo, Vicar-General of the Order<sup>263</sup>. Nor could the provincial carry out visitation of the foreign colleges without a special commission, such as that granted on 9 November 1720 authorizing him to conduct visitation in Holy Cross, Louvain<sup>264</sup>.

#### THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1721

Among the papers concerning the General Chapter of 1721, still preserved in the archives of the Master General, are the original signed postulations presented by Fathers Maguire, Plunkett, and Daly on behalf of the Irish province<sup>265</sup>. The document is far shorter than the letter from the provincial chapter transcribed above, partly because

<sup>263</sup> The Vicar-General reassigned these novices to Lisbon on 13 Aug 1720. Their names, sent on request to Rome for purposes of registration, are to be found in the same volume under date 23 Nov 1720: Christopher Fottrell, Ambrose MacDonnell, James Heffernan, John Morris, John Archer, John Barnewall, and Dominic Kennedy. AGOP IV. 200, pp. 101, 103.

Four priests who had finished their studies at Lisbon were assigned to Ireland, also on 23 Nov 1720: John Fitzgerald, Thomas Maddin, Thomas MacCarthy, and Michael Hervan. AGOP IV. 200, p. 104.

<sup>264</sup> AGOP IV. 200, p. 103.

<sup>265</sup> AGOP III. 56, doc. 19.

it refers neither to the election of a provincial nor to the urgent need for more missionaries in Munster. These were matters which could be better arranged with the new Master General than at the Chapter itself. The postulations do, however, contain one fresh item concerning the nuns of Dublin and Galway.

Postulationes Provinciae Hiberniae ad Reverendissimum Magistrum Generalem et Venerabile Diffinitorium.

Hiberniae Provincia postulat imprimis ut omnes ordinationes in praecedentibus Capitulis factae, et privilegia benigne concessa in favorem provinciae Hiberniae, in praesenti Capitulo Generali confirmentur <sup>266</sup>.

2. Postulat ut Collegia ultramarina, Lovaniense, Ullissiponense, et Romanum sub solius Provincialis Hiberniae jurisdictione (salva semper suprema Reverendissimi auctoritate) juxta primaeum praedictorum Collegiorum fundationem, sint et permaneant.

3. Ut ordinatio facta in ultimo Capitulo Generali Bononiae celebrato anno 1706 circa alternationem quoad Provinciales Hiberniae, et superiores conventuum, et collegiorum nostrorum Lovanii, Romae, et Ullissipone, extendatur quoque ad Regentes, Lectores, aliosque officiales et studentes in praefatis Conventibus.

4. Ut conventus Monialium nostrarum, quae in civitatibus Dublinensi et Galviensi degunt, eligere sibi valeant Priorissas juxta nostras Sacras Constitutiones et leges. Sint incorporati et uniti Ordini nostro, ac Provinciali Hiberniae pro tempore subjecti.

Demum humillime supplicat Reverendissimo Patri Magistro Generali, ut eos ad gradus Magisterii, Praesentaturae, ac Praedicatorum Generalis promovere dignetur quos in actibus Capituli Provincialis huiusmodi gradibus magis dignos esse Provincia judicavit.

fr. Antoninus MacGuire, Provincialis Hiberniae.

fr. Patricius Plonket, Diffinitor Hiberniae.

fr. Dominicus Daly, Elector Hiberniae.

The chapter opened on 31 May, Fr. Augustine Pipia was elected General <sup>267</sup>, and the Irish postulations were accepted without demur. In the notes left by the secretary, the word 'placet' is written after

<sup>266</sup> Perhaps the right to elect a provincial is indirectly intended here.

<sup>267</sup> By 39 votes in a total of 72. AGOP IV, 200, pro provincia Hungarico-Austriaca, pp. 74-75. Hence the story heard by Edmund Burke to the effect that Pipia would not have emerged from the Chapter as Master General but for the three Irish votes, has some basis in fact. In festo Pentecostes electus fuit Magister Ordinis fr. Augustinus Pipia... quod, ut dicitur, non fieret sine trium nostrorum Vocalium suffragiis. Journal, 122.

each of the Irish requests, while the published acts of the General Chapter reproduce the text of the original petition almost verbatim <sup>268</sup>.

The attentive reader will have noticed that Fr. Maguire referred, at the foot of the postulations, to those put forward for degrees by the Provincial Chapter. The reference can only be to the chapter of 1720, the acts of which (at least in the surviving copy) do not mention any such postulations. Probably these names were set forth in the letter of the chapter to the next Master General (but omitted in Edmund Burke's private copy) and it is to this capitular letter the postulation presented by Fr. Maguire refers <sup>269</sup>. During or shortly after the General Chapter the three Irish representatives gave Fr. Pipia a signed list of all those proposed for promotion by the province. No objection appears to have been raised against any of them, and on 5 July 1721 the patents conferring the various degrees (already granted on 26 June) were given to Fr. Maguire in Rome. Since most of those promoted at this time, and particularly those made Preachers General, appear to have been then working in Ireland, the full list of their names may be of interest <sup>270</sup>.

Thomas Morley	S.T.M. by title of teaching.
John Donnelly	S.T.M. by title of teaching.
Stephen [Mac] Egan	S.T.M. by title of preaching.
James MacCormick	S.T.P. by title of teaching.
James Dillon	S.T.P. by title of teaching.
Patrick O'Hart	S.T.P. by title of teaching.
Patrick Gormley	S.T.P. by title of preaching.
Patrick O'Diamond	S.T.P. by title of preaching.
Colman O'Shaughnessy	S.T.P. by title of preaching.
Dominic Mulfin	P.G. for Sligo.
Peter Archer	P.G. for Kilkenny.
Thomas Ferral	P.G. for Longford.
Charles Cassidy	P.G. for Gola.
Dominic Gusman or Gilde	P.G. for Ballindoon.
Patrick Brannan	P.G. for Roscommon.
Peter MacCarthy	P.G. for Cork.
John O'Brien	P.G. for Glanworth.
Dominic Ruan	P.G. for Strade.
William Kenny	P.G. for Galway.
Oliver Davorin	P.G. for Limerick.
John Moran	P.G. for Portumna.

<sup>268</sup> *Acta Capitulorum Generalium*, (ed. Reichert), MOPH XIII, 414.

<sup>269</sup> Edmund Burke, *Journal*, 125. See above p. 88.

<sup>270</sup> IV, 200, pp. 106-107.

## THE ELECTIVE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1721

Since Fr. Maguire received these patents at Rome on 5 July it is unlikely that he returned to Ireland in time for the provincial chapter scheduled for the end of that month. Indeed, it is clear from the acts of that chapter (signed on the 1st of August 1721) that the definitors were unaware of all that Fr. Maguire and his associates had already done for the province. Stating that the previous chapter of 1720 had failed to postulate any native of Munster, they put forward the names of Peter MacCarthy and Antoninus Kent (the priors of Cork and Cashel) for the Preacher Generalship, though the first of these had already been so promoted at the provincial's request <sup>271</sup>.

That is a minor detail when set beside the real achievement of the chapter — the election of Fr. Stephen MacEgan as provincial of Ireland. His accession to office marked the end of a difficult and troubled era in the history of the Irish province. Henceforth chapters could be regularly held, while provincials elected in Ireland could control the three distant colleges for the benefit of the province they had been founded to serve.

Fr. Anthony Maguire did not long survive the event. We find him in November 1722 drawing up the case of the college at Louvain against the English Dominicans in regard to the *spolia* of Fr. Patrick Grimes, recently deceased at London <sup>272</sup>. Fr. Maguire himself died at Dublin on 4 July 1724 <sup>273</sup>. Fr. Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva, who has figured as much as anyone else in this story, followed him to the grave in 1728. By a strange turn of fate his place in the Casanatensian library was taken by Edmund Burke who lived on to 1739, filling his Journal with disgruntled but highly interesting comments on the subsequent history of the Irish province.

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<sup>271</sup> The official copy of the chapter *acta* (1721) is in AGOP XIII, 157. There are other copies in TA.

<sup>272</sup> SCAR, Miscellanea (Shelf-number, 22), doc. 37.

<sup>273</sup> Thomas Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 530.

## CHAPTER TWO

# The Final Decades of Persecution 1721 - 1745

A lack of good domestic government distracted the Dominicans during the first twenty years of the century<sup>1</sup>. From 1721, this difficulty vanished and resident provincials in unbroken succession took matters firmly in hand. If the three foreign colleges, thanks to the wishes of those conducting them, fell once more under the Master General's jurisdiction, at least they became more efficient and sent a steady stream of missionaries to Ireland. The nuns acquired new monasteries at Drogheda and Waterford, while Sister Julia Brown prepared a "refuge" for them at Brussels should they ever need it. The first clash with another religious order occurred at Limerick in the 1730s, when the local Franciscans and Dominicans wished to turn the Augustinians out of the city as "newcomers". And now also, as the friars became more numerous, the old difficulties between regular and secular surfaced once again. On most points — questing, burial fees, the celebration of two Masses on the one day — the underlying financial motive is clear. Yet there were also theological and political differences between the so-called Gallican party and the friars whom they dismissed as "the Pope's Dragoons".

This second period could be described as one of consolidation and growth despite occasional interference and even persecution by the civil authorities. Chapters were regularly held, novices (less regularly) received, convents and even chapels were built; but all this took place in an atmosphere of secrecy and instability since the friars never knew when they might be arrested as the outlaws they legally were. This came to an end in the latter half of 1744 when the government, after a last and savage

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<sup>1</sup> The more numerous Franciscans had the immense advantage of holding elective chapters at Dublin from 1703.



bout of persecution, came to the conclusion that the friars were "not only inoffensive men but objects of compassion"<sup>2</sup>. Hence, in discussing the six provincials who ruled the province from 1721 to 1745, one is hampered by the poverty of the sources. The provincials wrote very seldom, while those who received their letters had every encouragement to destroy them. Even the Roman archives contain only a total of two letters from all six, and one of the two would not have been preserved at all had it not been joined to the acts of a provincial chapter. Fortunately the registers of the Masters General (AGOP IV) are for this period unusually rich in information about Ireland: better still, they have never in this respect been used at all. With their aid one can reconstruct the sequence of events, filling out the narrative with other documents of Roman or Irish provenance.

#### STEPHEN MACEGAN, 1721-1726

The first provincial to be elected in Ireland in the eighteenth century was Stephen MacEgan of Dublin who was born about 1681, received the Dominican habit at Holy Cross, Louvain, and made his first appearance in the records of the province on 28 January 1701 as a "choir novice" in that community<sup>3</sup>. On 18 July 1707, his superiors presented him to the internuncio at Brussels for missionary faculties and a subsidy towards his passage back to Ireland<sup>4</sup>. In the autumn of that year he returned to Dublin where he was destined to remain until his election as provincial in 1721. Conditions at Dublin were very difficult for priests, and more difficult still for friars, but Father MacEgan set about the restoration of the Dominican convent in the city. For a while he acted as curate in the united parishes of SS. James and Catherine<sup>5</sup>. His name appears as prior of St. Saviour's, Dublin, on a document of 7 August 1713, and it is clear that the "convent" was a reality by the following year<sup>6</sup>. Later, about 1716, he succeeded in opening a small chapel in

<sup>2</sup> Wilmot, writing in 1759 in the name of the Duke of Devonshire. W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times, 1660-1760*, Waterford 1914, 422.

<sup>3</sup> TA (= Irish provincial archives, Tallaght), *Liber Provinciae*, f. 29<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> APF (= Archivio de Propaganda Fide), SC Irlanda 6, f. 268-271. MacEgan and his companion, James Lynham, were given only part of the subsidy: they had to beg the rest.

<sup>5</sup> T. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, Cologne 1762, 197.

<sup>6</sup> The document of 1713 is in APF, CP 34B, f. 185. As regards the date of foundation of the convent, one may note a dispute of 1728 about a maid who had then been working in the convent for 14 years. AGOP IV. 214, p. 16.

Bridge Street to replace the earlier Dominican church (Cook Street) which had passed to the diocesan clergy of St. Audeon's parish after the exile of 1698. With the help of frequent extensions and repairs, MacEgan's chapel served the Dominicans of Dublin until their removal to Denmark Street in 1780<sup>7</sup>.

After 1717 he played an important part in settling some of the Galway nuns at Dublin. When the provincial Anthony Maguire was transported in August 1718, he chose Stephen MacEgan to be vicar provincial in his absence. MacEgan was also definitor for Leinster at the provincial chapter of 1720, and in the following year was promoted master of sacred theology (S.T.M.) by title of preaching<sup>8</sup>. So much for his *ratio vitae*: on the more personal level we have the testimony of Thomas Burke that he was the finest preacher in Ireland, and the comment of a priest who described him in 1747 as "dry, meek, and charitable tempered"<sup>9</sup>.

The provincial chapter which opened at Dublin on 27 July 1721 brought the province back to normal. It was the first elective chapter since 1694. The new provincial, thanks to the general chapter of 1721, would henceforth enjoy full jurisdiction over the colleges of the province at Louvain, Lisbon, and Rome. No longer would the master general directly govern the colleges or appoint provincials on his own initiative. So, at least, the province thought at the time.

The four definitors (each of whom we are soon to meet again) were James Cormick prior of Dublin, Dominic Brullaughan prior of Coleraine, John O'Brien prior of Youghal, and Colman O'Shaghnessy prior of Tombeola<sup>10</sup>. In the election of the provincial only candidates from Leinster were considered, but Stephen MacEgan drew a unanimous vote, twenty-nine in a total of thirty, which meant that the only vote he did not get was his own. Two Irishmen at Rome, John Brown and Gerald Weldon, were appointed to represent the province at the next general chapter.

The legislation of the chapter does not require detailed analysis, since it largely repeated the rules already laid down by the provincial chapter

<sup>7</sup> H. Fenning, *St. Saviour's Church Dublin: Centenary 1861-1961*, Dublin 1961, 66.

<sup>8</sup> For these and other details see above, pp. 75-76, 83, 85, 88. MacEgan was already preacher general before becoming a master, but I find no trace of that earlier promotion in AGOP IV.

<sup>9</sup> SCAR, Codex I, Vol. 1, doc. 139. For Burke's comment see *Hibernia Dominicana*, 501.

<sup>10</sup> The original acts are in AGOP XIII. 68095.

of 1720<sup>11</sup>. Preachers, who had already been warned in 1720 to expound the Gospel and Christian doctrine on Sundays and feastdays, were now told to exert themselves as well in promoting the devotion of the Rosary<sup>12</sup>. Special arrangements were made about the goods left by deceased brethren on the continent. The General was to be asked to permit the college at Louvain to recover the goods of those who died in Spain, France, and Germany, and to let the college at Rome acquire the effects of those who died in Italy<sup>13</sup>. Presumably the chapter thought that Lisbon could fend for itself.

The chapter of 1720 having dealt in detail with the reception and training of novices, there was no need to cover the same ground again. One notices, however, in the acts of 1721, a somewhat stronger determination to put an end to abuses in the matter. After naming local examiners of postulants, the chapter warns them to be moderate and circumspect, "since it is perfectly obvious to us that some have gone to excess in the reception of novices". Another part of the same ordination decreed that if the Constitutions of the order were not observed at the reception of a candidate, the novice concerned would be held not to have been received at all<sup>14</sup>.

The definitors wrote separately to the master general Augustine Pipia to congratulate him on his recent election and to thank him for the many benefits he had already showered on the Irish province<sup>15</sup>. This was a reference to the province's newly recovered rights granted two months previously by the general chapter at Rome. The definitory also asked Father Pipia to help the new provincial by forcing Irish friars, then comfortably ensconced on the continent, to come back to the mission. Their request did not fall on deaf ears. On 11 October 1721, when sending his confirmation of the provincial election to Patrick Diamond prior of Louvain, Pipia asked the latter to compel any Irishmen (already assigned to Ireland) who might have settled in the neighbourhood of Louvain to go back to the mission at once. The acts of the chapter were likewise confirmed on 15 October<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Discussed above on pp. 84-87. The unanimous vote is noted in AGOP IV. 201, p. 109.

<sup>12</sup> *Ordinatio* 2.

<sup>13</sup> *Ordinatio* 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ordinatio* 5.

<sup>15</sup> Dublin, 31 July 1721. Original in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>16</sup> The confirmation of the election and the acts is noted without comment in AGOP IV. 201, p. 109. The full text of Pipia's letter, equally devoid of comment, has been preserved by Edmund Burke, *Dissertatiuncula*, par. LX. AGOP XIII. 68095.

## THE NUNS OF DROGHEDA, 1722-1725

The most outstanding event of Father MacEgan's provincialate was the founding of a monastery for Dominican nuns at Drogheda. Although the idea was partly his own, the new venture caused him more trouble than he had a right to expect.

At the beginning of the century there was but one monastery of the order in Ireland, that of Galway. In 1717 some of the sisters moved to Dublin to found a second monastery there. Among the group were two close relatives of Oliver Plunkett († 1681) the martyred archbishop of Armagh, namely Catherine and Mary Plunkett, daughters of Thomas Plunkett a citizen of Drogheda. Both had been professed at Galway on 1 November 1709, Catherine taking the name of Sr. Mary of the Assumption, and Mary that of Sr. Mary of St. Joseph. The latter died at Dublin on 24 June 1719<sup>17</sup>. Thomas Burke, who knew Catherine personally (for she lived on to 1757), claims that she never was a member of the Dublin monastery but went at once (in 1717) from Dublin to Brussels where she lived for some years with the English Dominican nuns<sup>18</sup>.

Sister Catherine Plunkett, according to the annals of her own convent in Drogheda, was recalled from Brussels in 1721 by the provincial with a view to making the new foundation<sup>19</sup>. In the same year, on 27 August to be precise, the master general refused permission to an English nun at Brussels, Margaret Joseph Compton, who wished to go to Ireland to live in a new monastery which she hoped would soon be erected there<sup>20</sup>. The inference is that Sister Margaret had become friendly with Catherine Plunkett and wished to accompany her to Drogheda. After later requests from the archbishop of Armagh and from Sister Catherine herself, the English nun got the permission she wanted on 29 May 1723, but it was withdrawn on 14 August following when Father Pipia learned that the English community at Brussels needed her and that she was only six years professed<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> For these details I am obliged to Fr. Luke Taheney O.P. of Galway.

<sup>18</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 353-354, 361. See also above, pp. 75-76.

<sup>19</sup> Cited by P. Moran, *Memoir of Oliver Plunkett*, Dublin 1895, 444.

<sup>20</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 116-117. Sister Compton was professed at Brussels on 1 July 1717 at the age of 22. For this and other details see Catholic Record Society, Vol. XXV (London 1925) 192, 212, 228, 233-235.

On 8 May 1728, in reply to a query from Sr. Catherine Plunkett, the master general said that the provincial had not asked to recover jurisdiction over the mo-

The master general formally "restored" the monastery of Drogheda by a letter dated 28 March 1722 of which the full text has long been published<sup>22</sup>. The letter subjected the monastery to the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial, named Sister Catherine Plunkett as first prioress, and granted the monastery the right to elect its own superiors, a right already conceded to Galway and Dublin by the general chapter of 1721. The letter presumed the existence of a Dominican monastery at Drogheda in former times, though there is no certain evidence of such an earlier foundation. The most one can adduce is that two Irish nuns, natives of Newhaggard, who fled from Ireland about 1690 and made their way to Paris, may have belonged to a community in or near Drogheda: they certainly had no connection with Galway<sup>23</sup>. Besides, the nuns of Drogheda (unlike their sisters in Waterford at a later date) never asked for sanatory letters on the grounds that the alleged earlier foundation had not in fact existed.

The prime movers behind the enterprise were Catherine's mother Rose Plunkett, Hugh MacMahon archbishop of Armagh, and Father Stephen MacEgan. The nuns long preserved a portrait of the Primate and a grandfather clock bearing both his name and the date 1722<sup>24</sup>. Some difference of opinion unfortunately arose between the provincial, the foundress Rose Plunkett, and her daughter Sister Catherine, for the master general warned Father MacEgan in a letter of 4 December 1723 that he ought rather to help them than to cause them trouble<sup>25</sup>. One short week later Father Pipia took more drastic action still without waiting to hear what MacEgan had to say in his defence. According to the General's information, the provincial had misbehaved in the monastery

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nastery, and that Sr. Mary Compton of Brussels could not be permitted to go to Drogheda. AGOP IV, 214, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 360-361. The letter is registered in AGOP IV, 201, p. 111. The term *sorores* used in the letter encouraged a doubt at the beginning of this century as to whether the nuns of Drogheda were of the Second Order or the Third. In this respect one may note that the General's registers of the period use the term *sorores* with regard to the nuns of Bom Successo (Lisbon) and the English nuns of Brussels, both of which communities were certainly of the Second Order.

<sup>23</sup> H. Fenning, *Dominican Nuns of Meath: 1671-1713*, in *Riocht na Midhe*, Vol. III no. 3 (1965) 201-203.

<sup>24</sup> A. Coleman, *Historical Memoirs of the City of Armagh* by James Stuart, Dublin 1900, 277. The Primate also gave them the head of Bl. Oliver Plunkett, which the sisters reverently preserved until the present century. The portrait, if I am not mistaken, is that reproduced by D. Carolan Rushe, *History of Monaghan for Two Hundred Years: 1660-1860*, Dundalk 1921, opposite p. 48.

<sup>25</sup> AGOP IV, 201, p. 118.



in the presence of the archbishop of Armagh in such a way as to cause the Plunketts to consider abandoning the whole project. He therefore withdrew the monastery entirely from the provincial's jurisdiction on 11 December 1723 and decided to appoint a vicar to govern the monastery of Drogheda in his, the General's, name<sup>26</sup>. The new vicar, Thomas Morley S.T.M., was formally appointed on 29 January 1724<sup>27</sup>.

The provincial explained himself at once, saying that Rose Plunkett was to blame: she had "put the girls out of the convent" — a reference apparently to girls who were being educated there — and had cut the seal from the official letters of foundation. Father Pipia accepted the explanation and wrote to tell Stephen MacEgan that Rose Plunkett's unstable temperament was the cause of the whole trouble; but he did not, for all that, restore the monastery to the provincial's jurisdiction<sup>28</sup>. Thomas Morley was told to go to Ireland from the Low Countries if he thought his presence in Drogheda would help the struggling foundation: the feeling in Rome was that the monastery could scarcely survive, since word had come that a Protestant was threatening to have Rose Plunkett exiled from Ireland if she did not abandon her plans for a nunnery<sup>29</sup>.

In a later letter of 17 October 1724, Stephen MacEgan alleged that the sisters of Drogheda treated both him and the province with contempt<sup>30</sup>. At the time he wrote, the nuns were left very much to their own devices for Thomas Morley, the General's vicar, died at Bruges on 28 September 1724 and the prior of Carlingford (whom Morley had deputed to act in his name) followed him to the grave on 6 October. However, instead of giving jurisdiction over the nuns back to the provincial, Pipia thought it better to name another vicar in the person of Patrick Diamond S.T.M. on 11 November 1724<sup>31</sup>. Peace was soon resto-

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<sup>26</sup> 11 Dec. 1723. Pipia to MacEgan. AGOP IV. 201, p. 118. The General's information appears to have come from Sr. Catherine Plunkett and Thomas Morley, a native of the Drogheda area. It is quite likely that Patrick Plunkett of the Minerva played a part in this affair.

<sup>27</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 119. The name Morley also occurs as Marley in this case.

<sup>28</sup> 8 Apr. 1724. Pipia to MacEgan. AGOP IV. 201, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> 15 Apr. 1724. Pipia to Th. Morley. Ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> Dublin, 17 Oct. 1724. MacEgan to Pipia. AGOP XIII. 68095. The full text of this important letter is supplied below, pp. 106-108.

<sup>31</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 126. Patr. Diamond was earlier a missionary on Martinique (1711) and prior of Drogheda (1720). Later he became prior of Louvain (1721-1724) but had already returned to Ireland before his appointment as vicar. He died at Drogheda in 1729. Hyacinth Watson succeeded him as vicar on 27 Aug. 1729. AGOP IV. 214, p. 22.

red and the foundation of the monastery went ahead without further acrimony. At any event, the only later reference to Drogheda in the registers during MacEgan's term of office occurs under the date 20 January 1725 when the master general told the prioress of Galway to restore Catherine Plunkett's dowry, taking care to add the two years' interest which Sister Catherine had not received<sup>32</sup>.

#### NOVICES AND STUDENTS, 1721-1724

When the regular clergy returned to Ireland after 1698, their desire to make good their losses led to a certain amount of indiscriminate recruitment: they took in too many without much regard for quality. The Dominicans of Esker (Athenry) gave the habit to no less than twenty-four postulants between 1711 and 1720<sup>33</sup>, and Esker was only one of perhaps ten Dominican "pories" in which novices were then being received. The effects of this policy began to be felt during Stephen MacEgan's provincialate.

Anthony Sall, rector of the Irish Dominicans at Lisbon, wrote to the General in the autumn of 1721 complaining of the "multitude" of religious who flocked to the college and exhausted its meagre resources: he was told to admit those bearing proper letters of obedience and to punish the rest as fugitives and vagabonds<sup>34</sup>. Similar complaints must have reached Father Pipia from provincials on the continent, for he penned a stiff letter to Father MacEgan on 20 March 1723, warning him to send to Europe only good-living and properly trained subjects, adequately instructed in the rites and ceremonies of the order, so that the flood of protests might cease<sup>35</sup>.

Adm. R.P.M. Provincialis Salutem,

Rationabiliter vere quarundam Provinciarum superiores conqueruntur subinde ex nostris clericis Hibernis recenter professis ad suas venire Provincias, qui nec de vestitu religioso provisi, nec in Ordinis ceremoniis et rubricis sunt instructi, quibus proinde conventus huiusmodi clericis ex charitate fra-

<sup>32</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 127.

<sup>33</sup> Calculated from H. Fenning, *The Athenry House Chronicle, 1666-1779*, in *Collectanea Hibernica*, No. 11 (1968) 43-45.

<sup>34</sup> 20 Dec. 1721. Pipia to Sall. AGOP IV. 201, p. 110.

<sup>35</sup> Registered in AGOP IV. 201, p. 115. The full text is supplied above from the Journal or common-place book of Edmund Burke († 1739), now AGOP XIII. 69159, p. 127.

terna recipientes premature gravantur difficillimis hisce temporibus aliunde sufficienter gravati. Quod ne deinceps fiat, mandamus Paternitati V. A. R. quatenus suae Provinciae talibus provideat subiectis, de quibus spes bene fundata habeatur, quod suo tempore sacro Ordini proficui, et ad missiones apostolicas fructuose exercendas fient idonei. Quos ita habiles, non nisi bene instructos, et necessario Ordinis vestitu, caeterisque pro statu religioso requisitis, decenter provisos, et quidem in numero minime excedente, ad alias opulentiores provincias, in quibus viget regularis observantia, expediat.

Ne autem contingat recenter eiusmodi professos vagationi diuturnae exponi quando benevolos receptores tam facile invenire non possent, ideo priusquam ad aliam mittantur Provinciam, superior illius per litteras requiratur pro certo aliquo conventu designando, ad quem directe se conferre possent. Hoc nostrum mandatum cum rationi sit omnimode consonum volumus ut exacte observetur, ne quoad hoc in futurum amplius inquietemur, ut ultimate tandem etiam obligemur ad quasdam restrictiones ordinandas minus forsitan gratas, in contrario tamen eventu pernecessarias. Valeat, nostri et sociorum ad aram memor.

The attitude of the province, expressed in its reply of 2 September 1723, was that the provincial chapters of 1720 and 1721 had brought an end to all abuses in the matter<sup>36</sup>. Edmund Burke offered the characteristic comment that the problem existed only for as long as the masters general insisted on naming the Irish provincials themselves<sup>37</sup>. But, whatever the cause, there was no doubt about the reality: Father Pipia spoke from hard experience. Even if priests on the mission took care to admit only boys of promise whose parents could pay for their journey to the continent after the novitiate year, it was still true that these novices received only the most rudimentary training; they could not risk travelling with a religious habit in their luggage; and the priors in Ireland were in no position to arrange for specific convents to receive them on arrival. Arrangements of that sort must have been left to the priors at Lisbon and Louvain, or the procurator at Madrid, if they were not simply left to chance. On 8 October 1723, Father Pipia forcefully rebuked Patrick Diamond, prior of Louvain, telling him never again to dare to send religious abroad "in rags and tatters" as he had recently sent a cleric named James Deane to Genoa. The Irish province, he felt, ought not to accept more novices than its own (foreign) convents could shelter: and the prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, should first ask the con-

<sup>36</sup> Letter of the intermediate chapter at Dublin to Pipia. Original in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>37</sup> Edm. Burke, *Journal*, p. 127.

tinental provincials whom they wished to receive, before sending the novices out to convents which did not expect them<sup>38</sup>.

Another problem was the question of personal documents, baptismal certificates and the like, which young Irish friars abroad absolutely needed for admission to convents or the reception of sacred orders. A group of four young Irishmen (William Clemens, John Ryan, Francis Casey, and Patrick Brullaughan) at the convent of Bosco Marengo in Lombardy, were held back from ordination about this time for lack of proof of their baptism or profession. Pipia had to write on their behalf to Father MacEgan on 27 May 1724, and he took the occasion to insist that the provincial should warn the entire province to see that novices leaving Ireland brought the necessary certificates with them<sup>39</sup>. It subsequently transpired that the four in Lombardy had in fact left home with the documents in their possession, but lost them along the way: deliberately, perhaps, considering the risk they ran in carrying them.

In 1723 and 1724, the archbishop of Cashel and other Irish prelates complained of the indiscriminate reception of novices to Propaganda Fide. The congregation reached no practical decision at the time, but it is interesting to note that the Dominican superiors came to grips with many aspects of the problem before Propaganda even began to study it<sup>40</sup>. Pipia never had to carry out his threat of limiting the number of novices his subjects might receive in Ireland.

The master general also took an interest in their studies. After the usual theological course, Irish clerics were to do a further two years of moral theology, "controversies", and scripture. Then, provided they were already priests, they might return to the mission with a formal obedience either from the Irish provincial or the General<sup>41</sup>. Stephen MacEgan found that foreign superiors would not support the General with regard to the two extra years of study, but sent their Irish students back home (without advising either the provincial or the General) as soon as they finished their basic *quinquennium*, with the result that some of the Dominicans in Ireland were not properly prepared for their work.

<sup>38</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 117.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, p. 122.

<sup>40</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland: a study of the Novitiate Question in the eighteenth century*, Louvain 1972.

<sup>41</sup> 24 July 1723. Pipia to MacEgan. AGOP IV. 201, p. 116. It is clear from the list supplied in the appendix to this book that most of those sent to Ireland by the General were resident in Italy. The Irish provincial seems to have assigned many from Louvain and Lisbon on his own initiative.



The provincial asked Father Pipia to command the provincials of Italy and Spain to keep these students until they had completed the supplementary studies he recommended<sup>42</sup>. With that, the General veered away from his own proposal, explaining that the continental provincials could not afford to provide additional teachers for these Irishmen. He recommended Father MacEgan to appoint a special lector who might instruct young priests on their return to the mission<sup>43</sup>.

#### THE INTERMEDIATE CHAPTER OF 1723

Stephen MacEgan appears to have remained in Ireland throughout his first four years in office, save for a visit to Louvain in June 1723<sup>44</sup>. Nor did he stay there long, for he was back in Dublin on 22 August (when he attested his approval of Sylvester Lloyd's *Catechism*)<sup>45</sup> in time for the intermediate chapter held in the following month. The seventeen representatives of the province who attended it in Dublin unanimously approved of MacEgan's conduct as provincial. The chapter also wrote a letter (2 September 1723) to the master general about some problems which had come up for discussion<sup>46</sup>.

The first concerned Edward Fitzgerald, procurator of the province at Madrid. More than fourteen priests attested that although Fitzgerald duly received the royal viatick intended to pay for their return to Ireland, he kept the money himself and let them make their way home as best they could. The procurator had also received large sums of which he gave the province no account. The chapter wished to recall Fitzgerald to Ireland for an interview and asked Father Pipia to permit the provincial to name another procurator should Fitzgerald fail to give a good account of his stewardship<sup>47</sup>. Another problem concerned Lisbon

<sup>42</sup> Dublin, 17 Oct. 1724. MacEgan to Pipia. AGOP XIII. 68095. The full text is supplied below, pp. 106-108.

<sup>43</sup> 10 Feb. 1725. Pipia to MacEgan. AGOP IV. 201, p. 127.

<sup>44</sup> Mentioned under a later date (1 Apr. 1724) in AGOP IV. 201, p. 120.

<sup>45</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 8, ff. 154-155. The fact is also noted by C. Giblin from Nunziatura di Fiandra in Coll. Hib. No. 5 (1962) 108-109. MacEgan here styles himself a doctor of theology, perhaps intending his mastership. The other Dominican signatories were Ter. Kennedy, James Cormick, and John Byrne.

<sup>46</sup> The official result of the scrutiny, signed by Peter MacDermott, Anthony Sall, and Edm. Burke, is in AGOP XIII. 68095. There are no acts of the chapter, but the letter (2 Sept. 1723) written in its name by the secretary, John Donnelly, occurs *ibidem*.

<sup>47</sup> According to Edm. Burke (Journal, p. 135), the chapter actually named a new procurator at Madrid in the person of Dom. O'Dogherty of Roscommon: hardly had



where the Irish rectors were accustomed to sanction the reception of girls, mostly Portuguese girls, into the monastery without reference to the Irish provincial. The chapter feared that the Irish nuns of Bom Successo would be entirely outnumbered by the Portuguese and that the monastery itself would be lost to the province.

Pipia duly replied to the chapter on 27 November 1723, but only to disagree with its proposals<sup>48</sup>. Since Fitzgerald had been vindicated from earlier charges, the master general saw no reason to replace him by another<sup>49</sup>. Time would soon tell how wrong Pipia was on this point. Nor would the General interfere with Bom Successo since the King of Portugal wished Portuguese sisters to be admitted there. The best Father MacEgan could do, in the General's estimation, was to encourage Portuguese nobles to use their influence towards maintaining the Irish character of the monastery without offending the King.

Evidently the newly recovered jurisdiction over the foreign foundations, with which the province in 1721 had been so pleased, was beginning to crumble away. Pipia supported it in principle, but not always in practice. The Roman convent of SS. Sixtus and Clement, being so close to the curia, had far more to do with the General than with the Irish provincial. Pipia held visitation there in January 1722, sent them a commissary in July, and appointed a vicar in November pending the election of a prior<sup>50</sup>. He confirmed prioral elections, assigned subjects to and from the convent, and appointed the lectors who taught in it. He even gave some form of authority over the community to John Brown (an Irish Dominican), confessor of James III, at whose request he framed ordinations for the betterment of the college<sup>51</sup>.

The college of Holy Cross, Louvain, though near enough to Ireland, did not for all that escape the General's attentions. The provincial and he seem to have ruled it amicably between them. Stephen MacEgan visited the college in June 1723, made ordinations which Father Pipia subsequently approved, appointed and removed some members of the staff, and left John MacGhee on the spot to act as vicar-provincial<sup>52</sup>.

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he taken possession than Pipia, on the advice of Pat. Plunkett, deposed him and restored Edw. Fitzgerald to the procuratorship.

<sup>48</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 118.

<sup>49</sup> On Fitzgerald's earlier troubles see above, pp. 77-79.

<sup>50</sup> AGOP IV. 201, pp. 111, 113, 114.

<sup>51</sup> On 28 Apr. 1725. AGOP IV. 201, p. 127. One of the ordinations specified that the community was never to number more than sixteen.

<sup>52</sup> Dublin, 17 Oct. 1724. MacEgan to Pipia. The full text is supplied below.

MacGhee carried out a visitation of Holy Cross at the provincial's request in April 1724, but made matters more complicated than they need have been by appointing Michael Heaffy vicar *in capite*. The visitor thus exceeded his authority, while Heaffy produced his patents of appointment only on the day after the community had elected a vicar *in capite* of its own<sup>53</sup>. The result was a stream of letters to the General who naturally took matters into his own hands. By November 1724, Pipia had begun to assign people to and from Louvain as well as to appoint professors there. One feels, nonetheless, that he would willingly have left Louvain to the provincial had the community not appealed to Rome so often.

The same was true of Lisbon, with the added complication that the King was opposed to the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial over the priests and nuns of that city. After the visit to Lisbon of an earlier provincial, Hugh Callanan, a royal decree of 6 October 1713 declared that only Portuguese nationals might hold canonical visitation in the monastery of Bom Successo or the college of Holy Rosary<sup>54</sup>. That explains why the Portuguese provincial, Antonio a Sacramento, was made visitor and vicar-general of both communities on 18 April 1722<sup>55</sup>. Stephen MacEgan did indeed receive the General's licence to visit Bom Successo in July 1723, but there is no reason to believe that he ever laid eyes on that monastery<sup>56</sup>. On 8 January 1724, Father Pipia named five lectors in one day for the college in Lisbon, having been given to understand by the rector that the King would admit no foreign religious authority save that of Rome<sup>57</sup>. So far, then, as Lisbon was concerned, the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial was non-existent, despite the assurances of the general chapter.

The following letter from Stephen MacEgan to Father Pipia — the only surviving letter of his provincialate — refers to his work for Louvain, as well as to other problems upon which we have already touched: the question of supplementary studies, the nuns of Drogheda, and the four

<sup>53</sup> Note that the problem about the vicar *in capite* arose only in July, whereas the visitation took place in April 1724. AGOP IV. 201, pp. 120, 122-123. Edm. Burke blamed Pat. Plunkett of Rome for the confusion at Louvain. Journal, p. 137.

<sup>54</sup> The date of the decree is given in a letter (Lisbon, 9 July 1730) from Humbert Burke to Pipia's successor Ripoll. AGOP XIII. 68098. On Callanan's visitation, see above, pp. 66-67.

<sup>55</sup> AGOP IV. 209, f. 50<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 116.

<sup>57</sup> Ibidem, p. 119.

clerics of Bosco in need of testimonial letters <sup>58</sup>. MacEgan mentioned that there were 175 Dominican priests on the mission, a solid advance over the figure "more than ninety" which we have for 1707, and a number which would not vary greatly until after 1750 <sup>59</sup>.

Rme Pater,

Adversa valetudine, summoque labore iam sex integros menses in visitatione nostrae provinciae consumpsi, sed hoc mihi solatium est, quod (vestros Rme Pater) subditos in hoc regno magis assiduos ac indefessos in animarum captura invenerim, quam cum ultimo statum provinciae vobis repraesentaverim. Nec mirum, quia ex certitudine paternae protectionis vestrae (quam semper illis benevole indulsit) ad sua munera peragenda quamplurimum animantur, praecipue cum Deus filium SSmi Patriarchae nostri tam miraculose in diebus nostris, tanquam alterum Machabeum ad redimendum populum suum, exaltaverit in sedem sanctam suam <sup>60</sup>.

Centum septuaginta quinque patres existunt de facto in missione, ex quibus pauci rebelles qui praepropere a studiis reversi, sed hos divina spirante gratia ad pascuas salutare brevi reducam. Licet nostris studentibus in exteris regnis mandaverit tua Rma Ptas ne ad proprios lares redirent, etiam si quinquennium compleverint, quin prius theologiae morali et controversiis duobus vacarent annis, a provincialibus tamen finito cursu ordinario dimittuntur, quamvis inculti et ad missiones inepti. Quare humillime deprecor quatenus V.R.P. ad provinciales Hispaniae et Italiae scribere dignaretur, ut ex solita erga nostros clementia et charitate duos adhuc indulgeant annos, ut magis idonei pro missionibus reddantur.

In reditu meo a visitatione provinciae litterae vestrae circa novam fundationem Pontanensem ad meas accessere manus. Mandatis vestris per illas mihi significatis alacriter submitto, iisque inhaerebo, quamvis illae filiae per exemptiones concessas ducant in quantum possunt me et provinciam in contemptum. Commissarius pro regimine illarum constitutus hactenus ad exequendas vestras ordinationes non apparuit. Constituit nihilominus vicarium, qui erat actualis prior Carlingfordensis. Hoc aegre tuli, sed contraire nolui nesciens facultates quibus munitus fuerit praefatus Commissarius [Thomas Morley] qui obiit Brugis in Flandria die 28 Septembris praeteriti, et dictus prior discessit e vita die sexta currentis mensis. Ita illarum infortunium est, neminem habere de facto qui vel deserviat aut illas regat. Interim, Rme Pater, humilis mea

<sup>58</sup> Dublin, 17 Oct. 1724. AGOP XIII. 68095. Unfortunately we do not have the earlier report MacEgan mentions here. The General's reply (10 Feb. 1725) is registered in AGOP IV. 201, p. 127.

<sup>59</sup> The figure for 1707 is given above on p. 50.

<sup>60</sup> A reference to Vincenzo Maria Orsini, O.P., archbishop of Benevento, who was elected Pope on 29 May 1724 and took the name Benedict XIII.

petitio est, ut non amoveantur Priores a suis conventibus me inconsulto, ne conventus damnum patiantur ob defectum pastorum, ut casu predicto.

Quod meam visitationem et ordinationes pro integro conventus Lovaniensis bono factas approbaverit, Rmae Pti Vrae infinitas ago gratias. Similia statuta pro isto collegio pernecessaria fuere, ut ex eorum libris (quibus subsignare non potui, nisi iniuste agendo) constat. Totam rem iamdiu ad vos transmississem nisi praeventus desiderio celandi fratrum fragilitates, ne R.P.Vrae tranquillitatem perturbarent, et quod fuerim ductus spe corrigendi errata, propria autoritate. Hinc est quod Regentem Secundarium P. Hiacinthum Watson tot officiis onustum, et tanquam malum administratorem a quibusdam amovuerim, principaliter ab officio procuratoris et magistri novitiorum ob incompatibilitatem culinae et fori cum schola et novitiatu. Futuris malis occurrere desiderans, institui Rdum ac Eximium P. M. [Iohannem] Maghee, a pietate, doctrina, et regulari observantia commendabilem, meum Vicarium Provinciale ut diligentius inspiceret rebus dicti conventus. Ex ipsius epistola intelligo ipsum accusatum esse apud tuam Rmam Ptem a rege secundario, a magistro studentium, et ab artium lectore una cum studentibus iuvenibus qui modo triumphant, quod contra me et meum Vicarium apud vos praevaluerint. Non miror, Rme Pater, illos similia attentare, quandoquidem praefatus lector Laurentius Richardson, nondum sacerdos, scripserit non ita pridem ad quandam religiosum hic commorantem, quaerens ab ipso quem vellet habere priorem Lovaniensem; quod esset in ipsius potestate facere priorem ad libitum in dicto conventu, et cetera. Licet ingenio polleat, superbia et ambitione plenus, et si haec in viridi et cetera. Puerilia sunt sed periculosissima. Pro-regente Watson nunquam praeficerem illum communitati ob rationes antecedenter allatas, et certus sum quod ex libertatis et continui excursus amore, iunxerint manus contra meum Vicarium et alios graves patres.

Quare Rmae Pti Vrae enixe supplico, quatenus patrocinium vestrum meo Vicario pro regimine istius conventus dare, et petitionibus eius annuere dignemini. Oppressi enim sunt, ex mala villicatione, aere alieno, et in sacris celebrandis quamplurimum debitores facti, ita ut hoc triennio elapso quinque millibus sacris pro conventu Lovaniensi satisfecerim, semper tamen intentus exteris illorum obligationibus satisfacere, modo suis rixis et discordia non obstant. Praeferres ergo (Rme Pater) testimonium nostrum falsis puerorum et adolescentium insinuationibus, quandoquidem antiquior illorum in Ordine nostro duodecimum annum nondum est adeptus. Haec omnia sapientiae et iudicio vestro eminenti represento, nihil aliud anhelans quam bonum commune.

#### Postulationes ad Praedicatorum

Pro laborum munere et ut alii aemulatione spirituali excitentur ad operandum, postulo in favorem R.P.F. Iacobi Lynham, prioris Naasensis, quatenus pro ... laboribus in missione a 14 annis ad Praedicatoris Generalis munus pro conventu Trimmensi, loco R.P. Dominici Plunkett nuper defuncti, pro-

moveri queat. Item supplico, quatenus R.P.F. Christopherus Dillon prior Dublinensis, qui a 7 annis assidue et fructuose laboravit in vinea, ad Praedicationem pro conventu Dublinensi promoveatur. Item rogo pro R.P.F. Iacobo Collins, qui continua praedicationis munera a 17 annis subiit, licet annis incarcerationatus et ob religionem Patria expulsus, ut loco defuncti R.P.F. Oliveri Davoran subrogari possit pro conventu Traliensi. Annuas, Rme later, supplicanti, qui Rmae Ptis Vrae ad aram nunquam immemor existet.

Rmae Ptis Vrae humillimus ac devotissimus famulus et filius

fr. Stephanus MacEgan O.P.,

Dublinii die 17 Octobris 1724

per Hiberniam provincialis.

Rme Pater,

Circa clericos professos Hibernos, in tua epistola de die 27 Maii 1724 datas, specificatos, inclusa testimonialia ad vos mitto, sperans inde eis ad sacros ordines promoveri posse. De f. Patritio Brullaghan nil certum de professione vel baptismo possum dicere, cum responsum a priore conventus cuius est filius nondum receperim. Quoad f. Ioannem Ryan, ille recepit habitum die 23 Martii 1721 in conventu S. Salvatoris Dublinii et solemnem enisit professionem die 24 Martii 1722. Respectu aetatis et baptismi nil scio, nisi quod piis et Catholicis parentibus sit ortus, et quod fuerit propectae aetatis cum emitteret professionem. Ex quo litteras R. P. Vrae receperim nullum ex parentibus dicti fratris Ryan videre poteram, unde difficile est mihi testimonia aetatis et baptismi ipsi procurare. Interea diligenter inquiram ut quamprimum haberi possint. Quilibet illorum provisus erat in exitu e regno solitis professionis et baptismi testimoniis: nihilominus ut mandatis vestris obtemperem de novo mandavi omnibus ut litteras authenticas testimoniales ante discessum procurarent. Me et totam provinciam protectioni vestrae commendo.

Rmae Ptis Vrae obedientissimus servus,

fr. Stephanus MacEgan, prior provincialis in Hibernia.

#### GENERAL CHAPTER AT BOLOGNA, 1725

Two events occurred in Italy during Father MacEgan's last year in office which were to have important effects on both the province and himself. In May 1724, a Dominican named Vincenzo Orsini was elected Pope and took the name Benedict XIII: he was to establish close links with his Irish confrères at SS. Sixtus and Clement and appoint three members of the province bishops in Ireland. Being no less lavish with his favours to the Order as a whole, Benedict named Augustine Pipia a cardinal on 20 December 1724, so that it became necessary to convoke an elective general chapter to meet at Bologna on the feast of Pentecost 1725.



Stephen MacEgan foresaw that by going to the chapter he would cease to be provincial (on 27 July 1725) before his return. Since he found that prospect inconvenient, he called a meeting of the provincial definitors whom he asked to apply to the master general for an extension of his term. The definitors refused, fearing that any such interference with the succession of chapters and provincials might compromise their hard-won right of election<sup>61</sup>. After naming James Cormick vicar-provincial for the duration of his absence, MacEgan left Ireland at the close of winter and was already at Brussels, visiting the English Dominican nuns, on 28 March 1725. Sister Mary Rose Howard recommended him on that date to James III, the exiled Stuart at Rome<sup>62</sup>.

"I beg leave to present this deserving and apostolical missionary to your Majesty, who as provincial of Ireland is summoned to the general chapter. His merits make his character known, having been so great an ornament in the Irish mission, and no less known by his present post, both in zeal and example, the best character I now know to entitle him to your Majesty's favour. And give me leave to present him as my particular friend".

Neither John Brown nor Gerald Weldon, though designated definitors general by the provincial chapter of 1721 and resident in Italy, appeared at the chapter which opened at Bologna on 19 May. Instead, Patrick Plunkett was named *auctoritate apostolica* by the master general on 28 April 1725 to go there as definitor of the Irish province<sup>63</sup>. Plunkett, a theologian of the Casanatensian library in Rome, had already represented Ireland at the preceding chapters of 1706 and 1721. No copy survives of the petitions which MacEgan and Plunkett put before the general chapter, but at least one knows what they were granted. The five ordinations for Ireland may be briefly summarized as follows<sup>64</sup>.

1. The jurisdiction of the Irish provincial over the foreign colleges at Rome, Louvain, and Lisbon, as also over the nuns of Lisbon, is confirmed.

<sup>61</sup> Edm. Burke, *Dissertatiuncula*, par. LXI.

<sup>62</sup> Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 81, no. 36. Extracts from this collection are quoted with the gracious permission of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Father MacEgan also met the internuncio at Brussels, Spinelli, about 6 Apr. 1725 and brought a book to Rome for the secretary of state on Spinelli's behalf. *Collectanea Hibernica* No. 5 (1962) 113.

<sup>63</sup> AGOP IV. 201, p. 127. Th. Burke mentioned but could not explain the absence of Brown and Weldon. *Hibernia Dominicana*, 164.

<sup>64</sup> The full text is in MOPH XIV (1904) 83-84 and in *Hibernia Dominicana*, 164-165.

2. Permission is granted for the erection of a monastery of nuns in Waterford under the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial.
3. To avoid uncertainty about the time at which the provincial chapter should be held, all future chapters are to begin on the Saturday preceding the Sunday called *Deus qui errantibus* [i. e. third after Easter].
4. In order that the present provincial may attend to the business of the province and assist at the elective chapter which will choose his successor, he is confirmed in office until the day designated for the holding of that chapter.
5. No member of the province is to be affiliated to convents, national or not, outside Ireland itself. All members of the province living abroad are to return to Ireland immediately the provincial orders them to do so.

The province was pleased with this strengthening of the provincial's authority over Irishmen and Irish houses abroad. The provision regarding a monastery in Waterford was left in abeyance for about twelve years. There was, however, no precedent for the holding of provincial chapters so soon after Easter, and Edmund Burke for one was quite displeased by the third ordination <sup>65</sup>. It was felt in Ireland that the date of the chapter could never be uncertain, since each chapter set the date of the next. Chapters had always been held in July, August, or September when "horses were strong" and the vocals could more easily travel from remote parts of the country <sup>66</sup>. But it was the fourth ordination which gave the greatest offence in Ireland.

In virtue of this capitular ruling, Stephen MacEgan obtained at Bologna what the Irish definitory refused him at Dublin before his departure, namely his continuation in office. While yet unaware of this, they wrote on 19 June 1725 to the new master general, Thomas Ripoll, asking that Father MacEgan, who was "soon to go out of office", might visit their colleges and procurators abroad. They praised MacEgan highly for his conduct as provincial and emphasized his great success as a preacher over the previous eighteen years <sup>67</sup>. Shortly afterwards, MacEgan wrote to them himself, explaining that the terms of all the provincials present at Bologna had been extended, and enclosing an affidavit made by the secretary of the chapter to meet his own particular case <sup>68</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> Edm. Burke, *Journal*, p. 147. MacEgan seems to have asked the definitory to support this petition too before he left Dublin, but had been refused.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>67</sup> Dublin, 19 June 1725. Original in AGOP XIII. 68095. The signatories were Jas. Cormick and Colman O'Shaghnessy (definitors); Mich. Shee and Jn. Donnelly (pro-definitors).

<sup>68</sup> The text has been preserved by Edm. Burke, *Journal*, p. 128.

The definitors at Dublin were not in the least pleased. Edmund Burke, to whom they turned for advice, regarded the whole procedure as illegal and disastrous. In his view the *dies designatus* mentioned in the Bologna text was still 27 July 1725, on which day the province might validly elect a new provincial. For the sake of peace, however, he advised MacEgan's vicar, James Cormick, and the vicar *de iure*, James Dillon prior of Dublin, to act in perfect harmony until clearer instructions came from Rome<sup>69</sup>. Whatever about the correctness of Edmund Burke's legal arguments, it does seem that the provincial inspired this ordination himself, probably wishing to attend to the business of the province on the continent while still actually provincial. He would not have achieved much in Rome or Louvain merely as a special visitor.

After the chapter closed, Stephen MacEgan went on to Rome where he lodged with his subjects at SS. Sixtus and Clement from June to October 1725. At his recommendation, Father Thomas Ripoll gave honorary degrees to many members of the province and appointed some professors at Rome and Louvain<sup>70</sup>. MacEgan also carried out a visitation at St. Sixtus<sup>71</sup>. On 23 August he permitted James Barnewall, a sick student, to betake himself to Marseilles<sup>72</sup>. On the 29th, in the company of one of his predecessors, Hugh Callanan, he presided at the lectoral examination of Michael MacDonogh<sup>73</sup>. On 13 and 15 September he witnessed the installation of three new members of the teaching staff, one of whom (John Brett) would later be bishop of Elphin, and another (Michael MacDonogh) bishop of Kilmore<sup>74</sup>.

#### BISHOP AND VICAR-GENERAL, 1725-1726

While still at Rome, on 20 September 1725 to be precise, Stephen MacEgan was named bishop of Clonmacnois, a diocese equally remarkable for its long history and its poverty. Another son of the province,

<sup>69</sup> Edm. Burke, *Journal*, p. 128.

<sup>70</sup> The promotions were made between 12 and 21 July: the appointments between 31 Aug. and 7 Sept. AGOP IV. 201, pp. 128-129.

<sup>71</sup> The visitation is mentioned in the house-council book under date 31 July 1725. SCAR, No. 37, f. 67<sup>r</sup>. The ordinations were confirmed by Ripoll on 12 October. AGOP IV. 201, p. 130.

<sup>72</sup> *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* (1701-1743), p. 44. This volume is now AGOP XI. 3600.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 74<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 4<sup>r</sup>.

Dominic Daly of Atherry, became bishop of Achonry on the same day. Both were nominated by James III, either at the suggestion of the Dominican Pope or as a gesture to gratify him<sup>75</sup>. Edmund Burke simply says that MacEgan asked for the bishopric himself. The provincial was secretly consecrated at the Quirinal by Benedict XIII on 29 September and left Rome a few weeks later. Father Ripoll, with papal permission, named him vicar-general of the Irish province on 22 September, prolonging his term until the second Sunday after the octave of Easter<sup>76</sup>.

Bishop MacEgan appears to have made his way home through Milan, Frankfurt, and Brussels<sup>77</sup>, but that did not prevent him from dealing with the procurator at Madrid, Edward Fitzgerald, whom Pipia had defended from the intermediate chapter of 1723. Before leaving Rome, bishop MacEgan told the master general that he intended to depose Fitzgerald and name another in his place. He was as good as his word, for Fitzgerald was removed before 16 March 1726 and the new procurator, Denis O'Daly, makes his appearance soon after in the records<sup>78</sup>. It was left to O'Daly to discover just how badly Fitzgerald had mismanaged the funds of the province: his first two years in office were spent in paying his predecessor's heavy debts<sup>79</sup>.

On his journey home, bishop MacEgan lodged for a few days with the English Dominican nuns of Brussels whom he had already visited on his way to Bologna. In the interval between his two visits, the prioress had gone "suddenly and extravagantly mad": her chief obsession was that the nuns were witches<sup>80</sup>.

"So she continued till March when bishop Egan came from Rome, and to gratify the devotion of our community who desired to see and kiss the mitre

<sup>75</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 501-504, 530. There are two associated briefs, upholding the royal nomination (not expressly mentioned in the first) in Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 86, nos. 50, 51.

<sup>76</sup> AGOP IV, 201, p. 129.

<sup>77</sup> In a letter written in Ireland (13 Aug. 1726) to the King's secretary, bishop MacEgan mentioned his earlier letters written at Milan and Frankfurt. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 96, no. 52.

<sup>78</sup> 5 Jan. and 16 Mar. 1726. Ripoll to Pedro Perez de la Cuesta at Madrid. AGOP IV, 209D, ff. 33-34, 49<sup>v</sup>. Considering that MacEgan did not reach Brussels until March, it is possible that he paid a visit to Spain, though not to Lisbon.

<sup>79</sup> There are several letters on the subject in AGOP IV, 209D, ff. 95, 97, 121, 130, 148-149. Edw. Fitzgerald went to Naples on ceasing to be procurator.

<sup>80</sup> Contemporary, authenticated accounts of this episode have been published in Publications of the Catholic Record Society, Vol. XXV (London 1925) 204-205. For another copy see SCAR, Codex II, Vol. 3, ff. 655-662.

our holy Pope had consecrated his Lordship with, he gave it to us inside the grate with one of the Pope's slippers, which we all kissed with veneration and devotion. It was then carried to the infirmary where our prioress, Mother Agnes Atmore, had been so long and we told her what it was. She sensibly desired to have the mitre placed on her head, and desired all there to pray with her. So kneeling down she begged of God that all the malice and witchcraft be brought to light. Then she rose and was much pleased and was quiet ... She certainly from that time became much more herself and afterwards followed the community exercises for above a year, perfectly in her senses".

After this consoling experience, the bishop continued on his leisurely way to Ireland, almost as though he planned to arrive in April, as he did, just a week or two before the elective provincial chapter at which he was to preside. He had still another election to attend, the election of a prioress in the monastery at Dublin which he had arranged to postpone until his return. For that detail too we are indebted to the acid pen of Edmund Burke<sup>81</sup>.

"Proposuit se collegium Ulissiponense visitaturum, sed non attentavit. Episcopatum sollicitavit et obtinuit. Sic rebus suae provinciae consuluit. Et electionem priorissae Dublinensis suspendit ad suum usque reditum et tunc instituit priorissam Iulianam Brown, sibi dilectam".

Burke had other complaints to make, but it is impossible to say now (since he is the sole authority for most of them) whether he was right or wrong. He claimed that the province had no certain knowledge of MacEgan's continuation in office until the bishop arrived in person in April 1726; that some priests accepted MacEgan's vicar, James Cormick, while others obeyed only the prior of Dublin; that Cormick packed the elective chapter of 1726 by naming young priests, fresh from their studies, as priors of purely titular convents; that MacEgan exceeded his authority by actually voting in the election of his successor; and that, since the new provincial was elected by a majority of one, his election would have been null (because of MacEgan's vote) had not the master general chosen to overlook the error<sup>82</sup>.

After the election on 30 April 1726, bishop Stephen MacEgan was free to devote himself to his small and impoverished diocese. Thanks

<sup>81</sup> Journal, p. 147.

<sup>82</sup> The views expressed here will be found in the *Dissertationcula*, par. LXI and in the Journal, p. 140. Also in a letter (Dublin, 27 May 1726) from Edm. Burke to Ripoll, of which the full text is given below on pp. 118-120.



to the good graces of James III he was translated in 1729 (while retaining the administration of Clonmacnois) to the larger and wealthy diocese of Meath which he ruled until his death on 30 May 1756. Both as bishop of Clonmacnois and bishop of Meath he resided habitually at Dublin, first (for a few years) in the convent, and later in a small house which he rented from the Dominican nuns of the capital.

COLMAN O'SHAGHNUSSEY, 1726-1730

The new provincial belonged to a distinguished family, the O'Shaghnessys of Gort, lineal descendants of the high king Dathi († 427). He who knows them not, wrote Thomas Burke, knows nothing of Ireland<sup>1</sup>. Colman, who took his name from the family's patron saint, was born in 1675 to Charles O'Shaghnessy of Ardmilevan Castle and his wife Eleanor Lynch of Rafiladown, county Galway. Although both Colman and his father were second sons, the death of close relatives left Colman chief of his name in 1744.

Colman O'Shaghnessy was only a boy of sixteen when the family was ruined by the Williamite war. After the surrender of Limerick in 1691 he went to the continent as a soldier and became a lieutenant in Dorington's regiment in the service of the king of France<sup>2</sup>. Then, about 1700, he forsook the military life to become a friar at Holy Cross, Louvain, where he appears to have been received as a son of the convent of Athenry. We find him there on 28 January 1701 as a "choir novice" in company with Stephen MacEgan<sup>3</sup>. On 17 April 1706 he was named lector of philosophy but did not persevere long as a professor<sup>4</sup>. When James III attempted a landing in Scotland in March 1708, Colman left his books to take part in the expedition. According to Edmund Burke, O'Shaghnessy "zealously followed His Majesty to Scotland at the first attempt, leaving his office of teacher in Louvain, to serve in what he was capable of the just cause"<sup>5</sup>. However, James failed even to land

<sup>1</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 505. On the family background see W. Carrigan, *The History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory*, Vol. I, Dublin 1905, 149-152. Also J. Fahey, *The History and Antiquities of Kilmacduagh*, Dublin 1893, 329-336.

<sup>2</sup> Rome, 5 Mar. 1735. Edm. Burke to Col. John O'Brien. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 178, no. 63.

<sup>3</sup> TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 29<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> AGOP IV. 166, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> Burke to O'Brien, as in note 2. On the political background see C. Petrie, *The Jacobite Movement: the first phase, 1688-1716*, London 1948, 124-128.

in Scotland and the "rising" did not last long enough to keep Colman away from the classroom for more than two months. On 6 October 1708, the master general ordered him to go as a missionary to Ireland<sup>6</sup>.

Father O'Shaghnessy took ship for home in early April 1709 with the help of a subsidy from the internuncio at Brussels<sup>7</sup>. Later in the year he wrote back from Ireland to Belgium giving the internuncio details on the proposed oath of abjuration which all Catholic priests would be obliged to take on 25 March 1710; in another letter (Loughrea, 14 February 1709/10) he spoke again of the oath and its rejection by the clergy of Connacht<sup>8</sup>.

Dominican records, poor as they are, enable one to plot his successive priorships. Shortly after his return (5 July 1711) he was elected prior of Athenry and confirmed in office by the provincial, Hugh Callanan, who happened to be present at the time<sup>9</sup>. O'Shaghnessy would therefore have been at Athenry, or rather at Esker where the brethren settled after the exile, from July 1711 to July 1714. In 1713, when the friars of Connacht were pressing for Callanan's deposition, Colman O'Shaghnessy was one of those they recommended for the provincialate<sup>10</sup>. He next appears as prior of Limerick on 10 January 1718/19 when he witnessed the reception of a laybrother to the habit<sup>11</sup>. At the provincial chapter of 1721, Colman took part as prior of Tombeola and defensor for Connacht: the chapter named him examiner of postulants and confessors for that province. In the meanwhile, he was made bachelor of theology by title of preaching (26 June 1721) and subsequently master of theology (12 July 1725), in both cases at the request of the provincial<sup>12</sup>. Edmund Burke states more than once that Father O'Shaghnessy was also prior of Galway, but the statement cannot now be confirmed.

<sup>6</sup> AGOP IV. 166, p. 136. He was still at Louvain on 8 Nov. 1708 when Ambr. MacDermott, bishop of Elphin, recommended him to Cloche as master of studies at Louvain. AFP 40 (1970) 266.

<sup>7</sup> C. Giblin, *Nunziatura di Fiandra*, in *Coll. Hib. No. 4* (1961) 118.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, 8, 11-12. The text of the latter has been published by P. Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, Vol. 2, Dublin 1878, 398-399.

<sup>9</sup> See above, p. 59.

<sup>10</sup> See above, pp. 70-71.

<sup>11</sup> TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 62v. The brother was Dom. O'Heyne. Since both the witnesses (Jas. Davocke and Jn. Moran) belonged to Athenry, it is possible that the ceremony took place in Esker and not in Limerick.

<sup>12</sup> See above, p. 91. For the promotion to the mastership see AGOP IV. 201, p. 128.

## THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1726

These notes of dates, places, and promotions acquire deeper meaning when one recalls that the members of the province had no civil rights, but were liable on discovery to imprisonment or transportation. In practice, however, they had little to fear unless misfortune or misbehaviour brought them to the notice of the authorities. The extent to which the law was applied depended on the part of the country in which they worked and on the character of the local magistrates. The friars were usually ignored so long as they confined their ministrations to the Catholic population, but whenever they converted a Protestant (particularly a wealthy one) or solemnized a marriage involving a Protestant partner, they risked exciting the full force of the law. Apart from purely local outbreaks of persecution, there were also occasions when the clergy throughout the country had to be particularly on their guard. Such a general alert occurred in the summer of 1723 when Stephen MacEgan was provincial, because seventeen friars and several trunks of religious books were found on two ships in the port of Dublin. Parliament hurriedly put through a bill "for strengthening the Protestant interest", a bill which (had it ever been approved in England) would have inflicted the penalty for high treason on any unregistered priests found in the country and executed those guilty of giving them shelter<sup>13</sup>. On 22 October 1723, Propaganda's agent at London wrote that all the chapels in Ireland were closed "and God alone knows when the present tempest will permit them to be opened again"<sup>14</sup>.

Things had changed very much for the better by the time of Father O'Shaghnessy's election as provincial on 30 April 1726. Sylvester Lloyd, a Franciscan resident in Dublin, described the new political climate in a letter to the Stuart court in Rome<sup>15</sup>.

"As to the affairs of religion, the Catholics are treated of late with extraordinary mildness. The judges on their circuits everywhere recommended moderation to the magistrates (as they did in the most earnest manner), good

<sup>13</sup> London, 14 Feb. 1724. Giacomo Quirici to Propaganda. APF, SC Anglia 2, ff. 412-413. W. Lecky, *History of Ireland in the 18th century*, Vol. I, London 1913, 164. For the parts of the bill dealing with the clergy, see W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford 1914, 455-460.

<sup>14</sup> London, 22 Oct. 1723. Quirici to Pietro Caraffa, secretary of Propaganda. APF, SC Irlanda 8, ff. 157-158.

<sup>15</sup> Dublin, 1 June 1726. Lloyd to John Hay. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 94, no. 54.

behaviour and fidelity to the Catholics. Your Grace may easily judge from what spring we have this change. The oath of allegiance is no longer talked of".

The provincial chapter of 1726 chose to confirm rather than to repeat the earlier legislation of 1721, citing the Constitutions in favour of few rather than many laws. Of the seven new ordinations, five concerned matters of finance, most of them being aimed against the lodging of money with laypeople. The brethren were to hand over their surplus funds to the provincial who would invest them for the benefit of the convents to which they belonged. This was yet another step towards the reorganization of the province, a reorganization evidenced also in the other ordinations. The chapter named James Cormick procurator of the province and ordered each convent to pay him five shillings and five pence a year to cover postal expenses. Each priest was likewise told to buy and use an *Ordo* or directory for the divine office composed by Father Scanlan.

When confirming the election and the acts on 10 August, Thomas Ripoll asked for only one change in the text, an addition obliging Irish students to travel to the continent decently dressed, carrying proof of their baptism, confirmation, and profession<sup>16</sup>. He also obliged the province to provide a lector of scripture and controversies who might instruct ordained students on their return to the mission. This was a point on which his predecessor Father Pipia had written to Stephen MacEgan in 1724. Ripoll also promoted to the *praesentatura* or baccalaureate the five candidates postulated by the provincial chapter. And there the master general's interest in the chapter would have ceased had he not, just a few days later, received a long letter from Edmund Burke. Writing from Dublin on 27 May 1726, Burke complained that the chapter had been packed by James Cormick; that unworthy candidates were being postulated for degrees; and that the nuns of Dublin and Galway needed stricter control<sup>17</sup>. Nor were these the only observations he had to make. Considering his high standing on the mission, the long experience to which he himself referred, and the fact that Father Ripoll acted on his proposals, one may offer the full text of his letter here, even though it may have been inspired by pique. Most of his shafts were directed

<sup>16</sup> The acts of the chapter are in AGOP XIII. 68095. The full text of the letter of confirmation occurs in the Fottrell Papers. Public Record Office (Belfast), D. 1449/14. It is registered in AGOP IV. 201, p. 132.

<sup>17</sup> The original is in AGOP XIII. 68095.



against the new procurator, James Cormick, rather than against the provincial whom he felt would be as wax in Cormick's hands. The fact that James Cormick, a master of theology, had never taught nor preached, endeared him even less to Edmund Burke.\*

Reverendissimo Padre,

En 15 años que he trabajado en esta mission (despues de 8 años en España y 19 en Lovayna) no he molestado a su Corte con una sola carta, ni lo hiciera agora sino para liberar mi alma, informando (como hijo a su Padre) a V. Rma del presente estado desta pobre mission, declarando que no tengo otro motivo sino el dessear se pongan remedios a abusos; pues no pretendo favor ninguno, ni premio, sino la benedicion de V. Rma, ni desseo mal a nadie, sino, la emienda de las culpas.

No digo cosa de lo passado: la presente confusion vino de la continuacion del Señor Egan desde 27 de Julio passado, de la qual no huvimos certeza hasta que llegó en Abril, de suerte que el Vicario Provincial que dexó en partiendo el Señor Egan, fue reconocido por algunos, y otros pretendian que el mando tocava al Prior de Dublin en donde se devia celebrar el capítulo.

El Vicario que dexó el Señor Egan es el p. f. Jacobo Cormick, hombre de capacidad natural, mas no la empleó sino en pleitos. Ni predica, ni enseña, aunque pudiera hacer ambos. No obstante, es Maestro con patentes de V. R., uno de los veinte ya hechos. Como lo es Predicador General mi primo f. Thomas de Burgo, aunque jamas predicó aquí tanto como una simple exhortacion, y el p. f. Juan Moran y otros que no tienen meritos ni capacidad para predicar.

El dicho Vicario Cormick para tener la election a su disposicion instituyó Piores en varios conventos desolados a algunos sacerdotes moços que llegaron de los estudios. Tuvo juntas con ellos de noches en las tavernas, y el dia antes de la election envió un espresso por el Prior de Trim, temiendo que faltaria su voto; y assi sacó la election como quiso, aunque no habia excepcion contra la persona del electo, sino que es facil de natural, y que se apprehende que el dicho p. Cormick le dirixirá a su gusto, y por esso solamente algunos votaron contra el.

Aviendo assi salido con lo suio el p. Cormick, se hizo el mismo Procurador General de la provincia en Dublin, compañero del Provincial nuevo, definidor del capítulo general futuro, y aunque ay otros confesores de las monjas nombrados, las mas moças confiessan con el, como las da libertad, y gasta mucho de su tiempo hablando con ellas, aun en sus aposentos como me dicen la Madre Priora que es, y la que fué antes. Pues un ocioso de talentos los empleara en algo, quando ni lee, ni predica, ni enseña. Los que vienen de Lovayna me aseguran que quando fué lector de Artes, y Maestro de Estudios antes allá, passava muchos meses sin enseñar una lection, escribiendo y pleiteando extra Ordinem con un Doctor de aquella universidad, de suerte que



el Rmo Cloche le hechó de allá, y quando llegó a Yrlanda estuvo con su padre en la villa de Kilkenny por un año sin tanto decir Missa. Despues, como los que professaron fuera deste Reino eligen convento de profession aquí, llegó a Dublin, haciendose hixo deste convento, aunque se ha hecho ordenación de que los que professan afuera sean hixos del convento más vecino al lugar en donde nascieron. Pues consta que todos los tales querían elegir por su convento nativo a Dublin, o a otra villa grande, para su conveniencia, que pretenden una vez de pertenescer a un convento y otra vez a otro.

Si pareciere a V. R. convendria al bien comun y para prevenir fraudes:

1º De mandar al Provincial pro tempore de no hacer ningun Prior en algun convento en donde no ay a lo menos tres vocales; sino que enbie un Vicario in capite allá hasta que aya tres vocales.

2º Para prevenir floxedad y negligencia, que no se confirme algun Prior electo que no predica al pueblo a lo menos una vez en seis semanas, pues la predicacion es lo que aprovecha aquí.

3º Que los Graduados sin los meritos que piden nuestras leyes, se casen, y no tengan voz hasta hacer o tener merito, a lo menos del pulpito.

4º Que ningun seglar o religioso entre en las cassas de las monjas especialmente los dormitorios o huertas, sino derechamente a las capillas para decir Missas u oír Confessiones.

5º Que ninguna Monja salga de cassa, sino en tiempo de actual persecucion, o en los casos licitos.

6º Que ninguna se reciva al habito hasta que el fundo llegara a ser bastante para mantener y sustentar las que ay y entonces que se determine el numero que podrán las cassas sustentar. Pues en Galvia ay 44 monjas, el fundo no basta para la mitad dellas con que se ven obligadas de ir a cassas seglares de sus parientes o amigos, y estos se quexan que la Orden les engaño tomando su dinero y dexandoles el cargo.

7º Que los religiosos que professaron fuera deste Reino, en llegando sean hixos del convento mas vecino al lugar de su natividad, o al lugar en donde devian vivir sus padres. Y que la practica contraria hasta agora se declare nulla y invalida. Assi todos no se juntaren en una parte, dexando a otras partes sin ningun religioso.

Supongo que otros han informado a V. R. de lo mucho que nos attormentan aquí los Curas y Sacerdotes Seglares que vienen de Francia, y traen por mayor parte de su erudicion los principios de allá contra el Papa y religiosos: y assi no cansó a V. R. con cuenta dello, esperando que contribuiera con los Generales de otros Ordenes para taparles las bocas. De otra suerte succederá aquí como en Olanda. Fuera bueno si ninguno de los nuestros que estudia en Paris hallaría promocion en este Reyno.

Ya asseguré (y asseguro agora como espero morir bien) que no tengo intereses ninguno en lo que digo, sino el bien comun de la Orden y mission aquí. Si me engaño, es la falta del entendimento y no de la voluntad. Dios dé a

V. R. el acertar lo que mas conviene aunque contrario a mi dictamen, lo qual sommetto siempre como devo al de V. R. Todo se reduce a que el dicho p. Cormick con sus criaturas moças prevalezcan en floxedad y libertad, o nosotros los ancianos que hemos hasta agora adelantado la mission, y quisiéramos ver la observancia que el lugar y tiempo permite conservada como hasta agora con paz y travaxando. Dios inspire a V. R. los puntos que mas conducen a su honra y gloria de la Orden, y le dé un durable gobierno como desseo y ha menester en Dublin a 27 de Mayo 1726.

B.L.P. de V.R. su rendido hixo y servidor,

fr. Edmundo de Burgo.

P.S. Ay en la mission solos siete Maestros de merito para la escuela. Si V.R. gusta puede mandar que ellos examinen los otros, que estan hechos Maestros, y no tienen meritos, y cargarles en consciencia de declarar en nombre de V. R. los Maestros y Predicadores Generales que no merecieren los grados, tanquam non promotos, etc.

Burke's letter had immediate and complete success. Father Ripoll dictated four more additions to be made to the chapter acts, tightening up its legislation along the lines Edmund Burke suggested<sup>18</sup>. New restrictions were placed on the nuns and their confessors; new details were required in the case of those postulated for degrees. The General confirmed the ordination made at Dublin in 1721 whereby those professed abroad were forbidden to choose a convent of affiliation according to their fancy, but were to be reckoned sons of the convent nearest to their place of birth. The question of affiliation was to prove a very live issue between 1720 and 1740, especially at Dublin where friars from the country were wont to settle. Another of Father Ripoll's decrees declared that whenever a convent, through the negligence of superiors, lacked the three priest-members necessary to elect a prior, the provincial would forfeit his right to appoint one and would have to rest content with the nomination of a vicar until such time as there were three vocals in community.

Colman O'Shaghnessy later protested against the removal of his "power" to appoint priors in convents too small to elect their own. His argument was that if he could not appoint priors in such cases, the delicate balance of provincial elections would be upset: the "province" with most priors would outvote the others, ignoring the custom of elec-

<sup>18</sup> The official text of the four additions is registered under the date 17 Aug. 1726 in AGOP IV. 201, pp. 133-134. A draft of the ordinations was written (by Ripoll?) on the blank space at the end of Edm. Burke's letter in AGOP XIII. 68095. Burke mentions the additions in Journal, p. 140.

ting provincials from each of the four "provinces" in turn. Ripoll was not convinced. All were obliged, he felt, to respect the *alternativa*. If appointed superiors wanted to call themselves priors as a title of courtesy, the master general did not object: but they were not entitled to any privileges attached to that office<sup>19</sup>. In other words, they might not vote in provincial elections.

It was one thing to make laws, and another to enforce them. As late as November 1728 these supplementary ordinations had neither been published nor obeyed in Ireland. The priests of the province soon discovered on whose information they were based and did not hide their annoyance from Edmund Burke. Fearful of being delated to Rome in his turn, Burke prevailed on four bishops to sign a testimonial in his favour and sent the document to Father Ripoll to forestall all possible accusers. The General was displeased to learn of the fate of his ordinations. If the provincial would not accept them, he remarked, one could hardly expect much more from his subjects. Nonetheless, Father Ripoll was determined not to grant honorary degrees to members of the province until satisfied that his decisions had been obeyed<sup>20</sup>.

#### THE FOREIGN COLLEGES, 1726-1729

Thomas Ripoll, like his predecessor Pipia, endorsed the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial over the three foreign colleges. He even appointed a regent of studies at St. Sixtus on the recommendation of the provincial chapter<sup>21</sup>. If difficulties soon arose they were not caused by the master general but by Colman O'Shaghnessy's subjects at Louvain, Rome, and Lisbon, who wished to evade his authority.

In the very first year of the provincialate, on 20 December 1726, Benedict XIII subjected SS. Sixtus and Clement to the General's immediate jurisdiction at the request of the community. There is no record of any prior discussion in the house-council book, nor any trace of the papal decree in the community archives to which Father Ripoll sent it, but we know that one of the motives the friars alleged was their great distance

<sup>19</sup> 8 Feb. 1727. Ripoll to O'Shaghnessy. AGOP IV. 201, p. 136. None of the letters O'S. wrote to Ripoll are known to have been preserved.

<sup>20</sup> 4 Dec. 1728. Ripoll to Burke. AGOP IV. 214, p. 15. Burke gives the full text of the letter in *Journal*, pp. 140-141.

<sup>21</sup> John Byrne S.T.P. on 4 Nov. 1726. AGOP IV. 201, p. 135. On 28 Sept. Ripoll upheld the provincial's right to appoint lectors at Lisbon. On 5 Oct. he said he would abide by whatever the provincial or his vicar decided for Louvain. *Ibidem*, p. 134.

from the provincial. A second decree of 18 January 1727 totally removed the convent from the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial *pro tempore*<sup>22</sup>. 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<sup>23</sup>. But in changing their juridical status, he overruled the contrary decision of the general chapter of 1721 for which the Irish province had fought for twenty years<sup>24</sup>. When the prior of St. Sixtus, Patrick O'Dugan, went out of office in 1728, the Pope procured his re-appointment for a second term instead of allowing the friars to elect<sup>25</sup>. Patrick O'Dugan and Stephen Dowdall were both affiliated to the convent *auctoritate apostolica* despite the ruling of the provincial chapter (1721) and Thomas Ripoll's ordination (1726) whereby Irish Dominicans professed abroad should have been affiliated to the convents nearest their place of birth<sup>26</sup>. Benedict XIII's relations with St. Sixtus are but a small, local example of what the Order experienced on a larger scale from the warm but somewhat suffocating benevolence of the Popes.

The same urge for Roman control was felt, though not so strongly, at Louvain. John MacGhee, already vicar-provincial in Flanders under Stephen MacEgan, continued in that capacity under O'Shaghnessy but his attempts to regulate the affairs of Holy Cross were both resented and opposed by the community. When he suggested making a visitation in 1727, they objected almost to a man. MacGhee, they said, had been less than impartial in his previous dealings with the college: he also tended to exceed his authority, if indeed the new provincial had formally appointed him at all. A Belgian Dominican, Jerome T'seraerts, performed the visitation instead in July 1727 and his ordinations were duly approved<sup>27</sup>. Ripoll declined T'seraerts' proposal — made presumably at the community's request — to take the college under his immediate jurisdiction, but MacGhee was deposed from office and Colman O'Shaghnessy

<sup>22</sup> All this is briefly noted in AGOP IV. 201, pp. 135, 139.

<sup>23</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 384-388. The house-council book (SCAR, No. 37) has an excellent account of his benefactions under the date 21 Sept. 1727.

<sup>24</sup> See above, p. 90.

<sup>25</sup> 25 May 1729. Appointed by Ripoll at the express command of the Pope. AGOP IV. 214, p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> O'Dugan on 16 July 1729 and Dowdall on 9 Feb. 1730. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 21, 25.

<sup>27</sup> AGOP IV. 201, pp. 138-140.

warned to appoint another vicar who would not, as MacGhee had done, overstep the bounds of his authority. Failing that, the General would release the friars of Holy Cross from their obedience to the provincial<sup>28</sup>.

These developments at Rome and Louvain, coupled with the reservations of the *patres provinciae* about the college in Lisbon where an equal balance between the members of the four "provinces" was not being maintained and where the rector ignored the provincial's appointment of lectors, led Father O'Shaghnessy to leave Ireland in the late autumn of 1727<sup>29</sup>. By November he had safely reached Louvain. Soon afterwards, the community so completely changed their opinion of John MacGhee (the former vicar-provincial) as to elect him prior of Holy Cross. All we know of the provincial's work there is that he pressed for the removal of three friars as "disturbers of the peace" and closed the conventual novitiate<sup>30</sup>. Louvain for him was only a stepping-stone to Spain and Lisbon which he had set his heart on visiting.

Long before Pombal rose to power or Josephism acquired a name, Portugal was opposed to foreign jurisdiction in matters of religion. A royal decree issued on 5 July 1728 forbade any correspondence whatever with the court of Rome under pain of perpetual exile from the Portuguese dominions. An earlier decree of 6 October 1713, published after Hugh Callanan the Irish provincial had been to Lisbon, declared that only Portuguese nationals might canonically visitate the monastery of Bom Sucesso or the college of the Holy Rosary<sup>31</sup>. This was something Father O'Shaghnessy should have known even before the master general warned him not to go there: the certain humiliation awaiting him could only diminish his authority as provincial<sup>32</sup>.

Colman O'Shaghnessy also wished to visit Spain, but his excuses

<sup>28</sup> 16 Aug. 1727. Ripoll to O'Shaghnessy. Ibidem, p. 140.

<sup>29</sup> Ripoll knew by 13 Dec. 1727 that the provincial was at Louvain. AGOP IV. 201, p. 141. The views of the province with regard to Lisbon are mentioned under date 31 Oct. 1727, ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> 24 Jan. 1728. Ripoll to O'Shaghnessy. AGOP IV. 214, p. 2. The novitiate was reopened by the General on 18 Dec. 1728. Ibidem, p. 17.

The internuncio wrote (Brussels, 9 Apr. 1728) to Propaganda recommending the renewal of its subsidy to Holy Cross: he said they fully met their obligations but were extremely poor. Over the preceding 10 years 17 had taken the missionary oath: 8 of these were still in the convent, but 6 of the 8 were on the point of leaving for Ireland. APF, SOCG 661, ff. 105-106.

<sup>31</sup> Both decrees are mentioned in a letter (Lisbon, 9 July 1730) from Humbert Burke to Ripoll. AGOP XIII. 68098. There is a printed copy of the second (1728) in ASV, S.S. Portogallo 85, ff. 250-251.

<sup>32</sup> 13 Mar. 1728. Ripoll to O'Shaghnessy. AGOP IV. 214, p. 3.



for doing so were no less firmly dismissed by the General. He wanted to clear up the debts left at Madrid by the former procurator Fitzgerald: Ripoll insisted that that had been done already. He wanted to appoint a vicar-provincial in Spain who might save the General trouble by transacting the business of Irish priests and students there: Ripoll said that a vicar was quite unnecessary<sup>33</sup>. Nothing daunted, the provincial set off through France about April 1728 — we know he stopped at Rouen — while the Irish rector in Lisbon (hearing of his approach) wrote anxiously to Father Ripoll for advice. If he obeyed the provincial he would offend the king: if he obeyed the king he would offend the provincial. The master general told him to prevent a visitation, but left it to his own discretion to suggest how that might best be done<sup>34</sup>.

Father O'Shaghnessy reached Lisbon about May or June 1728. The story of his visit there is best told by Humbert Burke, the newly appointed rector of Holy Rosary college. Despite the royal decree forbidding correspondence with Rome, Burke later smuggled out a long letter (9 July 1730) to Thomas Ripoll describing exactly what happened. Reading between the lines, one can see that the Irish Dominicans of Lisbon were glad enough to have a royal decree to use as a shield between themselves and their provincial<sup>35</sup>.

Ahora P. Rmo dixe con la brevidad possible lo que passó por acá estes dos años. Apenas fui un mes Rector quando llegó aquí el P. Provincial de Irlanda para visitar el colegio y el convento de las monjas del Buensuceso. Lo recibimos con toda afabilidad y agrado, agazajándole conforme la posibilidad del pobre colegio, y alguna cosa más. En el primer dia de audiencia que hubo, yo hablé al Rey conforme el estilo dándole parte del arribo del dicho P. Provincial, y para saber qual fuesse su real agrado? Y me respondió su Magestad que quería se observase su real decreto de 6 de Octubre de 1713, en que prohibía a los de Irlanda, o a qualquier otro forastero visitar el colegio o el convento de las monjas. Y que quando hubiese necesidad de visita, se visitassen por algun padre de la provincia de Portugal, deputado por el Rmo General.

<sup>33</sup> 26 June 1728. Same to same. *Ibidem*, pp. 7-8. From the same letter we learn that the provincial had written to Ripoll about an Irish native of Rouen, William MacDermott, who had taken the habit in the Dominican convent there. Since many French convents were suspected of Jansenism, O'Shaghnessy wanted the novice transferred to another province.

<sup>34</sup> 10 July 1728. Ripoll to Humb. Burke. AGOP IV. 214, p. 11.

<sup>35</sup> Burke's appointment was dated 10 Apr. 1728. *Ibidem*, p. 5. His letter is in AGOP XIII. 68098. There is a briefer description of the provincial's visit to Lisbon in a letter (Lisbon, 13 July 1730) from Dom. French to Ripoll, bound into the same volume.

El Provincial sabiendo esta respuesta pretendió que no quería visitar, sino sólo ser reconocido por inmediato superior de ambas casas, para poder instituir lectores y mandar fuera del colegio a los que el quisiese, y assignar en él a los que le pareciese, y los que quería mandar fuera eran los más necesarios para el buen gobierno de él! Y también pretendía la facultad de proponer novicias para monjas. Entonces los successors y herederos de la fundadora del convento de las monjas, que son el Conde de Attalaya, grande deste regno, y su hermano el Deán de la Basilica Patriarchal, se le opposieron porque quieren que su fundación esté inmediatamente sujeta al Rmo General *pro tempore*, añadiendo con algunas amenazas que nunca permitirán que el convento del Buensuceso sea sujeto al Provincial de Irlanda, ni a otro sino a V. Rma y sus successors.

Después que el P. Provincial asistió por mas que seis meses, el Rey mandó al secretario de estado (el qual padrinaba mucho el P. Provincial) que me escribiese a mí y a la priora del Buensuceso en nombre de su Magestad que no admitiesemos al Provincial por visitador, ni reconociésemos su jurisdicción, y lo mesmo intimó al P. Provincial añadiendo que no hiciesse ni executasse cosa que pudiesse perturbar la paz y sosiego de ambas casas.

No obstante lo dicho, quedó por casi cinco meses después en el colegio, buscando empeños de España, Viena, y Flandres para que el Rey le admitiesse, pero nada le valió. Y así después de onze meses partió para Cádiz y Puerto de S. Maria en donde estava entonces la corte de España, y de allí para Irlanda.

Humbert Burke's letter is precise enough to let us know that Colman O'Shaghnessy spent eleven fruitless months at Lisbon, so he must have left the city for Cadiz about May 1729. He landed at Cork on 17 August following, in no very good humour with his subjects at Lisbon whom he accused of having caused his exile from Portugal<sup>36</sup>. The master general, a steady fount of consolation, said he had only himself to blame<sup>37</sup>. The provincial's long absence from Ireland also exposed him to one of Edmund Burke's more pointed shafts: "*sic integrum expendit vitae et officii biennium, provinciae arduis negotiis neglectis*"<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> The date of his return is given by Wm. Kenney, O.P., in a postscript to a letter (Galway, 27 Nov. 1729) from Ant. French, O.F.M. to Edm. Burke. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 182. O'Shaghnessy visited the exiled nuncio to Lisbon at San Lucar de Barreda on or shortly before 26 June 1729. On that date the nuncio wrote two letters to Rome, one on the provincial's wish to send Joseph Lynch from Lisbon to Dublin as chaplain to the nuns of Channel Row, and the other on the nuns of Bom Successo who resisted the provincial's authority. ASV, S.S. Portogallo 86, ff. 114-117.

<sup>37</sup> 4 Mar. 1730. Ripoll to O'Shaghnessy. AGOP IV. 214, p. 26.

<sup>38</sup> Journal, p. 141. The provincial chapter of 1730 asked Ripoll to remedy the situation in Lisbon where the Irish were in rebellion against the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial, appealing from it to the secular courts.

## REGULAR AND SECULAR, 1725-1730

The *ardua negotia* of the province, which Edmund Burke accused the provincial of neglecting, consisted largely in a group of controversies in which Edmund Burke happened to play an important part. The Dominicans were not the only friars involved, and Colman O'Shaghnessy was absent from Ireland while the dispute was at its height, but this history would be meaningless without some account, however short, of this chapter in the relations between regular and secular.

With the exile of the friars in 1698, the diocesan priests were left for a while with the mission to themselves<sup>39</sup>. Then the regulars began to drift back, becoming more numerous and less furtive in their activities as time went on. By 1720 the diocesan clergy began to realize that they had a large number of "competitors" in the field, competitors for the alms and affection of the faithful, who neither led a proper conventual life nor owed direct obedience to the bishops. Since many secular priests were trained in France, where few regulars (save the Capuchins) ever studied, their Gallican attitudes sometimes clashed with the Ultramontanism of the friars. The religious soon began to claim that some of their "adversaries" told the people that they were an unnecessary burden; that they came to Ireland to escape a strict conventual life abroad; that it did not suffice to assist on Sundays at Masses celebrated by friars, nor to confess to them at Easter; that the alms of the faithful were due to the parish clergy, not to the regulars; and that in preaching papal infallibility, the friars were merely acting as the Pope's dragoons.

One of the earliest bones of contention was at Galway where the diocesan clergy, after 1698, had used the cemeteries attached to the chapels of the regulars and did not feel inclined to discontinue the practice when the friars returned. In 1713, and again from 1720 to 1722, the friars held out for their privilege of exemption from the payment of the canonical portion or *quarta funeralia*<sup>40</sup>, but in all this the Franciscans took the lead while the Dominicans played a minor supporting role. The documents on the dispute, which was carried to Propaganda, do however

<sup>39</sup> The paragraph follows the summary given by Edm. Burke in his own account of the controversy: *Relatio moderni facti inter quosdam saeculares clerici et regulares in Hibernia ab anno 1725 ad 1728*. Journal, p. 32.

<sup>40</sup> The case was discussed at a general congregation of Propaganda on 16 Mar. 1723, no. 25. APF, Acta 93, ff. 164-167; SOCG 639, ff. 119-165. Also SC Irlanda 8, ff. 137-138. The printed *Facti* and *Summarium* are also in SCAR, No. 31, pp. 1-26.

throw some light on the Dominicans of Galway. They mention that Gregory French and two others returned to the city within four years of the general exile; that Nicholas Blake was prior there on 1 October 1713 and William Kenney on 27 January 1720; and that in the latter year there were more than seven in the community.

Even while Propaganda was preoccupied by the cemeteries of Galway, another dispute broke out in the neighbouring dioceses of Clonfert and Elphin over the right of the friars to binate, their right to say two Masses on the one day. As regards the "right" to binate, there were two contrasting opinions. In Propaganda's view, hardly a priest in Ireland might binate if the law were properly observed<sup>41</sup>. Joseph Power, O.D.C., the Roman agent of the regular clergy, said that the friars and priests of Ireland had been accustomed to say two Masses on feastdays from the time of the Reformation; it was still customary save in Clonfert and Elphin where it was practised by the diocesan clergy but forbidden to the friars<sup>42</sup>. Father Power asked that the regulars be permitted to binate in all dioceses; that secular and regular priests be equally considered Missionaries Apostolic; and that the bishops and religious superiors be urged to live at peace with each other. In 1721 and 1722 the internuncio at Brussels, Spinelli, threw some more light on the question. According to his information there were six convents of friars in the diocese of Clonfert alone, while the desire to binate was dictated, not by necessity, but by the anxiety of the priests (secular and regular) to make some extra money by celebrating a second Mass in the homes of the landed gentry. Spinelli admitted that the practice was widespread in country parts, but it was unknown in all save three cities: Dublin, Drogheda, and Galway<sup>43</sup>. Propaganda left the whole question to the internuncio's discretion, and in 1722 the friars of Elphin subscribed to a document expressing their esteem for the bishop, Carbry Kelly<sup>44</sup>.

These early and local incidents were but a prelude to the storm. Wider issues became more dominant as the years went by and the friars

<sup>41</sup> Discussed at a gen. cong. of Propaganda on 21 Apr. 1722, no. 10. APF, Acta 92, ff. 190-192; SOCG 634, ff. 268-279. Also SC Irlanda 8, ff. 69-70. For the statement mentioned, see SOCG 634, ff. 270-271.

<sup>42</sup> APF, SOCG 634, ff. 268, 273.

<sup>43</sup> The question was again discussed by Propaganda on 7 July 1722, no. 49. APF, Acta 92, ff. 381-383; SOCG 635, ff. 550-551. The latter reference is to Spinelli's letter (Brussels, 29 May 1722) summarized above.

<sup>44</sup> Mentioned by Carbry Kelly, the bishop, in a letter (21 Feb. 1727 o.s.) to the Pope, APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 182-183.

became more numerous on the mission. They grew ever more conscious of being unwanted and unloved, ever more concerned about the spread of Gallican ideas which hurt them in their pockets and their pride. Feeling that something should be done, the religious superiors met at Dublin in 1725 and decided to address a common letter to the bishops. When that failed in its intent, they sponsored the publication of a book by Edmund Burke, O.P., which gave the Roman view on papal infallibility, Easter confession, and the precept of attending Mass<sup>45</sup>. Carbry Kelly, bishop of Elphin, who prohibited the circulation of the book in his diocese, was soon involved in a politely insulting correspondence with the author<sup>46</sup>.

At much the same time the regular clergy found still another *casus belli* in a pastoral letter (1725) published by Bernard Dunne, bishop of Kildare, with the intention of preparing his flock to benefit by the indulgences of the Jubilee year. According to the friars, the pastoral contained no less than thirty-seven suspect propositions. After another meeting at Dublin on 28 May 1726, the superiors of the mendicant orders appointed agents on the continent to complain to Rome about the Kildare pastoral and about the secular priests who forbade regulars to quest and told the people that the persecution was caused solely by the presence of the friars<sup>47</sup>.

Peace was soon restored in Elphin through the mediation of bishop Stephen MacEgan, the former provincial. Carbry Kelly withdrew his prohibition of Edmund Burke's book, and the author made full amends in a letter of 13 August 1726<sup>48</sup>. The foreign agents were told to drop the case and a general calm prevailed for about a year: it was broken in June 1727 when Carbry Kelly again attacked Burke in a public letter. In 1728 the bishop himself, or perhaps one of his priests named Peter

<sup>45</sup> *The Rosaries of the Name of Jesus, etc.* The full title is given in *Hibernia Dominicana*, 549. There is a copy in the library of St. Mary's, Tallaght, Co. Dublin.

<sup>46</sup> There is a fair copy of the letters in SCAR, No. 50. An earlier and somewhat different set occurs *ibidem*, Codex II, Vol. 2, ff. 361-365.

<sup>47</sup> The agents were Laur. Richardson O.P. of Louvain and two Franciscans, Fran. Friell and Bon. O'Donnell, who later sent a joint-letter (without place or date) to Rome. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 180. The provincials at Dublin also wrote directly to their superiors general. O'Shaghnessy, for instance, wrote to Ripoll regarding doctrinal controversies in November 1726 and January 1727, a fact which is known only from Ripoll's answers of 14 Dec. 1726 and 8 Feb. 1727. AGOP IV. 201, pp. 135-136.

<sup>48</sup> Journal, p. 34.



Conry, published a work under the pseudonym "Philalethes" entitled: *Remarks upon the Book of E.B.D.D. in which Church Discipline is vindicated and the Divine Rights of Bishops asserted: in Answer to a Letter of a certain Clergyman*. Carbry Kelly also wrote to the nuncio and the Pope, protesting his loyalty and the purity of his faith<sup>49</sup>. The friars, he alleged, were not merely trying to exempt themselves completely from episcopal control, but were trying to exempt the faithful as well. He complained that Edmund Burke spoke strongly against bishops trained in France as though they were all anti-regular as a matter of principle, and that his book tended to the overthrow of the hierarchy. Bishop Kelly listed nine offensive propositions which he wanted condemned.

He was not the only one to write to Rome. The friars sent his public letter of 21 June 1727 both to the nuncio and the Holy Sec, with the result that the nuncio Spinelli commissioned the archbishop of Tuam and the bishop of Kilmacduagh in January 1728 to enquire into the dispute. Tuam at first delayed, then showed disinterest, so the regular clergy again appealed to Spinelli on 13 August. The nuncio merely recommended peace without offering the reparation the friars thought their due<sup>50</sup>. In the same month of August 1728, the regular clergy of Elphin withdrew their earlier declaration (1722) in the bishop's favour. By a fortunate accident, there still survives the original statement on the subject by the Dominican communities of Roscommon and Clonshanville<sup>51</sup>.

Infrascripti prior et patres conventus Roscommonensis diocesis Elphinensis in regno Hiberniae, capitulariter congregati, ne privilegia regularium videamur deserere aut illis renunciare dicamur (prout de aliis minus cautis spargi audimus) hisce declaramus quod testimonio in favorem Illmi ac Rmi domini episcopi Elphinensis nobis praesentato non subscripserimus, quamvis instanter requisiti fuerimus. Nec salva veritate subscribere potuisse, cum privilegia illa indies violari cernamus, non sine S. Sedis (ut credimus) contemptu, imo penes nos litteras originales magistri f. Petri MacDermott nuper defuncti et parochi sub Illmo Elphinensi habemus, quibus se inconsiderate dicto testimonio subscripsisse asserit, quia nec litteras praefati Illmi, nec libellum contra

<sup>49</sup> The letters are dated 20 Jan. 1728 and 21 Feb. 1727, both old style. APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 180-183.

<sup>50</sup> Edm. Burke, *Journal*, p. 34-36.

<sup>51</sup> SCAR, Codex I, Vol. 4, f. 996. The Peter MacDermott mentioned in this text is the one-time vicar-general of the province and companion of bishop Ambr. MacDermott O.P.

privilegia regularium tunc vidit. Datum in refugio nostro Montis Mariae, die vigesimo octavo Augusti 1728.

fr. Thomas Mulledy, prior  
fr. Thomas Egan, supprior  
fr. Patritius MacBrenan, p.g.  
fr. Thomas de Burgo  
fr. Guillelmus de Burgo  
fr. Patritius MacDermott  
fr. Thadeus Tully

fr. Dominicus MacDermottroe, prae-  
fato subscripsit inconsiderate, et  
nunc cum reliquis revocat  
fr. Iohannes de S. Maria [O'Connor?]  
fr. Petrus MacGeraghty  
fr. Patritius Kennedy  
fr. Patritius MacBrenan [iunior]

Infrascripti conventus Cloonsanvalensis ord. praed., instanter requisiti et sedulo circumventi, testimonio in favorem Illmi Elphinensis inconsiderate et ignoranter subscripsimus, et nunc regularium privilegia per praefatum Illmum et adhaerentes cernentes prorsus reiici scriptis, etiam typis publice mandatis, subscriptionem illam revocamus et pro communi regularium causa pro debito nostro declaramus. Datum die secundo Septembris 1728.

fr. Antoninus Tiernans

fr. Bernardus MacDermott, p.g.

While Edmund Burke and his opponents were arguing in Connacht about the divine rights of bishops, the regular clergy of Dublin, united for the first time in the century in a *Congregatio Regularium Hiberniae* with its own appointed officials, had other irons in the fire. While lending him support, they concentrated on matters nearer to hand such as the Kildare pastoral of 1725, Lord Delvin's *Address to George II* of 1727, their quarrel with the diocesan clergy about questing in 1728, and the succession to the see of Dublin in 1729. Considering the complexity of these disputes, and the fact that none of them has been studied at all, the reader will understand if attention is focussed here on matters more properly Dominican.

Benedict XIII, a Dominican himself and in close contact with his Irish confrères at Rome, was well informed of events in Ireland even if he did not understand them too clearly. He wished to send Michael MacDonogh O.P., a young teacher of the San Sisto community, to settle the differences between regular and secular, and thought that MacDonogh could do so more easily were he to go to Ireland as a bishop. MacDonogh had already gone to Ireland on business connected with the controversy in March 1727, returning again to Rome in April 1728<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> H. Fenning, Michael MacDonogh O.P., Bishop of Kilmore, 1728-1746, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (Sept. 1966) 138-153. The date of his return to Rome is noted in the *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* of St. Sixtus. AGOP XI, 3600, p. 45.

The idea of making him a bishop was opposed by the archbishop of Armagh, by King James III, and by MacDonogh himself, but the Pope had his way and on 12 December 1728 Michael MacDonogh was consecrated bishop of Kilmore at the age of about twenty-seven years<sup>53</sup>. Nothing could have been less likely to restore peace.

Promotion also came to another member of the province, closer still to the eye of the storm. On 9 April 1729, Edmund Burke was formally appointed theologian of the Casanatensian library in Rome, acquiring the post held for so long (1700-1728) by Patrick Plunkett, a man whom Burke cordially disliked because of his great but unofficial influence with the masters general<sup>54</sup>. The friars of Galway, delighted (as many others were, though for different reasons) by Burke's promotion, named him their Roman agent because of the revival of their old dispute with the clergy of the collegiate church<sup>55</sup>. Edmund Burke reached Rome early in 1730, before the new bishop of Kilmore began his journey to Ireland. It is not surprising that Rome settled most of the subjects of controversy before the year was out.

The case of the Kildare pastoral, alleged to be full of errors concerning sacramental penance and the doctrine of indulgences, was twice considered by the Holy Office: on 29 December 1728 and 16 February 1729<sup>56</sup>. Since the Pastoral was found to need correction, bishop Bernard Dunne was asked to modify his original letter in accordance with the suggestions of the Inquisition. After negotiations between Rome and Brussels, and again between Brussels and Kildare, the bishop issued

<sup>53</sup> Armagh recommended the vicar general of Kilmore (probably Michael O'Reilly). James III proposed Peter Mulligan O.S.A. in the belief that the dispute could be resolved by other means than by the appointment of a bishop. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 114, nos. 99, 179; Vol. 121, no. 137.

<sup>54</sup> AGOP IV, 214, p. 19. Burke was recommended by Dom. O'Daly O.P., bishop of Achonry. The English province made determined efforts at this time (as appears from AGOP IV) to obtain the vacant place for one of their own.

<sup>55</sup> He was asked to work in conjunction with a Fr. Madden of St. Isidore's to offset the efforts of "Edmund Lynch and his consistory of vicars" who infringed on the burial rights of the friars of Galway and excluded from Easter communion those members of the laity who offered resistance. There are two letters (24 June and 27 Nov. 1729) from the friars of Galway to Burke in SCAR, Codex IV, docs. 179, 182.

<sup>56</sup> There are copies of the H. Office discussions in SCAR, Codex I, Vol. 2, ff. 483-498; Vol. 3, ff. 499-531. For some excellent material on the Pastoral, see Giblin's calendar of the *Nunziatura di Fiandra* in *Collectanea Hibernica* No. 5 (1962) 116-119; and No. 9 (1966) 12-18. There is also a letter (Dublin, 12 July 1729) on the subject by Paul de Cruce O.D.C. in the general archives of the Discalced Carmelites, 273. B, vii.

a second, amended Pastoral which satisfied everyone. Spinelli at Brussels took the bishop's part throughout, claiming that he had been shabbily treated by the friars when his only fault was not to have expressed himself well. Bishop Dunne wrote to James III from Dublin on 29 April 1731 to say that peace had been restored, thanks to friendly bishops recently appointed <sup>57</sup>.

Another Roman bureau, the Congregation of the Index, dealt with Philalethes' printed counterblast to Edmund Burke, the *Remarks upon the Book of E.B.D.D.* The book was solemnly condemned by a decree of 29 August 1730 <sup>58</sup>. Here too, Spinelli defended bishop Kelly of Elphin just as he had already supported bishop Dunne of Kildare. Carbry Kelly, he observed, was commonly esteemed one of the best bishops in Ireland. Spinelli forwarded a copy of Edmund Burke's book to Propaganda, asking that it too be censured "so as to maintain a fine impartiality" <sup>59</sup>. The decree of condemnation was sent, not only to Ireland, but also to England, Scotland, and Douai, lest *Remarks upon the Book* should be in circulation outside Ireland <sup>60</sup>.

In most of these disputes, the friars maintained that their only concern was for the purity of the faith, but Carbry Kelly was right (up to a point) in saying that they sought complete exemption from episcopal control. A memorial presented to Propaganda by the regulars of the Three Kingdoms (England, Scotland, Ireland) asked that faculties for confessions and preaching be given to regular missionaries by their own religious superiors without dependence on the bishops. In support of this request they cited the privileges accorded them by ten Popes and complained that the bishops (especially bishops trained in France) refused or withdrew such faculties without sufficient reason. Propaganda replied on 26 September 1730 that their request had already been answered in 1695: the regular clergy were subject to the bishops in all matters pertaining to the *cura animarum* or the administration of the sacraments <sup>61</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 144, no. 152. There are other letters from bishop Dunne in this collection.

<sup>58</sup> The text of the decree is given in *Hibernia Dominicana*, 165.

<sup>59</sup> Brussels, 18 Oct. 1730. Spinelli to Petra. APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 179, 184.

<sup>60</sup> There are references to this in APF, SC Anglia 3, ff. 369-370; Scozia 2, ff. 158-159; Collegio Inglese di Duaco 1, ff. 348-349. Carbry Kelly, the inspirer if not the author of the book, died on St. Dominic's day, 4 Aug. 1731, as is mentioned by Cornelius Kelly in a letter (Tuam, 24 Aug. 1731) to Propaganda. APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 224-225.

<sup>61</sup> The memorial was discussed at a gen. cong. on 26 Sept. 1730, no. 21. APF, Acta 100, ff. 177-178; SOCG 668, ff. 282-283.

## COLMAN O'SHAGHNUSSY'S LAST YEARS, 1729-1748

With this long digression on Irish controversies, we have almost lost sight of the provincial with whom it began. After an absence of two years in Louvain and Lisbon, Colman O'Shaghnessy landed at Cork on 17 August 1729 and made his way back to Dublin. He visited the nuns there, the nuns of Channel Row, at the beginning of December. Nothing of importance marked his final months in office. Once his successor had been elected on 18 April 1730, he spent most of his time in the Galway convent which was close to his birthplace and suitably central for the fulfilment of the duties attached to a new office he acquired: from 1730 to 1736, O'Shaghnessy was vicar-provincial of Connacht<sup>62</sup>. Sometimes he used the alias Lynch — his mother's name — to avoid detection, as appears from a government report of 1731<sup>63</sup>. In that same year he was also vicar and confessor of the Dominican nuns of Galway, but since the nuns did not relish him — he lacked, according to the master general, the special "discretion and moderation required to direct nuns" — the provincial replaced him by another<sup>64</sup>.

Father O'Shaghnessy, however, was destined for higher things. At various times between 1731 and 1735 he was postulated or recommended for the vacant western dioceses of Elphin, Clonfert, Achonry, and Kilmacduagh<sup>65</sup>. Eventually, after many false starts, he became bishop of Ossory in Leinster in October 1736 and laboured in that diocese until death claimed him on 2 September 1748 in his 73rd year.

<sup>62</sup> Rome, 5 Mar. 1735. Edm. Burke O.P. to (?) Col. John O'Brien. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 178, no. 63. Burke here mentioned the death of bishop Dom. O'Daly O.P. of Achonry "of a cold" on 10 Jan. 1735 and recommended O'Shaghnessy to succeed.

<sup>63</sup> Report on the State of Popery in Ireland, 1731, in *Archivum Hibernicum* 3 (1914) 155, 156, 159.

<sup>64</sup> AGOP IV, 214, pp. 43-45. This register also mentions (p. 124) a dispute with the prior of Galway over money O'Shaghnessy had paid during his provinciate to a convent in Paris on behalf of Nich. Kenney, a son of Galway, imprisoned there because mentally ill. The prior of Galway was forced to make good the loss to O'Shaghnessy.

<sup>65</sup> *Collectanea Hibernica* No. 9 (1966) 26, 47-48. There are other references to postulations in Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vols. 141, no. 31; 151, no. 58; 178, nos. 63, 81, 147.



## JOHN O'BRIEN, 1730-1734

The new provincial, Father O'Brien, stayed in Ireland throughout his term of office, but there are few traces of his work save in the archives of the master general. One may tentatively identify him with the John O'Brien mentioned in the *Liber Provinciae* who was a novice at Cork in 1684, a professed cleric there from 1685 to 1687, and who left Cork in that latter year to study in the Dominican province of Bethica in southern Spain. On 17 July 1695 he was assigned to the convent of San Pablo at Seville. These details, which probably apply to the same person, agree with the evidence of Thomas Burke who says that he studied and taught in the province of Bethica<sup>1</sup>. One reaches surer ground on 5 December 1703 when he was transiliated from his original Irish convent to that of St. Dominic in Cadiz. At all events he should not be confused, as Papillon confused him, with an older John O'Brien who was a master of theology in 1698 and died shortly before April 1715 as regent of studies at Lisbon<sup>2</sup>.

Thanks to the generosity of a certain captain Miguel de Benavides, a fund was established in 1675 for the maintenance of an Irish Dominican confessor in the convent of San Pablo el Real at Seville. Benavides's heirs, more generous still than he was himself, increased the foundation to provide for two confessors rather than one, who might attend to the spiritual needs of English-speaking and other foreign travellers. The first two confessors, appointed under the new arrangement in 1693, were Edward French and Raymund of St. Thomas<sup>3</sup>. When this Father Raymund died in 1704, our John O'Brien (now for the first time styled a lector in the registers) was appointed to succeed him<sup>4</sup>. Presumably he

<sup>1</sup> The details from the *Liber Provinciae* (now at Tallaght) were kindly supplied to me by Br. Paul Lawlor O.P. of that community. The assignation to Seville in 1695, when J. O'B. was already a priest, is noted in AGOP IV. 176\*\*, Bethica, f. 19<sup>v</sup>. See also *Hibernia Dominicana*, 530. Edm. Burke, who left Ireland for ever in 1729, has little to say of the provincials who followed O'Shaghnessy.

<sup>2</sup> J. O'B. senior was rector at Lisbon from 1708 to 1711. He is mentioned by O'Heyne (ed. A. Coleman), 75-77, and in AGOP IV. 166, 192, 194, 199, 200. His writings are listed in SOP (ed. Papillon) 746-747, who confuses him with the provincial of the same name. O'Brien's transiliation of 1703 is noted in AGOP IV. 176\*\*, Bethica, f. 28<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> From documents concerning this foundation in AGOP XIV, Libri, Vol. I, pp. 117-128. The "number" of this volume is a letter of the alphabet.

<sup>4</sup> 30 Aug. 1704. AGOP IV. 176\*\*, Bethica, f. 28<sup>v</sup>; 194, f. 237<sup>r</sup>. The second confessor in 1704 was Chris. O'Brien (perhaps John's relative) as appears from 194\* under date 16 Aug. 1704.

remained at Seville from 1704 until the beginning of 1719 when the master general permitted him to return to Ireland. His place was kept vacant for him on his departure, for he intended merely to visit his parents and then return, but in fact he was destined never to see Spain again <sup>5</sup>.

Unlike many others, Father O'Brien came to the mission with a long priestly experience behind him, so it is not surprising that he soon came to the fore. Besides, the Dominicans of his native province of Munster were few and far between. In 1721 he was named a preacher general at the request of the provincial, and in the same year attended the provincial chapter at Dublin as prior of Youghal: the chapter elected him definitor for Munster. When signing a petition at Cork in August 1722, he styled himself "professor of theology and vicar-provincial of Munster" <sup>6</sup>. One suspects that his priorship of Youghal was purely titular and that he spent most of his time in the city of Cork where he twice presided (in 1722 and 1729) at the profession of novices <sup>7</sup>. Meanwhile, in 1725, Stephen MacEgan obtained his promotion to the mastership of theology and MacEgan's vicar, James Cormick, recommended O'Brien to the General as a candidate for the vacant see of Limerick <sup>8</sup>. When the provincial chapter met at Dublin in April 1730 it could elect a provincial only from Munster, so the choice of John O'Brien must have been almost automatic. The acts explicitly state that he was elected in great peace and harmony, to the satisfaction of the whole province and of the archbishop of Dublin.

#### THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1730

The election took place on 18 April 1730, the acts were signed at Dublin on the 23rd, and the master general confirmed both on 1 July <sup>9</sup>. Reading through the provisions of the chapter there is little that strikes

<sup>5</sup> When assigned to Ireland on 21 Jan. 1719, J. O'B. was actually in Seville and intended to return there within 18 months. AFP 38 (1968) 356. The other details come from AGOP IV. 197, f. 4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Cork, 31 Aug. 1722. He and seven other priests signed a petition in favour of Thady O'Sullivan, former superior of the Irish college at Toulouse. APF, SOCG 641, f. 57<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> He presided as *praeses-in-capite*, perhaps because vicar-provincial of Munster, on 3 Sept. 1722 and 2 Nov. 1729. Noted in the Cork profession and confraternity book, now in the provincial archives at Tallaght, Co. Dublin. Youghal was described as "almost destitute" in 1735. AGOP IV. 214, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> He was promoted S.T.M. on 20 July 1725. AGOP IV. 201, p. 129. His postulation for Limerick was in the summer of 1726, but Ripoll ignored it. *Ibidem*, p. 133.

<sup>9</sup> The original acts are in AGOP XIII. 68095. The confirmation is in IV. 214,

*Pray for the repose of the soul of*



**AUGUSTINE JOHN DOHERTY O.P.**

*Born: 7th May 1937*

*Professed: 15th Sept 1961*

*Ordained: 9th July 1967*

*Died: St. Catherine's Newry  
25th July 2002*

*May he rest in peace*

*I have loved, O Lord,  
the beauty of your House and the  
place where your glory dwells. Ps. 26,8*

*"Judgement is whispering into the ear  
of a merciful and compassionate God  
the story of my life which I had never  
been able to tell completely to anyone*

*(Cardinal Basil Hume)*

*Quoted by Fr Gus in his last sermon  
on the evening before he died.*



one as particularly new save a series of ordinations obviously intended to improve the selection and training of students. This was something John O'Brien would insist upon throughout his provincialate.

Instead of deputing senior priests to examine postulants before their reception of the habit, the chapter left it to the provincial's discretion to name examiners himself (ord. 1). Local superiors, whether on the mission or abroad, were warned under pain of suspension from office not to admit any to the habit without the provincial's written permission; similarly, "for grave reasons", Father O'Brien was charged to examine strictly such novices as he encountered in the course of visitation and to dismiss those he judged unworthy (ord. 2). Special arrangements were made for those intending to receive the habit at Louvain. They were to pay a pension for their novitiate year, while both they and others reaching the college already professed were to be admitted by the prior without respect to their province of origin (ord. 3). Seemingly it had been the practice to admit students there according to a rota so that the student body would represent the four "provinces" in equal numbers. Thomas Ripoll's letter of 10 August 1726 insisting that clerics bring certificates of their baptism, confirmation, and profession with them to the continent was now transformed into an ordination<sup>10</sup>. Finally, the Louvain professors were told (ord. 9) not to be excessively speculative in their teaching, but to give their students the practical knowledge needed on the mission. The chapter did not attempt similar legislation for Rome or Lisbon. Rome was now under Father Ripoll's jurisdiction by papal decree and its own desire, while Lisbon was beyond the reach, not only of the province, but of the General himself.

Once again, the election and the acts were marred by technical defects, obvious enough in the quiet of the Roman curia, but easily overlooked at Dublin where the capitular fathers met for a few days in secret, wearing lay clothes, and never knowing when the magistrates might arrest them. Thomas Ferrall, prior of Dublin, presided as prior of the convent in which the previous chapter had been held, rather than as prior of the convent in which the chapter was actually being celebrated. Fortunately the chapters were always in Dublin. Ferrall also acted as one of the three scrutators, because he happened to be one of the three priors present who were senior by profession: not knowing this, Ripoll

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pp. 28-30. For a copy of the ordinations confirming the acts, see Edm. Burke, *Journal*, 142-146.

<sup>10</sup> Ord. 2. See above, p. 117.



confirmed the election conditionally, condoning the defect, if defect there was, "for the peace of the province" <sup>11</sup>.

Nor was this all. Besides postulating a large number of friars for the degrees of the order, the definitors postulated three of themselves, a proceeding which was both presumptuous and illegal. Thomas Ripoll ignored most of the postulations, explaining that there were too many *graduati* already. Each of the four nations or provinces was entitled to have three masters of theology *titulo scholae* and one *titulo missionis*: similarly they might have three bachelors (*praesentati*) of theology *titulo scholae* and one *titulo missionis*. A total, therefore, of sixteen whereas by the General's calculation there were actually at least twenty-one. He refused to promote any more until the supernumeraries had been eliminated. Father Ripoll also demanded that whenever a postulation was to be made, full details of the vacancy and of the candidate were to be supplied in the acts.

Ripoll relented somewhat a few days later when he promoted Dominic French of Lisbon and Peter Killikelly of Louvain, both actually teaching, to the *praesentatura* in compensation for the neglect of the definitors who had largely ignored the professors of the three foreign colleges. On the same day (8 July 1730) six priests on the mission were made preachers general <sup>12</sup>.

Another of the General's comments on the chapter acts pressed home his views on *graduati*. He urged the provincial to recall to Ireland all the members of the province not really needed on the continent, and to assign out of Dublin the many priests who lived there without permission or occupation. If they resisted on the score that they were masters or preachers, they would be deprived of active and passive voice in all canonical elections, provincial or conventual. Ripoll advised them to reflect that the degrees of the order were conferred as a stimulus to further work, not as a licence for laziness.

The question of Dominicans living at Dublin without proper authorization was one already noticed in the acts of the chapter (ord. 7)

<sup>11</sup> The fact that Ferrall was a senior prior is mentioned in AGOP IV. 214, p. 39. Not knowing this, Edm. Burke claimed that O'Brien was rather created by the General than elected by the province. *Journal*, 143. No vocals from Ulster attended the chapter, which explains why Ter. Reilly and Laur. Richardson, both of Dublin, were definitors.

<sup>12</sup> AGOP IV. 214, pp. 31-32. They were Dom. Newman for Naas, Ray. Hogan for Lorrha, Hy. Tully for Portumna, Jn. Fitzgerald for Cork, Dom. Burke for Tombeoi, and Th. Muleady for Roscommon.

which mentioned the evils it occasioned and insisted that no one come to Dublin from the country without the provincial's permission. In part this was a matter of domestic politics, for more noise was made about removing James Cormick from Dublin to his native Kilkenny than the case was worth on its merits, but there was more to it than a clash of personalities or a party dispute<sup>13</sup>. The provincial's authority was severely limited in practice by the operation of the penal laws: not only had he little coercive power, but he ran the constant risk of being betrayed to the government by some discontented subject. The large population of the capital gave harassed friars the opportunity of losing themselves in the crowd and of finding some means of support more easily than they might in the country. Sometimes a priest knew no Irish and was therefore incapable of working outside Dublin where English was the common language. The Dominican convent there boasting only seven rooms, there was not even accommodation for all who were properly its sons<sup>14</sup>.

Father O'Brien tried to remove the subprior, John O'Hart, who belonged to the province of Connacht, but the community (feeling that O'Hart was worth his place) appealed to the master general<sup>15</sup>. Then the provincial ordered seven priests out of the city of Dublin. Four of them — Dominic and Philip Lynham, John Mullen, and John Archer — were sons of the convent though not, apparently, assigned to it. The others were Michael MacDermott of Clonshanville, Thomas Nolan of Gola, and James Cormick of Kilkenny<sup>16</sup>. The excessive number of friars in Dublin — and the Dominicans were not the sole offenders — was an error for which all the religious of Ireland would pay dearly; it antagonized the diocesan clergy of the capital when it would have been more wise not to give them unnecessary cause for complaint<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Apart from numerous references to the Cormick case in AGOP IV. 214, one may note a letter (Dublin, 6 May 1732) from the Dublin community in favour of Cormick's removal which occurs in AGOP XIII. 68095. It was signed by Ter. Reilly, prior, Jn. Fottrell, subprior, Laur. Richardson, Th. Ferrelly, Chris. Fottrell, Jn. O'Hart, and Th. Wm. MacAlpin.

<sup>14</sup> The number is noted in AGOP IV. 217, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> 17 Nov. 1731. Ripoll to Ter. Reilly, prior of Dublin. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 47-48.

<sup>16</sup> 12 Apr. 1732. Ripoll to the friars named above who had appealed to him against the provincial's decision. *Ibidem*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>17</sup> One could also raise here the question of the reception of novices in Dublin, still being practised in 1735 as appears from AGOP IV. 214, p. 127. Since there was no room for more than seven or eight priests, and others lived in lodgings, one is almost forced to admit that their novices spent the novitiate year in their parents' homes, exactly as Canon John Murphy accused them of doing in 1750. H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, Louvain 1972.

His own convent gave the provincial better news to report. In summer 1731 he was able to tell Father Ripoll that the Dominicans of Cork, "the second city of the kingdom", had recently built a house in which six religious were preaching and catechizing the poor: the like, he said, had not been seen in Cork for forty years<sup>18</sup>. This new "house" was perhaps a Mass-house or chapel which Thomas Blenerhassett of the parish of Shandon described in a letter to the government on 17 November 1731. Blenerhassett said that the Mass-house was built towards the end of the reign of George I, that is before June 1727<sup>19</sup>.

"The other [Mass-house], called by some a Friary, was built about the latter end of the reign of his late Majesty. The number of friars is confined to eight, whose business I hear it is to instruct the youth in the principles of the popish religion, and to lecture in philosophy those that are capable and disposed that way. Several or ... seven of their names, if it was necessary, I could make a return of".

Since it is hardly likely that the provincial would report to Rome in 1731 the building of a chapel already completed under his own eyes three years before his election, it is possible that he was referring to some conventual building erected about 1730. Before the end of his term (in 1733) he issued a commission for the recovery of the conventual plate which Fr. Louis or Peter O'Garvan had lodged for safe-keeping at St. Malo in 1690<sup>20</sup>.

Of John O'Brien's other activities in the first two years of his provinciate, we know very little and nothing of importance. Immediately after his election he set out on visitation, returning from Connacht to Dublin on 12 October 1730<sup>21</sup>. Shortly after, he appointed Augustine Vaughan of London as vicar-provincial for the college in Louvain<sup>22</sup>. During a second visitation in the summer of 1731 he succeeded in reducing a little the number of novices in the convents of Connacht. Finding only two religious working in Tralee, he took steps to have Melchior

<sup>18</sup> 25 Aug. 1731. Ripoll to O'Brien. AGOP IV. 214, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> Published as part of the Report on the State of Popery, in Arch. Hib. 2 (1913) 133.

<sup>20</sup> The commission (22 May 1733) is mentioned in AGOP IV. 217, p. 19. See also above, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 40. He signed the Athenry account-book (recepta: 1721-1755) on 29 July 1730 and again on 9 June 1732. I owe this detail to Br. Paul Lawlor who consulted the original volume at Tallaght.

<sup>22</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 40.

Moriarty, a son of that convent, sent back from Italy to join them. He was already preparing to hold an intermediate provincial chapter, but found himself faced by a legal difficulty which no one on the mission could solve. No vocals from Ulster having attended the chapter of 1730, it had not been possible to elect a definitor from that province: the problem was how Ulster, which had no definitor at the elective chapter, might have one at the intermediate chapter. What in Ireland appeared a canonical conundrum was easily solved in Rome. Dominican definitors, the General kindly explained, ceased to be such when the chapter which elected them was over. The intermediate chapter of 1732 had simply to elect four new definitors, one of whom would be from Ulster<sup>23</sup>.

#### THE INTERMEDIATE CHAPTER OF 1732

At the intermediate or middle chapter, which was duly held at Dublin on 29 April 1732, the vocals unanimously agreed that Fr O'Brien should continue in office as provincial. Judging from the acts, they had little other business to discuss, for they merely postulated yet more members of the province for degrees and asked the General to ignore complaints from Ireland which had not previously been submitted to the provincial. One notices that the original chapter acts bear the number "regesta, folio 9", an indication of some desire to keep proper records in Ireland and yet another reason to believe that John O'Brien was methodical and conscientious. He wrote to Fr Ripoll from Dublin (29 April 1732) about some of his problems, using the blank leaf after the text of the acts<sup>24</sup>. Only for this accident, his letter would probably not have survived. Though not of the first importance, this is the only extant letter from his hand and it would be a pity not to preserve the full text here.

Rme Pater,

Divino adiuvante numine, hucusque ab inimicorum machinationibus haec vestra humillima filia provincia Hiberniae incolumis, se cum suis in capitulo intermedio perfectis actis Rmae V. Paternitati tota submissione devolvit. Tri-

<sup>23</sup> 1 Dec. 1731. Ripoll to O'Brien. The provincial also recommended for the S.T.M. Bern. MacHenry of Ulster who would prove to be his successor. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 50-51. Ripoll wrote a second time on 6 December, which answer was misfiled in 215, p. 86 under Germania Inferior.

<sup>24</sup> Both the acts and the letter are in AGOP XIII. 68095. The acts mention that there had previously been only two intermediate chapters. One (1720) with definitors under Maguire; the other (1723) without definitors under MacEgan.



nas R.V. Paternitatis litteras accepi et qua par est reverentia pro temporis et loci circumstantiis earum contenta exequenda curavi, procillasque irruentes et subortas placare Deo adiuvante conabor.

Filii conventus Dubliniensis nativi (in numero proh dolor excessivo) quia Hibernici nostri sermonis ignari, nullibi in hoc regno (Dublinio excepto) missioni idonei sunt: hos Dublinii, sive in sacello Ordinis aut in aliqua parochiali capella inservientes relinqui, exceptis paucis fratribus magnatibus aut viris alioquin clarissimis assistentiae destinatis, quod genus missionis perutile alias, sola me dura necessitas permittere compellit. Iam aliquialiter satisfactum fuit Illmo Midensi<sup>25</sup>, et plenius accepto V. R. Paternitatis mandato nuperrime, quae omnia ex iuvenum arrogancia et ex defectu potentiae coercivae proveniunt.

Recipiendorum numerum et compescui et compescam quamvis aliquos, sed digniores, pro conventibus filiis carentibus ac pro nostris exteris studiis sublevandis, necessum sit admittere.

Prior Dubliniensis [Terentius Reilly], quia iuvenis et regimini non assuetus, in suis quaelis plurimum Provinciam (inimicorum furore alias depressam) his temporibus afflixit, sed Deo disponente futuras vigilans cautela praeveniet. Utinam in nobis tanta regendi cupiditas (Dublinii praecipue) nimio ardore non ferret, sic et domi pace gauderemus et simul pretiosum tempus A. R. V. Paternitate non arriperemus!

Quos Provincia, non postulando, sed humiliter petendo, pro gradibus benignitati vestrae repraesentat, ea de causa fuit, quia Ultonia modo feliciter refflorescens, nullos habuit idoneos titulo praedicationis, sed vere non ita modo, quia strenue laborant pro quibus petit Provincia, in omnibus se submittens dispositioni V. R. Paternitatis. Quia Provinciae minime constat an Praesentura titulo scholae vacans pro Conacia fuerit alteri concessa, ideo conditionaliter supplicat pro regente secundario Lovanii [Dominico Kelly], eiusdem gradus non immerito, ut nobis constat. Defunctorum suffragia pariter et vivorum brevitati studens Diffinitorium apud nos perficienda decrevit.

Maiores procillae imminentem aliam ab Illmis E. E. [= Episcopis] pro nunc sedavit. Gravissime patitur in salute p. m. fr. Michael Shee ob huius aeris intemperiem, et cum nostra iactura non modica discedere cogitur. Utinam R. V. Paternitas ipsum Collegio Ulisiponensi assignare dignetur<sup>26</sup>.

Allegationes partium Diffinitorio expositas circa affiliationem p. m. Cormick subiicio. Dictus magister Cormick assignatus fuit conventui Dubliniensi a P. Provinciali [Antonio] Maguire 3 Iunii 1720, quo tempore nondum emanavit lex affilians extra regnum professos loco viciniore eorum vel parentum

<sup>25</sup> Stephen MacEgan O.P., bishop of Meath. There are some references to his dispute with the Dominicans of Dublin in AGOP IV. 214.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Shee died at Lisbon early in 1733, four months after his arrival. AGOP IV. 214, p. 79.



nativitati. Consequenter dicta lex ante stabilita non destruit, cum aliam anteriorem assignationem pro aliquo huius regni conventu p. Cormick non habuerit. Allegant patres Dublinii magistrum Cormick nunquam habuisse consensum dicti conventus Dublinii pro receptione, professione, aut affiliatione, imo semper iudicaverunt ipsum (quia Kilkeniae natum) filium fuisse Kilkeniensis conventus. Insuper in assignatione P. Provincialis Maguire leguntur haec verba: « amoventes te a conventu Kilkeniensi, cuius supponimus te esse filium ». Cum ergo magister Cormick nullum habeat argumentum pro sua affiliatione praeter dictam assignationem, videtur dictis patribus Dublinii (salvo semper iudicio Rev.mi) dictum p. m. Cormick non esse affiliatum Dublinio. Determinatio R. V. Paternitatis huic affiliationi et aliis eiusdem naturae nunc ventilatis finem imponet. Quamque enixe petit Provincia cum paternali vestra benedictione, sicut et quod omnia prospere vobis succedant (Revme Pater) ad vota

Dublinii 29 Aprilis 1732 R. V. Paternitatis humillimi et obedientissimi filii, fr. Johannis O'Brien, provincialis Hiberniae.

Terence Reilly, the "young and inexperienced" prior of Dublin of whom the provincial complained in this letter, crossed swords with him again a year later because Father O'Brien expressed the wish (about May 1733) that the priests in Dublin should eat at the same table and recite the divine office in common. For Terence O'Reilly this was an unheard of idea, evident proof that the provincial knew nothing either of Dublin or of the mission. Better, he felt, for religious to hide their status lest the proper practice of conventual life excite fresh persecution against them. Strangely enough, he was able to support his case with a statement to the same effect from one of the vicars general of the city<sup>27</sup>.

The last six months of the provincial's term of office were marked by persecution and anxiety. A diocesan priest named John Hennessy, at one time pastor of Doneraile in county Cork, denounced the archbishop of Cashel to the government for raising money (with the help of a papal bull) in order to put James III on the throne. His story was all the more readily believed when the papers of a solicitor named Nagle, containing lists of those who had subscribed money to be used in softening the anti-Catholic zeal of parliament, were found during a search in the rooms of the bishop of Cork. The result was the appointment of a special committee of the House of Commons in Dublin and a proclamation by the Lord Lieutenant in January 1734 requiring the ma-

<sup>27</sup> 11 July 1733. Ripoll to Reilly, AGOP IV, 214, p. 82.

gistrates to put the laws against "popery" into execution<sup>28</sup>. This outburst, which ran from December 1733 to April 1734, was evidently of unusual severity. Ambrose O'Callaghan O.F.M., bishop of Ferns, wrote in March that the "storm" was "the most terrible and shocking which has been since Oliver's days. The prints won't tell you half"<sup>29</sup>. It is not clear whether he meant Oliver Plunkett, the martyred primate, or Oliver Cromwell, so well remembered in the bishop's city of Wexford. The archbishop of Cashel, supposed author of the whole plot, said in a letter of 12 April that most chapels had already been closed for five weeks<sup>30</sup>.

John O'Brien was worried lest the persecution should prevent the election of his successor and the holding of the provincial chapter on 4 May 1734. When explaining the difficulty, he asked Father Ripoll to urge the capitular fathers to insist on the practice of a common table, on choral recitation of the office, and on moderation in admitting novices: they should be told to permit the reception only of better and Irish-speaking candidates, and then only in such convents as were more suited for their training<sup>31</sup>. To obviate confusion with regard to the government of the province, he proposed the names of three Ulster friars — Dominic Brullaughan, Bernard MacHenry, and Hyacinth Watson — one of whom the General might designate as his vicar until such time as the chapter could be held. On 8 May 1734, Thomas Ripoll appointed Dominic Brullaughan vicar-general of the Irish province, unaware that the elective chapter had actually begun four days before<sup>32</sup>. The persecution, which had seemed so fierce in March, died out before the beginning of May<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford 1914, 218-219. It is strange that this book should have nothing to say of the persecution of 1734 apart from its cause. The proclamation is noted by J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th century* Press, Maynooth 1965, 53. The printed 12-page "Report from the Committee appointed to inspect the original papers seized" is listed in the Catalogue of the Bradshaw Collection of Irish Books, Vol. I, Cambridge 1916, 132. There are other valuable details in Giblin's catalogue of the *Nunziatura di Fiandra* in Coll. Hib. No. 9 (1966) 37-43.

<sup>29</sup> Dublin, 20 Mar. 1734. O'Callaghan to Edgar. Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 169, no. 21.

<sup>30</sup> Cashel, 12 Apr. 1734. Butler to Valenti-Gonzaga, nuncio at Brussels. APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 334-335. See Coll. Hib. No. 9 (1966) 40-41.

<sup>31</sup> 17 Apr. 1734. Ripoll to O'Brien. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 97-98. This request indicates that the provincial was unable to impose his will in the matter.

<sup>32</sup> 8 May 1734. Ripoll to Brullaughan. Loc. cit., p. 99.

<sup>33</sup> On this point there is an interesting letter (23 Apr. 1734) from Stephen Dowdall, bishop of Kildare, to James III in Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 169, no. 183.

On ceasing to be provincial, Father John O'Brien was immediately elected prior of his native convent of Cork and remained so for the usual term until 1737<sup>34</sup>. His successor in the priorship (1737-1740) was Albert O'Brien, probably a close relative. One finds him prior again on 24 June 1741 when with other religious superiors he signed a formal protest against the attempted establishment of the Discalced Carmelites in Cork; in July, as a result of the petition, the bishop suspended some priests of that Order — O'Neal, Fitzgerald, and Flynn — who had opened a public chapel in the southern suburbs of the city<sup>35</sup>. Considering the date (1741) and his strict views on novices, John O'Brien was probably the Dominican prior of Cork who turned a novice named William Inglis out of the Order about this time. Inglis or English later joined the Augustinians of Cork and made a reputation as a poet in the Irish language: one of his poems contains a reference to his leaving the Dominicans, from which one gathers that he was "thrown out" — the phrase is his own — because he and the prior did not agree on the meaning of the vow of poverty<sup>36</sup>.

To these somewhat scattered details one could add that he was defensor for Munster at the provincial chapter of 1738 and that he was elected prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, on 6 February 1740. His age and sickness (he suffered from rheumatism) did not permit him to accept this latter honour<sup>37</sup>. John O'Brien died at Cork on 11 January 1743, to the loss both of the province and of his convent<sup>38</sup>. By a strange and unmerited oversight, he has never been mentioned in any of the historical booklets devoted to the priory of Cork. His death inspired another

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Dowdall was at London in January 1734 when he heard of his promotion to Kildare, Ireland, as he wrote, "being then in turmoil", he was persuaded by friends to stay in London, working in the embassy chapels, until the storm died down. He returned to Ireland in April, having been assured by the French and Spanish ambassadors that the Catholics "would be connived at as hitherto. This is all the afflicted Catholics can hope for there till (it) please God to restore your most sacred Majesty".

<sup>34</sup> On 13 Aug. 1734 he presided as prior at the profession of Dom. MacCurtin. TA, Cork profession book. According to AGOP IV. 217, p. 21, Alb. O'Brien was prior in December 1737.

<sup>35</sup> There are copies of the protest and of the bishop's decision in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 90.

<sup>36</sup> R. O Foghludha, *Cois na Bride: Liam Inglis O.S.A., 1709-1778*, Dublin 1937, xv, 19. I owe this information to Fr. Conleth Kearns, O.P.

<sup>37</sup> Strictly speaking, his rheumatism was mentioned in 1737 when he was proposed as rector for Lisbon. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 12-13, 58.

<sup>38</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 530.

John O'Brien, a priest and a poet, to compose an Irish elegy in his honour, a poem of small literary merit which is disappointingly poor in biographical detail. It does, however, praise him as a theologian and preacher, a priest full of zeal for the reformation and honour of religious orders, with the suggestion that he was descended from the Fitzgerald's on his mother's side<sup>39</sup>. The introduction and first quatrain (transcribed by Fr. Michael MacGrath O.F.M. of St. Isidore's) give one the flavour of the whole.

An tAthair Seán Ó Briain cecinit ar bhás an bhráthar bheannaighthe  
broinsráidhteach agus an dochtúra fhoghlamtha riaghalta d'Ord St.  
Doiminic, i.e. an tAthair Seán Ui Briain 1738 [recte 1743].

Mó chiach mó cheas mó chreach mó bhrón mó sgios!  
Diadhaire dleacht na cceacht gan smól gan timheal  
An Brianach geal d'fuil Ghearailt chródha ghroidhe  
A mbliaghna leagtha lag fá'd bhord a liag.

#### BERNARD MACHENRY, 1734-1738

The practice of choosing provincials from each of the four "provinces" in turn had the automatic effect that none could expect re-election at the end of his four-year term. To enjoy a second term, if enjoy be the proper word, an outgoing provincial had to wait another twelve years before he might possibly be elected again. Only three provincials achieved this feat during the eighteenth century, and the first of the three was Bernard MacHenry, elected for the first time on 4 May 1734 and for the second on 17 June 1749.

The new provincial, an Ulsterman and a son of the convent of Coleraine, was born about 1693 in the parish of Glenravel, county Antrim<sup>40</sup>, and was a Louvain student on 23 September 1716 when he received clerical tonsure, minor orders, and subdiaconate at Malines<sup>41</sup>. One finds

<sup>39</sup> It was Fr. Conleth Kearns O.P. who drew my attention to the existence in manuscript of this poem in the Royal Irish Academy, 23 M 14, p. 9 (Catalogue, p. 868). Fr. MacGrath O.F.M. made me a complete transcript and translation of the four verses, but the poem does not merit full publication here.

<sup>40</sup> J. O'Laverty, *An Historical Account of the Diocese of Down and Connor*, III (Dublin 1884) 470-471.

<sup>41</sup> B. Jennings, *Irish Names in the Malines Ordination Registers, 1602-1794: Part IV*, in *Irish Eccles. Record*, Vol. 76 (1951) 233. This entry was missed by A. M. Bogaerts, *De Dominikanen in de Wijdingsregisters van het Aartsbisdom Mechelen*, Brussels 1965.

him still a student at Holy Cross in a list of December 1718. Soon after, he began to teach in the college, first as lector of philosophy and then as master of students, in which latter office he was still employed on 11 November 1724 when the master general permitted him to forsake the classroom in favour of the Scottish mission<sup>42</sup>.

One must leave to another occasion any detailed account of Irish Dominicans in Scotland. Enough to say that two young Sligo priests of San Sisto — Peter Cluan and John Gusman (alias Gildea) — volunteered to go there in 1706. Peter Cluan did indeed spend seven years as a missionary in Scotland at some later though unspecified date, but there is no compelling evidence that John Gusman ever laboured there<sup>43</sup>. Bernard MacHenry was the next Dominican to interest himself in Scotland, but although he received his patents at Louvain about Christmas 1724, it would seem that he went to Ireland first and appeared in the Highlands only in 1726<sup>44</sup>. Another Irishman, Michael Ryan, mentioned him indirectly in March 1727 when he asked Propaganda for leave to go to Scotland on the score that there was but one other member of his Order in that country<sup>45</sup>. However, MacHenry was not destined to stay in Scotland long. The vicars apostolic, writing in May 1728, stated that an Irish Dominican — surely MacHenry — had recently been forced to leave the mission because of poor health<sup>46</sup>.

Father MacHenry's labours earned him the postulation of the provincial chapter of 1730 and immediate promotion to the baccalaureate of theology (S.T.P.) by title of preaching: the citation read, "qui pluribus annis in Scotia et Hibernia missionem fructuose exercuit"<sup>47</sup>. John O'Brien sought his promotion to the mastership in the autumn

<sup>42</sup> On 6 Dec. 1718 the entire community of 20 subscribed to Unigenitus. Their names are noted in *Acta Ecclesiae Mechliniensis anni M.DCC.XVIII circa Bullam Unigenitus*, Brussels [1719]. His assignation to Scotland is mentioned in AGOP IV. 201, p. 126. I find no record of either academic appointment in this series, but that he held both offices successively was mentioned by the definitory in May 1734 when recommending him to the General. AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>43</sup> On Cluan and Gusman see appendix, p. 593. The chapter acts of 1738 postulated Cluan, remarking that he was 60 and had spent 7 years preaching in Scotland. AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>44</sup> His name appears in the list of missionaries in 1726 supplied by J.F.S. Gordon, *Journal and Appendix to Scotichronicon and Monasticon*, Vol. I, Glasgow 1867, 632.

<sup>45</sup> APF, Acta 97, ff. 101-102; SOCG 655, ff. 387-399.

<sup>46</sup> APF, SC Scozia 2, f. 142<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> The acts are in AGOP XIII. 68095. The promotion (1 July 1730) is in AGOP IV. 214, p. 30.



of 1731, describing him as an outstanding preacher, but this was an honour for which MacHenry would have to wait<sup>48</sup>. His name came up in 1733 when he was suggested for the rectorship in Lisbon, and in November of that year he was unanimously elected prior of Holy Cross, Louvain. But he declined that flattering offer and we find him early in 1734 helping bishop Michael MacDonogh O.P. in the diocese of Kilmore<sup>49</sup>. Upon his election as provincial a few months later, the definitory wrote a special letter to Thomas Ripoll asking that he be promoted master of theology. It is this letter which tells us that MacHenry was successively lector of philosophy and master of students at Louvain, and might have finished out his academic career in the usual way had not zeal for souls moved him to apply for permission to work in Scotland<sup>50</sup>.

The provincial chapter of 1734 respected the views of Father O'Brien, the outgoing provincial, for almost the only original legislation it attempted bore on the question of novices. In future, postulants for the habit would either have to speak Irish or prove themselves capable of doing so with a little practice: they would also have to guarantee that their parents or friends would provide them with enough money and clothes for their journey to the continent after profession. This latter provision (ord. 3) was intended to stop the abuse whereby young friars, newly professed, went begging about the countryside to collect the cost of their passage. Another ordination (2) forbade any member of the province to receive sacred orders, least of all the priesthood, on the mission itself. Previously it had not been unusual for the newly professed to become priests before ever they went abroad, largely in order to have a means of livelihood during their studies. These new laws, taken in conjunction with earlier legislation, were more than sufficient to meet the case, but Thomas Ripoll (when confirming the election and the acts on 3 July 1734) ordered the following addition to be made<sup>51</sup>.

Ut bono communi provinciae ac negotio missionis magis prospiciatur, districtè praecipitur ut numerus subditorum ad habitum recipiendorum attemperetur, ne recipiantur quaevis subdita obvia et inepta, sed pauca et selecta, ac praecellentia in moribus et talentis et origine, in quibus effulgeat

<sup>48</sup> AGOP IV. 214, pp. 50-51. Obviously, the provincial had met him during the course of the visitation which he was here reporting to the General.

<sup>49</sup> AGOP IV. 214, pp. 77, 94, 98-99. It is not to be excluded that MacHenry refused the priorship in Louvain because of the probability of his election as provincial within six months.

<sup>50</sup> Undated, but written in May 1734. The original is in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>51</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 102.

certa spes profectus, nedum in obsequium religionis sed et maxime missionis apostolicae. Nec ullus recipiatur sine expressa licentia patris provincialis in scriptis habita, et nonnisi in locis congruentibus ubi ab examinadoribus deputatis coram patribus a consilio diligenter examinari, et eius idoneitas sufficienter probari possit: de qua idoneitate detur conscientiosa relatio patri priori conventus qui et patrem provincialem informabit.

Et quia pro missionibus summopere necessaria est lingua Hibernica, maxime ruri ubi maior est messis, severe inhibetur ne ullus recipiatur ad habitum aut ad professionem admittatur, qui non calleat linguam Hibernicam, aut saltem iudicio discretorum adsit certissima spes et capacitas brevi eam addiscendi.

There is no indication that either the Irish Dominicans or their master general knew of a discussion then in progress at Propaganda Fide as to whether it would be opportune to prohibit all ordinations and all religious professions in Ireland for a certain number of years, but it would be strange had no hint of it reached them. Although the archbishop of Cashel and some leading Irish priests at Paris were much in favour of such an embargo, cardinal Imperiali (protector of Ireland) succeeded in postponing a decision <sup>52</sup>.

#### VISITATION OF THE PROVINCE, 1734-1735

Father MacHenry had a busy provincialate and the records of this period are remarkably full. Since they largely deal with the restoration of convents or disputes connected with them, it is fitting that our earliest eighteenth-century list of convents and friars in Ireland should have been compiled by him. The notes he made during visitation between summer 1734 and summer 1735 still exist in manuscript, but because they were used also by his successor they have hitherto been wrongly called the Fottrell list. Worse still, the only printed edition made two lists out of one, dating the first part correctly to 1734 and ascribing the second erroneously to 1738 <sup>53</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 271-287. Also Acta 103, ff. 370-375.

<sup>53</sup> The original Fottrell Papers among which this list occurs, are now preserved in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast, D. 1449/14. They were edited by L. Murray in *Louth Archaeological Journal*, Vol. VII, No. 2 (1930) 124-152 from a faulty transcript prepared by Dr. Chart the deputy-keeper: Murray never saw the originals. See H. Fenning (ed.), *The Fottrell Papers*, Belfast 1980.

The two parts of the list are on paper of the same size and texture; they are written in the same hand (MacHenry's hand); and the material is arranged in the same unusual format, the names of the convents being written sideways-on to the page

The full text of the MacHenry list, if one may use its proper title for the first time, is given at the end of this chapter, so there is no need to analyse it here. It shows the substantial recovery of the province from the exile of 1698, for there were now thirty-four more or less thriving convents staffed by 172 priests. Among the convents of Leinster there was no mention of Naas<sup>54</sup>, Athy had only one "son", and Aghaboe was described as "destitute". In Munster the entry for Tralee was left blank and Youghal not even named. In Connacht, where there were eleven convents, almost all with large communities, the only missing name seems to be that of Tulsk near Roscommon. Two of the Connacht entries can be dated precisely, for MacHenry was in Galway on 14 July and in Athenry on 16 July 1735<sup>55</sup>. Even Ulster, where conditions for friars under the penal laws were so much more difficult than elsewhere, had seven fairly numerous communities, including the recently founded convent of Cavan.

In the autumn of 1735, the provincial reported to Rome on his visitation. His letter has been lost, but it was summarized in the registers of the General and one may reproduce that summary here as a fair example of the indirect way in which some of the letters of the Irish provincials have been preserved<sup>56</sup>.

Patri praesentato provinciali describenti statum provinciae post visitationem, in qua reperiuntur 38 conventus in quibus nominavit priores, exceptis tribus, scilicet Naas, Aghaboe, et Youghal fere destitutis<sup>57</sup>. In quibusdam aliis est prior solus, in aliis duo, aut 3 aut 4 religiosi, qui sunt 172 et sorores 72. Numerum recipiendorum ita attemperavit ut hucusque nonnisi 12 iuvenes

at the left-hand side. The friars mentioned in the list as having been postulated for degrees were so honoured by the chapter of 1734. Internal evidence too from the second, undated portion, shows that it cannot be so late as 1738. Colman O'Shaghnessy, for instance, appears merely as a master, whereas he was a bishop from October 1736.

<sup>54</sup> MacHenry appointed Th. Curtis prior of Naas on 13 Feb. 1738, but Curtis tried to evade the responsibility by appealing to the General. AGOP IV, 217, p. 25.

<sup>55</sup> He signed the account-books on these dates, as appears from the originals in Tallaght. For these details I am indebted to Br. Paul Lawlor.

<sup>56</sup> 21 Jan. 1736, Ripoll to MacHenry. AGOP IV, 214, p. 128. I omit the reply in which Ripoll, presumably taking his cue from MacHenry's report, regretted that though there were so many convents, the number of good "labourers" was very small. He hoped that greater care in admitting novices would eventually solve the problem.

<sup>57</sup> In fact there were only 34 real convents, or 35 if one allows for Tralee which the provincial did not describe in his list. Adding to 35 the three destitute convents mentioned, one gets the General's total of 38.

electos suscepit ad habitum. Mittit etiam cathalogum graduatorum<sup>58</sup>. Lis inter conventum Galviensem et p. m. O'Shaghnessy dirimetur licet non facile: fietque illi iustitia<sup>59</sup>. Pater magister Iacobum Cormick moniales Dublinenses unanimiter petunt confirmari in munere confessarii, quem et proponit pro rectore Ulissiponensi, vel p. m. Iacobum Fitzgerald existentem in Italia, cum ordo [i. e. alternativa] sit in Lagenia. Patrem Michaellem Fleming pro ratha Ultoniae instituit lectorem philosophiae Lovanii ad requisitionem professorum, petit ut Rmus hanc institutionem rati habeat. Item p. m. Hyacinthum Watson terminat officium vicarii generalis et confessarii monialium Pontanensium, ut Rmus vel illum continuat vel alium instituat.

Father MacHenry noted in his list that certain communities "live regularly"; this, though he did not say so, was equally true of other convents, such as that of Galway, which are known to have been more than purely titular. But many another convent was such only in name. Bishop Michael MacDonogh of Kilmore, a Dominican himself, asked Thomas Ripoll in 1732 to force the superiors and their subjects to live in their priories of assignation. Perhaps he was thinking chiefly of Ulster where he lived and worked, but his complaint applied equally to places such as Arklow or Athy in Leinster where the priests were few and did not live together.

Bishop MacDonogh made every effort to found — or, as he thought, to restore — a Dominican convent at Cavan in his own diocese. Finding the parish of St. Mary's, Drumlahane, vacant in 1734 the bishop thought it would be feasible to establish a community which might rely on the parochial income for its support. Before the end of 1735 there were five Dominicans assigned there, but the project soon aroused the opposition of the primate. Archbishop Bernard MacMahon of Armagh challenged the proposed perpetual union between the parish and the priory in 1738 and bishop MacDonogh had to take his case to Rome<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> This list of *graduati*, in MacHenry's hand, also occurs among the Fottrell Papers in Belfast. Three names were added by Fottrell in 1738-39, but the list itself is certainly of 1734-35.

<sup>59</sup> On this dispute see above, p. 133, note 64.

<sup>60</sup> H. Fenning, Michael MacDonogh O.P., in *Irish Eccles. Record*, Vol. CVI (Sept. 1966) 144-145. On 2 July 1737 Ripoll wrote to thank the bishop for having established the convent. The register mentions that MacDonogh was then presenting a petition to the Pope on the subject through Corsini, protector of Ireland and of the Order. AGOP IV. 217, p. 9. The copy of Stevens' *Monasticon Hibernicum* in the library of San Clemente (Rome) bears marginal notes in the hand of bishop MacDonogh — some referring to Cavan — notes mutilated in the last century when the book was rebound and recut.

Another Dominican bishop, Stephen MacEgan of Meath, ran into the same obstacle when he tried to bestow a parish on his brethren of Mullingar who had been living south of the town at Killenough from the time of the exile. About 1733 the prior was appointed parish priest of Mullingar and a layman named Mathew Casey began to build a chapel and a house for them in the town. That is why the MacHenry list of the following year says: "they now begin to live together under the patronage of Mathew Casey". Despite difficulties raised by the primate in 1738, the Dominicans held the parish until the close of the century <sup>61</sup>.

In this period of conventual restoration, the superiors of the order had to contend with the local magistrates, the bishops, and other religious, each of whom might object to the building of a particular convent. The following case reveals a more unexpected source of opposition. It concerns the restoration of Tolsk, a small Dominican convent near Roscommon, a project opposed by no one so strenuously as by the Dominicans of Roscommon itself. The following valuable letter tells the story clearly enough <sup>62</sup>.

Copia epistolae transmissae ex Hibernia ad p. l. f. Thomam Brenan degentem in conventu SS. Xysti et Clementis de Urbe, a p. f. Thadeo Tully, filio conventus Roscommenensis, nomine suo et aliorum confratrum, die 29 mensis Maii anno 1734.

Omnes huius conventus filii enixe rogant P. V. ut omnem curam et diligentiam adhibeat in praesenti rerum discrimine ad iura nostra tuenda, et ad gravia toties huic domui et familiae intentata damna eliminanda. In variis quidem capitulis provincialibus, in hoc praesertim ultimo habito Dublinii die 2 huius mensis agebatur de prioratu stabiliendo in oppido Tolsk paucis abhinc miliaribus distante et de auferendo ab hoc nostro conventu quaestu 20 parochiarum, quo quaestu ablato, extremas sine dubio patiemur miseras, nec diutius hic vivere poterimus. Adversarii nostri (inter quos est Illmus D. Iohannes Dowle asserens domum Tolskensem fundatam fuisse a suis maioribus, quod tamen negatur ab aliis adscribentibus foundationem alteri familiae) praetendunt relatam domum fuisse conventum et filium eiusdem fuisse Illum

<sup>61</sup> A. Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, II (Dublin 1867) 454-472. There are some interesting letters (dated 1738) on the subject in SCAR, Codex IV, docs. 18-20. See also Coll. Hib. No. 10 (1967) 84-85 for details on Barnaby Barnewall O.P., appointed pastor on 3 Mar. 1737/38. His predecessor as prior and parish priest was Th. Hylan of Roscommon, translocated to Mullingar on 6 Oct. 1736. AGOP IV. 214, p. 141.

<sup>62</sup> The letter (a copy) was formerly slipped loosely into AGOP IV. 214, facing p. 99, but is now more properly filed in XIII. 68095. I find no trace of the General's decision on the matter. There was no community at Tolsk in 1756 (*Hibernia Dominicana*) nor in 1767 (*Netterville list*).



R. D. Ambrosium MacDermott, olim paenitentiarium ad S. Mariam Maiorem, Romae<sup>63</sup>. Nos contrarium scimus, et invenimus in libro professionum, praefatum Illmum et Rmum Dominum professionem emisisse pro hoc conventu Roscommanensi die 14 Ianuarii anno 1667. Exploratum insuper habemus Illmum et Rmum D. Stephanum Eagan attestationem dedisse patribus vocalibus convocatis in hoc ultimo capitulo Dubliniensi, die et mense supradicti, quod ipse audiverit ab Illmo et Rmo D. Ambrosio MacDermott, quod domus Tolskensis fuit solum vicariatus conventus Roscommanensis, et quod pro sui sustentatione habebat quaestum trium tantummodo parochiarum. Hoc idem nobis referunt et confirmant antiquiores huius patriae familiae, quibus omnem fidem adhibere tenemur in hoc, similiter et in aliis rebus, cum temporum iniuriarum authentica magis monumenta nobis abstulerint.

Denuo igitur rogamus, ut cuncta haec candide exponat, ad hoc ut intentata huic conventui damna repellantur, nosterque hucusque vivendi modus, et quaestus servetur immunis. Gratissima haec munia praestando, me caeterosque confratres devinctos semper habebis, etc.

#### THE NUNS AND FRIARS OF WATERFORD, 1735-1737

Bishop MacDonogh's concern for the good of the province extended as far south as Waterford, for it was he who took up the question of founding a monastery of Dominican nuns in that city. The general chapter of 1725 authorized such a foundation, but it had still to be attempted ten years later. Acting on the bishop's advice, Father Ripoll told Bernard MacHenry in a letter of 12 November 1735 that he was to apply himself to the business<sup>64</sup>. The provincial lost so little time in doing his duty that he obtained the written approval of William O'Mara, vicar general of Waterford, before the following autumn. The original document has fortunately been preserved in the archives of Propaganda<sup>65</sup>.

Whereas formerly in this city of Waterford there was (as we are informed) a convent of nuns of the holy order of St. Dominick under the title and protection of St. Catherine of Siena, and said convent by the ruin and destruction of other monasteries fell along with them and was, to the great detriment of the Catholick religion, abolished like the rest of the sanctuaries for the nurse-

<sup>63</sup> H. Fenning, Ambrose MacDermott O.P., in *AFP* 40 (1970) 231-275, esp. p. 233 where the above letter is mentioned.

<sup>64</sup> *AGOP* IV. 214, p. 126.

<sup>65</sup> *APF*, CP 88, f. 135. The bishop, Richard Pierce, lived permanently in France, leaving the care of the diocese to his vicar general.

ries of Christian piety and sanctity in this kingdom. And whereas the general chapter of friars preachers held in Bologna in the year 1725, in the chapter *pro provincia Hiberniae*, ordered that the said convent of St. Catherine of Siena in the city of Waterford should be restored and re-established and kept up according to the way and means that other religious houses of said Order of St. Dominick are established in this kingdom. And whereas the Most Rev. Fr. Thomas Ripoll, master general of the whole Order of Preachers, has lately ordered the execution of said act of the aforesaid general chapter, and that (with the assistance of God) the having a religious house of nuns of said Order here will be an ornament here to the Catholick religion, [and] means to instruct the young ladies of this city and country in piety and Christian education.

We therefore, overseers and directors of this diocess of Waterford, doe approve of said establishment of religious nuns in this city of Waterford, according as they will be fixed and settled by their General or Provincial, and according to the rules and constitutions of the friars preachers and the nuns of the order of St. Dominick. And said establishment soe approved of and permitted by us, we recommend the same to all those of said city and others under our care and direction. Given in Waterford this the 22nd of October 1736.

William O'Mara, vicar general of Waterford.

With this permission in hand, Father MacHenry sent two nuns to Waterford: Sr. Anastasia Wyse of Channel Row in Dublin, a member of a prominent local family, and Sr. Margaret Brown of the Galway community. Both lived on the interest of their dowries<sup>66</sup>. The two nuns rented a house in which they began to teach girl boarders and after some time gave the habit to Catherine Wyse, a niece of the prioress. After Catherine made profession (1740?) with the approval of the new bishop, Sylvester Lloyd O.F.M., the sisters proceeded to admit a second postulant named Mary Pilkington. It was then the first difficulty arose, for while Mary was still a novice the infant community began to doubt whether their monastery had a proper legal title. So far as one can judge, other religious of the city objected to the foundation and the Franciscan

<sup>66</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 362-365. Also AGOP IV, 217, p. 16. The capital of the dowries remained in their original convents. There are further interesting, though partly contradictory, details in H. Fenning, John Kent's Report on the Irish Mission, 1742, in *Archivium Hibernicum* 28 (1966) 85-86. According to Kent, the bishop refused to approve the clothing of Catherine Wyse, and equally refused to examine her before profession. Kent, however, may not have stated the case correctly. Sister M. Thérèse O.P., archivist in Cabra (Dublin), recently sent me an interesting unpublished article, *Dominican Nuns in Waterford, 1735-1758*, written by Fr. Benedict O'Sullivan O.P. in February 1970 shortly before his death.

bishop could not afford to ignore their arguments. At all events the nuns, failing to find any evidence that there had ever been a monastery of Dominican nuns in Waterford, felt obliged to apply to Rome for a *sanatio in radice*. At this juncture the bishop gave them his full support while a former provincial, Colman O'Shaghnessy bishop of Ossory, rallied to their aid. Here again, the archives of Propaganda preserve bishop Lloyd's original letter of procuration <sup>67</sup>.

Whereas some doubts and scruples have arisen in the city of Waterford concerning the foundation of Mrs. Anstace Wise and her Sisters. It's therefore that I doe by these presents impower my good friend Mr. Colman O'Shaghnessy jointly with saide Mrs. Wise and her friends to concert the proper measures for removing all doubts and scruples, so as to prove an ancient foundation, or obtaine a new one if necessary, and I shall most willingly, not only approve of such measures as they shall take, but shall most earnestly recommend to our superiors the advantage it will be to the publick, that the saide Mrs. Wise her house be built upon a sollid foundation, beyond all contradiction for the future. As witness my hand this 13th day of July 1740.

S. Lloyd, etc.

With the help of John Brett O.P. at Rome this problem was soon solved, for the Pope issued a brief on 11 May 1742 regularizing both the foundation and the profession of the novices <sup>68</sup>.

The Dominican priests of Waterford seem to have been stimulated by the presence of the sisters to improve their own, already comfortable, position. They were living in community, and none too poorly, at the time of Bernard MacHenry's visitation in 1735. The provincial noted the names of three "sons" of the convent — Antoninus Sall, James Dominic Ferrall, and Robert Elliot — but Ferrall went to Lisbon in spring 1736 and Elliot is found in Spain soon after. Elliot was not, in fact, a son of Waterford at all, but a son of the convent of San Pablo at Seville where he occupied one of the Irish places in 1743 <sup>69</sup>. Be that as it may, John

<sup>67</sup> APF, CP 88, f. 137.

<sup>68</sup> Hibernia Dominicana, 363-366. On the Roman negotiations connected with the sanatory brief see SCAR, Miscellanea (shelf-number 22), docs. 53-55. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 68-71; CP 88, ff. 120-140; Udienze 5, f. 48. It is mentioned in these papers that the S. C. of Bishops and Regulars issued a rescript on the subject on 21 July 1741.

<sup>69</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 84. He had earlier held one of these places from 10 Nov. 1731. Ibidem, 209C, f. 65<sup>r</sup>. The arrival of Dom. Farrell (or Ferrall) in Lisbon is mentioned in AGOP IV. 214, p. 136 with the detail that he had been 16 years (1720-36) on the Irish mission.

Newman (presumably prior of Waterford) wrote to the General at the close of 1736 explaining that although the city was populous and the people devoted to the Rosary, the convent had only two sons: Antoninus Sall who was old, and another (Dominic Ferrall) who was confessor to the nuns in Lisbon <sup>70</sup>. There were also two novices in the convent. The provincial, Father Newman continued, had agreed to send them some from the well-stocked priories of Connacht, but the new arrivals would have to be transfiliated to Waterford by the master general. This Father Ripoll did on 26 January 1737 when he transfiliated Peter Costelloe from Roscommon, which had twenty sons, and Peter Lagnan from Strade which had fifteen. The General remarked that the case showed considerable negligence, since the Waterford community had only two sons advanced in years and two prospective ones not yet professed <sup>71</sup>.

#### THE AUGUSTINIANS OF LIMERICK, 1733-1739

The Dominicans of Limerick, after a long, unsettled period in which they lived and served where best they could, opened a chapel in Fish Lane about 1730 and began to pick up the threads of a community life they had not known for forty years. Apart from the Franciscans, they were the only religious in the city. They also believed — wrongly, as events would prove — that the Franciscans and themselves were the only religious who had any right to be there. When two Augustinians moved into Limerick from Adare in 1733, the Dominicans and Franciscans felt their livelihood was threatened, so they laid a formal protest before the bishop, Cornelius O'Keeffe, on 14 June of that year. The bishop handed the document over to the Augustinians, but since he was forced almost at once to leave for France, nothing could be done until his return <sup>72</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> 26 Jan. 1737. Ripoll to Newman. AGOP IV. 217, p. 2. The General declined to transfiliate the prior (Newman?) since that was forbidden by Dominican law. It is interesting to note that on 5 June 1731 Jn. Newman was prior of Kilkenny and Peter Costelloe its subprior. C. Giblin, Catalogue, in Coll. Hib. No. 9 (1966) 21.

<sup>71</sup> One may note here the intended restoration of another convent in Munster. On 16 Feb. 1737, the General permitted Bonav. Nagle of Louvain to go to Ireland where he wished to restore the convent of Clonmel. AGOP IV. 217, p. 3.

<sup>72</sup> From the bishop's statement of 2 Jan. 1735/36 in APF, SC Irlanda 9, f. 705. Some of the earliest documents on the question are copied on nine unnumbered pages at the back of the James White Mss which are preserved by the present bishop of Limerick. They show that Albert O'Brien O.P. was already prior in 1733. See also J. Begley, *The Diocese of Limerick from 1691 to the Present Time*, Dublin 1938, 196-197.



When bishop O'Keeffe came back, the injured parties approached him again on 18 September 1735 and a series of meetings was held in the Franciscan friary between 26 September 1735 and 2 January 1736 to hear both sides of the dispute. On that latter date the bishop gave judgement against the Augustinians, commanding Edmund Durkan and Nicholas O'Brien of that order under pain of suspension not to celebrate Mass nor hear confessions anywhere in the diocese save where they had monasteries before. He also ordered them to quit the city of Limerick within twenty days.

So firm a decision would have daunted most, but not the Augustinians. They appealed to the metropolitan (Cashel) and, when he told them to approach the Roman congregation of Bishops and Regulars, they appealed over his head to the primate in Armagh. Bernard MacMahon of Armagh, pleased with this recognition of his theoretical authority — and pleased too because the nuncio in Flanders had recently snubbed him on a question connected with this very dispute — appointed the bishop of Raphoe as his commissary and delegate. On 12 April 1736, Raphoe called on Albert O'Brien O.P. and John MacNamara O.F.M. (the prior and guardian of their respective orders in Limerick) to appear before him at Bellafin near Maryborough in the house of Mr. Denis Dulany on 18 May following to present their case against the Augustinians<sup>73</sup>. By now the point at issue had grown more serious, for the Augustinians had begun to build a chapel in Fish Lane itself, only a stone's throw from the Dominican one.

Two weeks later (on 30 April) the Franciscans and Dominicans, with the support of their respective provincials, asked the primate to withdraw the commission given to Raphoe, and appealed to the court of Rome for final judgement. A document to this effect was given to the bishop-delegate on 14 May, four days before the date fixed for the meeting at Bellafin, but Raphoe went ahead and gave judgement in favour of the Augustinians. Where he did so one cannot say, but it was certainly not at Bellafin: the procurator whom the Dominicans and Franciscans sent to that remote spot on the appointed day failed to catch so much as a glimpse of bishops or Augustinians.

The case now moved to Rome, for on 12 June 1736 the Augustinian definitory asked Propaganda Fide to appoint an impartial commissary<sup>74</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> Raphoe's citation is in APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 706-707.

<sup>74</sup> APF, SOCG 692, ff. 95-96. The decision of 1 Oct. 1737 is in Acta 107, ff. 405-413 and the originals in SOCG 692, ff. 88-105.



About the same time, Albert O'Brien O.P. sent to the master general an appeal he wished to lodge with the congregation of Bishops and Regulars<sup>75</sup>. Propaganda took more than a year to make any decision at all, and then (1 October 1737) merely agreed to lift *usque ad exitum causae* the censures imposed on the Augustinians. After a second interval of fourteen months, the Congregation decided (15 December 1738) to ask the nuncio in Flanders for more information<sup>76</sup>. Propaganda was not entirely responsible for the delay, for the Dominicans and Franciscans do not seem to have pressed their case at Rome with the energy they had shown in Ireland. Perhaps opposition to the Augustinians abated with the removal of Albert O'Brien from Limerick to Cork in 1737 and the death of bishop O'Keeffe of Limerick in the same year.

So matters dragged on into 1739 while the new bishop, Robert Lacy, waited impatiently for a decision<sup>77</sup> and the Augustinians, provisionally freed from censure (though lacking faculties in the diocese) attracted ever more people to their chapel. At last, in 1740, the Franciscan and Dominican papers arrived in Rome; but they arrived too late. George Vaughan, the Augustinian provincial, had reached Rome first and put certain facts before Propaganda which, had they been presented earlier, would have saved a great deal of trouble for all concerned.

What neither the clergy nor the people of Limerick knew in 1733 was that there *had* been Augustinians in the city long before. The appointment of Augustinian priors of Limerick was mentioned in the acts of their provincial chapters in 1661, 1670, 1673, and 1685. Granted, the Augustinian friars had no medieval foundation in the city, but they inherited the foundation of the Augustinian Canons Regular of the Holy Cross (*fratres cruciferi*) in virtue of a brief issued by Urban VIII on 18 October 1632<sup>78</sup>. This was the document which closed the case at Rome and guaranteed the Augustinians the right to peaceful coexistence with the other religious of Limerick.

<sup>75</sup> This appears to have been lost. It is mentioned in AGOP IV. 214, p. 138.

<sup>76</sup> APF, Acta 108, ff. 413-417; SOCG 697, ff. 431-438.

<sup>77</sup> Limerick, 22 June 1739. Lacy to nuncio. A copy. APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 641-642.

<sup>78</sup> Undated petition. Vaughan to Propaganda. Ibidem, ff. 708, 713. Vaughan mentions this early brief of which there is a copy in APF, SOCG 294, ff. 447-448 described by B. Millett in Coll. Hib. No. 8 (1965) 37. It was published by T. Burke in the Supplementum Hiberniae Dominicanae (1772) 929. The point is mentioned by A. Gwynn and N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: Ireland*, London 1970, 304. And by A. Downey who wrote three articles on the Augustinians in Limerick in the diocesan magazine *Catholic Life*, Christmas 1959, Spring 1960, and Summer 1960.

The controversy was not a complete defeat for the losing parties: their determined stand against the Augustinians scared off the Carmelites and Capuchins who in 1733 were equally interested in making foundations at Limerick <sup>79</sup>. To end on a more friendly note, one may mention that George Vaughan O.S.A., the Irish provincial, was treated to a special dinner by the Irish Dominicans of San Sisto in May 1739 <sup>80</sup>.

#### THE IRISH REFUGE AT BRUSSELS, 1733-1738

The central figure in this interesting and hitherto unknown chapter of Irish Dominican history was Sister Julia Browne who is said to have belonged to the family of Browne of the Neale in county Mayo. She entered the Order at Galway in 1711, made profession there on 27 December 1712, went to Dublin as one of the founding sisters about 1717, and was prioress of the Dublin monastery in Channel Row from 1726 to 1729 <sup>81</sup>. On ceasing to be prioress she got leave to take the waters at Spa near Liège and Sister Mary O'Daly of Dublin was permitted to go to the continent as her companion. In the course of this journey, Sister Julia spent some time with the English Dominican nuns of Brussels and made so favourable an impression on her hosts that they elected her prioress in the autumn of 1730 for the usual three-year term. Unfortunately, Julia's term of office and her honeymoon with the English sisters ended together in 1733. Raymund Greene, the nuns' confessor, alleged that she wished to be affiliated to the English monastery and that she also wanted to take some of the nuns for a new monastery she planned to found in Brussels. So fearful were the English nuns of her strong personality that they refused to proceed to a fresh election until Julia Browne was safely out of the house <sup>82</sup>.

Sister Julia's plan was to establish a small monastery or refuge at Brussels to which the nuns of Dublin might retire should the following

<sup>79</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 701-702.

<sup>80</sup> The other guests were bishop Sylvester Lloyd of Waterford and George Byrne, dean of Dublin. SCAR, Account-book 1730-47 (section on expenses), p. 168.

<sup>81</sup> Anon., *Annals of the Dominican Convent of Cabra*, Dublin 1912, 21-43. This work says nothing of the Brussels foundation, and very little about Sister Julia. I am indebted to Fr. Luke Taheney for the date of profession which he copied from the original register in Taylor's Hill, Galway. The name in the register is "Sister July Jesus Browne".

<sup>82</sup> AGOP IV, 214, pp. 20-21, 82, 89. There are innumerable references to Julia Browne in this particular register.

parliament oblige them to go into exile. The famous "Report on the State of Popery" had only recently appeared, and in 1732 (as the following text testifies) the Franciscan, Augustinian, and Dominican nuns of Galway had been forced by the magistrates to disperse. Her scheme, therefore, can appear visionary only in retrospect. In March 1733 some Irish bishops recommended the plan in a petition to the Archduchess Maria Elizabeth, governess of the Austrian Netherlands. Their formal request has survived in the archives of the archdiocese of Brussels-Malines and is reproduced here by courtesy of the historian who found it, Fr. A.M. Bogaerts O.P.<sup>83</sup>

Serenissimae Austriae Archiduci, necnon Belgii Austriaci Gubernatrici, & &.

Nos infrascripti in regno Hiberniae episcopi humillime exponimus Serenissimae Celsitudini Vestrae Catholicos huius regni plurimas calamitates, necnon continuas, saevasque persecutiones ab anno 1698 ob Iesu Christi fidem sustinuisse per decreta parlamentaria iam inde condita, et singulis bienniis condenda contra universum clerum et populum orthodoxum, ita ut nisi Deus O. M. se tanto opposuerit malo, Catholica fides in hoc regno erit brevi penitus eversa.

Et quandoquidem plures sint praenobiles filiae, quae vitam monasticam in hac quondam sanctorum insula amplexae sunt, quae religiosae virgines inevitabili periculo et ruinae per leges iam latas obnoxiae sunt, quoties magistratui leges exequi placuerit, prout anno praeterito [1732] in civitate Galviensi perluctuose tres monialium aedes diversorum ordinum expertae sunt, cum per magistratum domus deserere, fugam arripere, et ad parentum aedes pro azylo recurrere impellerentur.

Hinc est quod nos ad instantiam religiosarum sororum Ordinis S. Dominici Dublinii Ser. Cel. Vrae humillime representamus, quantum illis opus est veniam obtinere ab aliquo Catholico et Christiano Principe, ut azylum in eius ditione (propriis illarum sororum expensis) sibi comparare queant.

Nos, S. C. Vrae oratores, ardentem optamus quatenus vestro Catholicissimo Diplomate praefatis sororibus S. Dominici permittatur, ut sibi domum et hortum emant in aliqua commoda civitate vel villa sub dominio augustissimae Do-

<sup>83</sup> Fr. Bogaerts found and listed (in a typed but unpublished volume which calendars all the Dominican documents at Malines) seventeen documents bearing on the Irish refuge at Brussels. He courteously sent me photographic copies of them. So far as I can judge, the proper archival reference for them all is Archives of the archdiocese of Malines, VII. Deel 1, § II. Vrouwenkloosters.

The document reproduced above was undated, but bears a secretarial note of 16 March 1733. After the text of the petition there follows the decree of Maria Elizabeth (6 July 1734) declaring that the petition had been favourably received by the Emperor.

mus Austriacae, quae sua conspicua pietate et zelo Ecclesiae Dei, et Christianesimo tot retro saeculis sustentaculum fuit et est.

Huius nostrae supplicationis praesentationem S. C. Vrae sorori Iulianae Browne actuali Dominicanarum Anglarum Bruxellis priorissae, vel cuicumque procuratori ab illa deputato committere aequum iudicavimus: cum praefata priorissa fuerit de primis quae hanc familiam Dubliniensem instituit, quamque laudabiliter rexit.

Cum hae religiosae sint futurae nec oneri gubernio nec subditis augustissimi et catholicissimi Imperatoris praepiudicio, nos in summam expectationem adducit illas hanc gratiam et permissionem obtenturas esse sub clientela S. C. Vrae; et semper pro S. C. Tuae Augustissimaeque Domus Austriacae prosperitate et incolumitate orabimus.

Erat signatum: Hugo [MacMahon] archiep. Armacanus, totius Hiberniae primas.

Lucas [Fagan] archiep. Dubliniensis et Hiberniae primas.  
fr. Stephanus [MacEgan O.P.] Medensis episcopus.  
fr. Dominicus [O'Daly O.P.] ep. Accadensis.  
fr. Michael [MacDonogh O.P.] ep. Kilmorensis.  
fr. Patritius [French O.F.M.] ep. Elfinensis.  
fr. Petrus [Mulligan O.S.A.] ep. Ardaghensis.  
fr. Silvester [Lloyd O.F.M.] ep. Laonensis.

Sister Julia Browne seems to have expected some support for the scheme from the English nuns already on the spot. Perhaps, as they alleged, she wished two or three of them to form the first community until the Irish sisters should arrive. This would have raised serious financial difficulties for the English Dominicans, because the transfer of a nun automatically meant the transfer either of her dowry or of the interest on it, so it is not surprising that Julia was politely told to manage the refuge herself. At first she intended to stay with the Belgian nuns of the order at Oudergem near Brussels, but in January 1734 the cardinal-archbishop of Malines brought her in his own coach to a Benedictine monastery where the nuncio permitted her to remain until such time as her business was concluded. She owed this high patronage to a recommendation from Hugh MacMahon, archbishop of Armagh, who had played such a large part in the foundation of the monastery in Drogheda.

Eventually, Julia's negotiations bore fruit and the nuns of Dublin were permitted to buy a house and garden in Brussels which they might turn into the refuge they required. The conditions imposed, however, were rather stiff. They are set forth at length in the imperial indult or



*octroi* issued by the Emperor Charles VI at his castle in Luxembourg on 2 June 1734: this document too is preserved at Malines<sup>84</sup>.

1. Que les dittes religieuses devront avant tout exprimer l'endroit ou elles auroient envie d'establi leur demeure.

2. Qu'elles seront obligées de paier pour la première acquisition les droit de lot et vente, appelez pont-penninghen, et de continuer ce payment tous les trente ans en deux fois, c'est a dire de 15 en 15 années regulièrement la moietie.

3. Pour eviter qu'avec le tems cet etablissement ne retombe point a la charge de la ville, les dittes religieuses devront preallablement faire conster d'être pourvues des moyens suffisans pour la subsistance du nombre actuel des religieuses, a quel effect l'argent necessaire devra être employé a interet en notre Pais Bas.

4. Que le nombre des religieuses n'excèdera jamais celui que notre susdittes tres chere et tres aimée sœur [Marie Elizabeth] trouvera bon de fixer, et avant d'admettre quelque novice, on devra faire conster des moyen necessaires pour sa subsistance.

5. Que les dittes religieuses ne demanderont jamais aucune exemption des acceises ou d'autres charges quelconques.

6. Qu'elles n'auront jamais des ecole publiques, ni pourront admettre des pensionnaire natives de mon dit Pais Bas.

The archbishop of Malines found a suitable property offered for sale at £ 600. Sister Julia made a part-payment of two hundred and wrote to the monastery in Dublin which she expected would pay the balance and send out six sisters to launch the foundation. Impressed by the rank of the patrons who were working on Julia's behalf, the master general consented to the foundation on 11 September 1734 and instructed the prior at Louvain, Dominic Brullaughan, to give her every assistance in his power<sup>85</sup>. On the same day, he wrote to the provincial, Bernard Mac-Henry, outlining the conditions imposed by the imperial decree. Julia Browne went herself to Ireland at this juncture, in company with Father Peter Killikelly of Louvain, to find the extra £ 400 needed for the house and the sisters who were to staff it.

<sup>84</sup> The reference here is as in the preceding note. The text of the conditions printed above is merely an extract from a notarial copy of the original ten-page document. Note that some of the plural nouns are given the singular form (*droit*, *moyen*, *pensionnaire*).

<sup>85</sup> AGOP IV. 214, pp. 106-107. Among the Malines documents there is a letter in French (Dublin, 10 July 1735) which Sister Julia wrote to a business friend in Brussels.



Despite the support of two Dominican bishops — MacEgan of Meath and MacDonogh of Kilmore — Julia Browne's mission in Ireland was a failure, for the nuns of Dublin unanimously refused to buy a house in Brussels on the grounds that they neither needed nor could afford it: they would go to Brussels only if persecution left them with no alternative. The most Sister Julia could do was to use her own dowry of £ 150 which had been held by her brother from the time of her transfer in 1717 from Galway to Dublin. Even this drew energetic protests from Channel Row, but the master general gave the required permission: if Galway, he said, had not been ruined by the loss of seven dowries, Dublin would not be ruined by the loss of one <sup>86</sup>.

The whole project was thus opposed by the very nuns in whose name and for whose sake it had been broached. But Julia Browne, a woman of infinite resource, had no intention of stopping now. By the autumn of 1736 she was once more in Brussels, sheltering with the Canonesses Regular of St. Augustine at Berlemont. Her first step was to obtain a companion from the English Dominican monastery nearby, and her choice fell on a nun already mentioned in this story — Sister Margaret Joseph Compton who had so earnestly wished to take part in the foundation of Drogheda in 1722. The English sisters refused to give her up; the General refused to let her go without the consent of the community; but Sister Julia procured a papal decree (dated 28 August 1737) which permitted Sister Compton to betake herself to the Irish refuge without the consent of the English nuns, and she was whisked away in a coach by a commissary of the archbishop of Malines before the English sisters could even inform their vicar-provincial <sup>87</sup>.

In the meanwhile, Bernard MacHenry and the nuns of Dublin made a written statement unfavourable to the Brussels foundation. Father Ripoll felt that this "decree" did Julia Browne an injustice, but since it did permit her to use her dowry of £ 150 for the immediate purchase of a house, he said that it granted the point on which she most insisted. Sister Julia found another ally in the English priest Francis Goddard, administrator of the nunciature in Brussels, who took her part against the Irish provincial and the nuns of Dublin. By June 1737 she was living with three girls (her nieces, apparently) in a rented house which she had fitted out with a grille and chapel at a total cost of £ 500. The cardinal-archbishop of Malines not only took care of the decoration of

<sup>86</sup> 3 Aug. 1736. Ripoll to the sisters in Dublin. AGOP IV. 214, p. 137.

<sup>87</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 141; 217, pp. 11, 14, 21.

the chapel, but sent his own secretary to supervise the workmen. Two of the Galway community, Sisters Mary and Elizabeth Browne, were permitted in August 1737 to set out for Brussels: it was intended that they should live on the interest on their dowries, the same arrangement as that under which Father MacHenry had recently permitted Sister Margaret Browne of Galway to go to Waterford<sup>88</sup>. Margaret Compton too, when she arrived, had the interest on her dowry, though the capital sum of £ 350 remained in the hands of the English Dominican nuns.

In the summer of 1738, where we must break off this story for a while, Sister Julia Browne was installed in her rented house at Brussels with Sister Compton and Sister Mary Browne of Galway. There was little to eat and not much room, but they tried to make a start by receiving "pensioners" or boarding pupils.

"DE MISSIONE ET MISSIONARIIS", 1735-1737

Dominic Brullaughan, the author of the book in question here, was an outstanding missionary in the north of Ireland where his memory was preserved in oral tradition up to recent times. He was a professed cleric of the convent of Coleraine in 1688 and 1689, a student at Holy Cross, Louvain, from 1690 to 1696, and a preacher in Ireland thereafter until 1734. Most probably he ignored the general exile of 1698, for one finds that he was made prior of his native convent of Coleraine on 5 October 1702. He held the same office in 1713 when suggested as a possible provincial, and again in 1721 when elected a definitor at the provincial chapter in Dublin<sup>89</sup>.

Though not an official lector or reader within the Order, Brullaughan published more writings than many who were. While still a youth, he printed some scholastic theses at Louvain and in 1726 published a treatise on simony in response to some Irish clergyman who had written on

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<sup>88</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 2-12. This volume, like the preceding one (214) is full of references to the Brussels refuge. The present account, long as it is, does not do full justice to the sources. And it is quite likely that there are further details still in the archives of the nuns of Carisbrooke in the Isle of Wight, successors of the English nuns of Brussels.

<sup>89</sup> AFP 38 (1968) 289, 303, 328. The details of his early life are taken from the *Liber Provinciae* now in Tallaght. There is an excellent but undocumented article on Dom. Brullaughan by Brian Mac Giolla Phádraig, *An Bráthair Bán*, in *An tUltach*, Vol. 37 no. 3 (Mar. 1960) 4-5. Some local traditions about him, collected in 1918, were noted by Fr. MacInerney in his notebook G 10, now in the Tallaght archives.

that subject. No copy of his book on simony is known to survive, but since it offended many — particularly Hugh MacMahon archbishop of Armagh — it probably dealt with forms of "simony" to which Irish bishops were exposed: the acceptance of money from candidates for ordination or from pastors upon their collation to parishes<sup>90</sup>.

As has been mentioned already, Dominic Brullaughan was active in the Cavan area in the early part of 1734 when Thomas Ripoll appointed him vicar-general in the belief that the provincial chapter of that year would not take place as planned. In the event, he pleaded old age and sickness as excuses for not attending the chapter at all, and wrote to the definitory offering to resign his mastership in favour of a younger missionary of their choice. Perhaps he intended to bequeath the degree, as it were, to the new provincial Bernard MacHenry, with whom he was working in Cavan and who was like himself a son of Coleraine. However, the master general declined the offer because of its novelty and suggested that Father MacHenry might wait until a vacancy arose in the usual way<sup>91</sup>.

Dominic Brullaughan may have been old and sick in the summer of 1734, but he was able to travel to Louvain about six weeks later to take up the priorship of Holy Cross and to assist Julia Brown in her negotiations at Brussels. He proved a strict prior and conscientious administrator<sup>92</sup>, but his efforts to improve religious observance among the lectors did not prevent him from turning his hand once more to literary pursuits. In March 1735 he obtained the General's licence to print two books, one on St. Patrick's Purgatory (a place of pilgrimage in Donegal), and the other on Irish missionary method. The appointed censors were Martin Brasseur, a Belgian Dominican, and Patrick Brullaughan, the author's nephew, who was second regent at Holy Cross<sup>93</sup>.

<sup>90</sup> SOP (ed. Papillon) 827-828. Licence to publish this work on simony was given by the General on 27 Apr. 1726. AGOP IV, 201, p. 130. Brullaughan himself said that it was approved at Louvain. AGOP IV, 214, p. 142. Armagh's annoyance is mentioned *loc. cit.*, p. 145. That the book was actually printed appears from Brullaughan's *De Missione* (2nd ed., Metz 1747, p. 177) where he says: "Sed de simonia in alio opusculo satis tractavi".

<sup>91</sup> The definitory wrote to the General about Brullaughan's offer in May 1734. The original letter is in AGOP XIII, 68095. The reply (10 July) is registered in IV 214, p. 104.

<sup>92</sup> Jerome T'seraerts, visitor of Holy Cross in October 1735, described him as follows: "bonus, pius, zelosus, et religiosus, sed zelus saepe non discretionem sed passionem regitur". AGOP IV, 214, p. 125.

<sup>93</sup> 5 Mar. 1735. Ripoll to Dom. Brullaughan. AGOP IV, 214, p. 113. That Pa-

The first book raised no difficulty: it seems to have been a Latin version of the English work on Patrick's Purgatory which he had published at Belfast in 1726 and would later re-publish at Dublin in 1742. The volume appeared in duodecimo at Louvain about 1735 under the title: *In nomine Iesu Christi opusculum de Purgatorio Sancti Patritii Hyberniae patroni*<sup>94</sup>.

The second book, *Opusculum de Missione et Missionariis*, caused the author rather more trouble, and reading through the volume now one wonders why. An elaborate use of scriptural allusion heavily overlays Brullaughan's advice to missionaries in Ireland. The very fact that it was written in Latin ensured that few laymen would read it. In modern times it has been quoted chiefly to show how itinerant friars and priests, working under the penal code, assembled the people in the fields for Mass and imparted to them the rudiments of Christian doctrine before admitting them to the sacraments. But in speaking of the temptations to which missionaries were exposed, Brullaughan came rather too close to the bone and it was for this, rather than for grammatical or doctrinal error, that his *Opusculum* was opposed.

The storm broke in September 1736 when half the intended number of copies had come from the printers. Some bishops and priests in Ireland, still smarting at the recollection of his earlier work on simony, wrote to Francis Goddard at the nunciature in Brussels to say that whatever Brullaughan might write on missionaries would give offence in Ireland. Worse than Pharaoh, said the author, to condemn the child unseen, no matter whether it was male or female. When Goddard made enquiries at Holy Cross, Patrick Brullaughan (the censor) presented him with an annotated copy indicating the passages which he had recommended should be changed. But, after trying to save his own skin by accusing his uncle of ignoring the censor's comments, Patrick Brullaughan stole a copy of the book from his uncle's room and sent it to John Fitzmaurice O.P. at Lisbon. Thanks to the immediate, energetic action of Goddard and Ripoll, working in concert, an embargo was placed on the publication of the book in Portugal and the stray copy ended up in the hands of the Inquisition at Lisbon.

Goddard had already brought the matter to the notice of the cardinal

trick was Dominic's nephew is stated loc. cit., p. 140. This Patrick was later *theologus Casanatensis* (1742-1756).

<sup>94</sup> SOP (ed. Papillon) 827-828. J. C. Brunet, *Manuel du Libraire*, I - première partie, Paris 1860, c. 1289. A later Dublin printing (1810ca) of the English version is listed in the Catalogue of the Gilbert Library, Dublin 1918, 45.



archbishop of Malines to whom Brullaughan (without permission) had dedicated the *Opusculum*. An examiner appointed by the cardinal subsequently declared that there was a grammatical error on almost every page and that the book insulted the bishops and missionaries of Ireland<sup>95</sup>. Another copy was sent to Propaganda Fide by the administrator of the nunciature who ordered the author to retrieve the entire stock from the printers and to keep it under lock and key until Rome gave its verdict. On 24 November 1736 the master general put Dominic Brullaughan under formal precept to hand all the copies over to Goddard or to burn them in his presence<sup>96</sup>, so the unfortunate author put the books into a sack and deposited them in the archives of the nunciature pending a decision from Rome. Father Thomas Ripoll would not even permit Brullaughan to write to Propaganda in his own defence, which perhaps explains why he resigned his priorship at Louvain in January 1737<sup>97</sup>.

The book was formally condemned by the Holy Office in Rome on 2 July 1737<sup>98</sup>. Dominic Brullaughan survived the blow until 1746 when he died in his native county of Derry at the age of about eighty years. In 1747, a second printing of his *Opusculum* appeared in mysterious circumstances at Metz, and it is thanks to this pirated edition that the book is known at all<sup>99</sup>.

#### REGULAR AND SECULAR, 1733-1736

Some of the problems which brought the regular and secular clergy of Ireland into conflict about 1725 came again to the fore ten years later. Hyacinth Keaghry, prior of Athenry, wrote at length on the subject to cardinal Imperiali in 1735, complaining particularly of the Gallicanism

<sup>95</sup> C. Giblin, *Nunziatura di Fiandra*, in *Coll. Hib. No. 9* (1966) 65-67. See also APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 456-469.

<sup>96</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 145.

<sup>97</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> *Loc. cit.*, pp. 10-11. Three copies of the official Roman broadside condemning the printing or reading of the book occur in APF, SC Olanda 10, ff. 742-744. Because of this decree, it is likely that all the copies of *De Missione* in the archives of the nunciature at Brussels were burnt.

<sup>99</sup> There are copies of the Metz edition at San Clemente (Rome) and St. Mary's, Tallaght, Co. Dublin. It is not extremely rare. Neither edition, nor the work on simony, is mentioned by T. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 550, who gives a notice of the author. The Metz edition was printed by François Antoine and includes a letter of approbation (Paris, 1 Dec. 1745) by A. Le Seigneur, doctor of the Sorbonne, who had examined a printed copy of the book at the request of the Chancellor of France.



of the diocesan clergy<sup>1</sup>. According to the prior, bishops and parish priests who had studied in France were rejecting Roman decisions (e.g. with regard to prohibited books) unless subsequently endorsed by themselves. The bishops claimed to rule by divine right and sought to destroy the regulars whom they called the "Pope's Dragoons", upholders of a papal infallibility which they for their part did not accept.

As usual, the complaint stemmed from more practical considerations. Bernard O'Gara, archbishop of Tuam, had recently commanded the friars not to absent themselves from their dwellings for more than three days at a time. If Hyacinth Keaghry may be believed, he also withdrew from the regulars their faculties to hear confessions and refused to examine friars presenting themselves for his approval. The archbishop felt that the mission stood in no need of regulars who had, in any case, been founded for the contemplative and not the active ministry. His decisions excluded the friars from much of their normal apostolate and *ipso facto* made it difficult for them to earn a living.

Keaghry's letter was forwarded to Mgr. Spinelli, archbishop of Naples and cardinal Imperiali's nephew, who for ten years (1721-1731) had directed the nunciature at Brussels. Spinelli thought that since the Irish regulars and seculars were always at odds, the prior's letter probably exaggerated the position. He suggested that Rome should prohibit the circulation in Ireland of books on papal authority and appoint only bishops notoriously attached to the Holy See<sup>2</sup>.

Two other sources of friction — bination and questing — also reappeared at this time. The archbishop of Armagh, speaking for the entire hierarchy, elicited a ruling from the nuncio at Brussels in 1734 that no one was to binate save in cases of urgent necessity and with the express permission of the local bishop<sup>3</sup>. Michael MacDonogh of Kilmore claimed that some bishops used this decree to the disadvantage of the

<sup>1</sup> Imperiali was protector of Ireland. A slightly imperfect text of the letter (28 Oct. 1735) was edited from SCAR by H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in Coll. Hib. No. 8 (1965) 64-67. There is a better one in APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 390-391.

One may also note an anonymous letter (6 June 1735) from a friar to the nuncio calling for more active measures to maintain the purity of the faith in Ireland. The writer listed 12 propositions he wished condemned. Loc. cit., ff. 369-372.

<sup>2</sup> Naples, 4 Feb. 1736. Spinelli to Monti, secretary of Propaganda. Loc. cit., ff. 389, 392. After 1740 the bishops of Connacht were remarkable for their good relations with the regular clergy, perhaps because of the type of policy recommended by Spinelli.

<sup>3</sup> C. Giblin, *Nunziatura di Fiandra*, in Coll. Hib. No. 9 (1966) 68.

friars, forbidding them to say two Masses on Sundays and feastdays (hitherto the general practice) while permitting the secular clergy to do so. The favoured parish clergy then proceeded to beg from the altars, leaving the friars to content themselves with the empty title of mendicants<sup>4</sup>. The Franciscans raised the same two points after their provincial chapter in 1736: they applied to Brussels for redress, but got very small satisfaction with regard to questing and none at all on the bination issue<sup>5</sup>.

Bination seems to have been a local and passing problem, confined between 1733 and 1736 almost exclusively to the archdiocese of Armagh. So much at least was stated by the regulars and townspeople of Drogheda who appealed to the nuncio against the archbishop in December 1736<sup>6</sup>. The fact explains why bishop MacDonogh, a suffragan of Armagh, took such a keen interest in the question. Questing, on the other hand, posed a widespread and persistent difficulty. Parish priests and curates had little choice but to beg at their chapel doors and to collect turf, grain, hay, and so forth throughout their parishes at certain times of the year.

So far as is known, Propaganda never laid down the law with regard to the quest. Perhaps there was no need to do so, for the friars had little legal basis for complaint. As Thomas Ripoll remarked in reply to Michael MacDonogh, the privilege of questing was not a privative one and the diocesan clergy might quest if they pleased<sup>7</sup>. But the Propaganda decrees of 1751 for Ireland did include a ruling on bination, a ruling which simply re-echoed the nuncio's decision of 1734<sup>8</sup>.

#### NOVICES IN SCOTLAND, 1737

Father Bernard MacHenry's interest in Scotland did not slacken with the years. The reader will recall that in 1729 his place in the Highlands was taken by Michael Ryan or Mulrian who laboured in Glengarry until 1731 when circumstances forced him to retire. At the time

<sup>4</sup> H. Fenning, Michael MacDonogh, Bishop of Kilmore, in *Irish Eccles. Record*, (Sept. 1966) 143.

<sup>5</sup> C. Giblin, loc. cit., 67-68. The letter of 12 Oct. 1736 calendared here occurs also in a copy in APF, SC Irlanda 9, ff. 472-473.

<sup>6</sup> Drogheda, 12 Dec. 1736. Signed by Jn. Donnelly, O.P., prior-elect, among others. Forwarded from Brussels to Rome on 25 Jan. 1737. APF, SC Olanda 10, ff. 727-729.

<sup>7</sup> 12 Mar. 1735. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 113-114.

<sup>8</sup> T. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 180.

of Ryan's departure, another Dominican named Ambrose O'Connor had already been a year in Scotland. This priest, if the identification be correct, had studied in Spain from whence he returned to Ireland as a lector in 1729<sup>9</sup>. A list of missionaries compiled in 1734 tells us that O'Connor served in Moidart, taking care of an area of 1,800 square miles which included Letterlochshiel, Glenaladale, Glenfinnan, Ardnamurchan, Sunart, Morven, and the islands of Shona, Coll, and Mull. The list expressly states that he was then four years on the mission<sup>10</sup>.

At the suggestion of Father Membriye, a Dominican attached as theologian to the court of James III, the provincial (imagining that Membriye spoke in the name of the General) advised Ambrose O'Connor in 1737 to give the habit of the order to some Scottish boys of promise. The master general was quite displeased. If, he said, novices could not properly be trained in Ireland, it was still less likely that they could be cared for in Scotland where "only three or four Dominicans" lived. Father Ripoll insisted that if any had actually received the habit they were either to be dismissed or admitted to the Irish province. Father MacHenry was bluntly told to leave Scotland alone and to attend to his own affairs<sup>11</sup>. The provincial, who recalled O'Connor to Ireland in July 1737, was later instructed by the General to withdraw him completely from the Scottish mission<sup>12</sup>.

There is little more to add about Father MacHenry's first term of office. The account-books of Esker and Galway show that he visited those communities in June 1737. In the following October he got leave from Rome to hold the coming provincial chapter in whichever convent seemed most convenient, for it appeared undesirable to hold the chapter in Drogheda as had been planned. On the same occasion he asked

<sup>9</sup> He is mentioned as having received the royal viatick to return to Ireland in October 1729. Simancas, *Segreteria de Hacienda*, no. 966. From the notes of Reg. Walsh in the provincial archives, Tallaght. After his spell in Scotland (1730-37), O'Connor went to the West Indies where he died before 1743. A homonym left Louvain for Ireland in 1729 and spent most of his life as a parish priest in the Wicklow area.

<sup>10</sup> APF, CP 86, ff. 119-120. The only other Irish missionary mentioned here was Ant. Kelly O.F.M. at Barra in the Hebrides who had served 8 years. Both Kelly and O'Connor signed a letter to Propaganda on 21 Apr. 1735. *Loc. cit.*, ff. 207-208.

<sup>11</sup> 20 Apr. 1737. Ripoll to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 5. It is hard to credit that there were even 3 or 4 Dominicans then in Scotland. Pat. Reynolds at Carpentras got leave to go to Scotland on 5 Oct. 1734. AGOP IV. 214, p. 107.

<sup>12</sup> 12 Oct. 1737. Ripoll to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 16. O'Connor's removal from Scotland in July 1737 is noted by J. F. S. Gordon, *Journal and Appendix to Scotichronicon*, 635, where O'Connor is mistakenly described as a Franciscan.

Thomas Ripoll to favour the promotion of bishop Michael MacDonogh to the vacant diocese of Armagh<sup>13</sup>. After the election of his successor, John Fottrell, on 22 April 1738, Bernard MacHenry appears to have returned to the scene of his former labours in the diocese of Kilmore. A list of addresses in Fottrell's hand indicates that MacHenry was living "near Belturbet" in 1738: Belturbet was in or beside the "Dominican" parish of Drumlahane, now Drumlane, given to the order by bishop MacDonogh. In 1743 he was described as a pastor in the diocese of Kilmore<sup>14</sup>. With the death of Dominic Brullaghan in 1746, the way was clear for MacHenry's promotion to the mastership of theology which he duly received in August 1748<sup>15</sup>. A year later he was elected provincial of Ireland for the second time.

#### JOHN FOTTRELL, 1738-1742

The new provincial, elected on 22 April 1738, was remarkable for three things: he was elected almost by accident, was arrested in the course of his visitation, and survived his term of office by more than forty years. The English surname Fottrell, borne by several members of the province at the time, indicates that he came from the Dublin area where that family had lived since the fifteenth century. He was born about 1701, joined the Order in or for the convent of Dublin about 1720, began his studies at Lisbon, and on 7 April 1726 (the first definite date in his career) was assigned as a student of theology to the convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence<sup>16</sup>.

Fottrell soon became a lector, for in July 1727 the master general appointed him to teach philosophy at Lisbon, having been given to understand by the rector that such was the wish of the provincial chapter. The rector, Joseph Lynch, was being less than honest, since the Irish provincial had recently named John Fitzmaurice for the same post: but Lynch calculated that he could get Fottrell instead of Fitzmaurice by ignoring one superior and deceiving the other. He did not succeed<sup>17</sup>. Instead of returning to Lisbon, John Fottrell went back to Dublin where he began

<sup>13</sup> 12 Oct. 1737. Ripoll to MacHenry, *ut supra*.

<sup>14</sup> Brussels, 7 June 1743, Nuncio to card. Petra, prefect of Propaganda. The full text is given below, pp. 185-186.

<sup>15</sup> 20 Aug. 1748, on the postulation of the general chapter. AGOP IV. 217, p. 109.

<sup>16</sup> AGOP IV. 213, f. 2<sup>v</sup>. *Hibernia Dominicana*, 197, 530.

<sup>17</sup> AGOP IV. 201, pp. 138-139; 214, p. 1.

his ministry in 1729<sup>18</sup>. One finds him there as subprior in 1732, 1733, and 1737, and as prior of the convent from March of that latter year<sup>19</sup>.

Fottrell's election as prior of Dublin involved him in a bizarre episode which has already been described elsewhere and need not therefore detain us very long<sup>20</sup>. After the prioral election was confirmed by the provincial in the usual way, all went well until 21 December 1737 when a letter from the General (dated 15 October) arrived in the post, cassating Fottrell's election. The provincial, Bernard MacHenry, thereupon called a second election in which, out of eleven votes, there were six for Fottrell, three for his predecessor Laurence Richardson, one for James Sexton and one blank. This result being inconclusive, the matter was referred to Father Ripoll who declared that he had never cassated the first election at all. Investigation revealed that the "cassation" was a forgery perpetrated with the intention of having Laurence Richardson named "perpetual vicar" of the Dublin community. Philip Lynham, Nicholas Crump, Laurence Ford, and Richardson himself were the prime suspects.

The mystery was still being probed when the chapter met in April 1738 to elect a provincial from Leinster. According to Thomas Burke the historian, writing thirty-five years after the event, there were only two candidates in the field: Terence O'Reilly and the suspected forger Laurence Richardson<sup>21</sup>. When the election opened, "a stiff contention" developed between those who were for O'Reilly and those, of equal number, who favoured Richardson. And since neither block would yield to the other, the provincialate finally fell into the surprised hands of John Fottrell, prior of Dublin. His election was confirmed by the General on 16 August<sup>22</sup>.

The legislation framed by the elective chapter fell into what was quickly becoming the accepted pattern: most of the acts was taken up by innumerable postulations for the degrees of the Order, many of them in

<sup>18</sup> The chapter of 1734, when postulating him for the P. G., said that he had laboured for five years in Dublin. He obtained the promotion on 25 Aug. 1736. AGOP IV. 214, p. 138.

<sup>19</sup> On 6 May 1732 he signed a letter at Dublin as subprior. AGOP XIII. 68095. That he was subprior in 1733 and 1737 is mentioned in AGOP IV. 214, p. 89; 217, p. 4. His election as prior in March 1737 is mentioned in 217, pp. 22-23.

<sup>20</sup> H. Fenning, Laurence Richardson O.P., Bishop of Kilmore, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (Mar. 1968) 144-145.

<sup>21</sup> Kilkenny, 9 Dec. 1773. Burke to J. T. Troy at Rome. Dublin diocesan archives.

<sup>22</sup> Possibly on 19 August, since there is an error in the register. AGOP IV. 217, p. 33.



favour of priests who had spent no more than a few years on the mission. One novel and (to us) useful feature was the addition of a list of those who had died since the previous chapter of 1734. The total number was twenty-three or about six a year, from which it is evident that the province was still expanding; they were certainly receiving at least twice as many as they lost by death<sup>23</sup>. The chapter repeated earlier laws respecting novices and complained strongly of the foreign colleges which sometimes gave the habit to candidates already rejected in Ireland (ord. 3). From what we know, the fault lay more often with the superiors on the mission. Patrick Kindelan, a student who gave signs of mental illness before ever leaving home, was in 1728 committed to a Roman asylum where he had to remain until his death<sup>24</sup>. Coming closer to the date of the chapter one finds a priest, John Dougherty, who after ordination in Ireland was sent to begin philosophy at Forlì about 1740. Not merely had he wretched health, but his Italian professors failed to teach him how to write a lesson or a letter, so that Father Ripoll was forced to send him back to Ireland as innocent of learning as he had left it<sup>25</sup>.

When confirming the acts on 27 September 1738, the General made an addition requiring students bound for Louvain or Lisbon to reach those colleges by the feast of Holy Cross (14 September), the beginning of the scholastic year: students bound for Rome were to be at St. Sixtus before the end of June so as to avoid travelling in the full heat of summer<sup>26</sup>. This ordination was prompted by the late arrival in Rome of three clerics (James Bodkin, Patrick Kirwan, and John Browne — obviously Galwaymen) on 9 January 1738: the community had been waiting for them since 1 July of the previous year for the beginning of the philosophy course<sup>27</sup>. The General also explained a point about the postulation of candidates for degrees. Those lacking academic experience were to be postulated first as preachers general, then at some later chapter for the baccalaureate (S.T.P.) *titulo missionis*, and finally for the mastership in theology by the same title: this order or gradual progress from one degree to the other was to be invariably observed.

<sup>23</sup> Bern MacHenry reported in autumn 1735 that only 12 had been received in Ireland over the previous year. See above, pp. 149-150.

<sup>24</sup> AGOP XI, 3600, f. 46<sup>r</sup>. This is the *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* of St. Sixtus (1701-1743). It mentions that Kindelan died on 15 Jan. 1739.

<sup>25</sup> AGOP IV, 217, p. 71. See also last appendix to this book, where there are more details on Dougherty.

<sup>26</sup> AGOP IV, 217, pp. 34-35.

<sup>27</sup> AGOP XI, 3600, f. 48<sup>v</sup>.

## THE PROVINCIAL VISITATION OF 1739

In the year immediately following his election, John Fottrell was preoccupied by many things, but by nothing of outstanding importance. There was, for instance, a dispute between the convents of Dublin and Trim with regard to certain parishes (Dunboyne, Kilbride, Donaghmore, Ratoath) in which both claimed the right to quest. He had to deal with *graduati* who claimed exemption from the three faculty examinations, usual within the Order, because of the titles they held: this exemption covered those actually teaching, but not the "masters" and others in Ireland, many of whom had never taught at all<sup>28</sup>. Another troublesome affair was the case of Fr. Edmund Stones, a priest long suspended from the hearing of confessions. In order to make his suspension formal, the provincial surprised Stones in a chemist's shop in Thomas Street, Dublin, and began to read the official document in his presence. While attempting to escape, Father Stones cut his finger on the glass door of the shop, and the story (magnified in the telling) came to the notice of the master general. On 9 May 1739, Father Ripoll threatened to appoint a vicar general if the provincial did not restrain his impetuosity<sup>29</sup>. Soon after, John Fottrell set out on his first visitation of the Irish houses.

The most unusual aspect of the visitation was that the provincial was arrested in the course of it. While he was travelling with bishop MacDonogh O.P. near Lough Neagh — apparently heading for Coleraine where the bishop wished to reorganize his native convent — some magistrates seized them both on 6 June. Although they were soon released, their confiscated papers remained in the hands of the magistrates and came to light only in 1924 among the muniments of the Lenox-Conyngham family of Springhill, Moneymore, county Derry<sup>30</sup>. For a member of the regular clergy, and as such liable on discovery to imprisonment or transportation, Father Fottrell was carrying quite a collection of documents. Among them were the acts of five provincial chapters held since 1721, with the relevant confirmatory letters of the masters general. Another large bundle of papers concerned the visitation in which the provincial was engaged at the time of his arrest: formal pre-

<sup>28</sup> 15 Nov. 1738. Ripoll to Fottrell. AGOP IV, 217, pp. 37-38. The provincial had recently deposed Bon. Nagle, prior of Cashel, for misconduct. The exemption of the *graduati* is mentioned again on pp. 40-41.

<sup>29</sup> AGOP IV, 217, p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> See above, p. 148, note 53.

cepts, ordinations, and exhortations given to the nuns of Dublin and the priests and nuns of Drogheda, with a long address in English which Father Fottrell had delivered at a profession ceremony in Channel Row. The rest of the documents in this class lacking any indication of the communities to which they refer, they create the impression that John Fottrell had scarcely begun his visitation at the time of his arrest. The provincial was also carrying ten formal assignations, a formulary for official letters in Latin, notes (MacHenry's notes) on various convents and their personnel, lists of addresses and *graduati*, and some papers recording financial transactions. A good half of the so-called Fottrell Papers were in fact the papers of his predecessor, Bernard MacHenry<sup>31</sup>.

After regaining his liberty "with the connivance of friends", the provincial made a hasty retreat back to Dublin and after a short while began his visitation again. By October 1739 he was able to send the General an account of it which we find thus summarized in the registers in the usual indirect form<sup>32</sup>.

Patri Provinciali scribenti se visitasse totam provinciam, et se invenisse 38 conventus virorum, 182 fratres sacerdotes, 10 novitios bonae indolis, et 5 conversos, 3 monasteria monialium suae curae subiecta, quartum Pontanense. Moniales sunt in tribus monasteriis 66 chorales, 2 novitiae, 3 conversae. In omnibus conventibus habitant fratres simul in communi, excepto Culraniae in Ultonia et Gaulae<sup>33</sup>. Culraniae mandavit priori ut conducat domum in qua simul habitent; Gaulae posset idem fieri, si pater Thomas Nolan qui est ad latus episcopi Midensis [Stephani MacEgan] fratris nostri, cum licentia Magistri ordinis ut episcopus asserit, tribueret conventui quod deberet. Nam pater magister Antonius Maguire<sup>34</sup> reliquit conventui huic suo 250 lib. sterl., et pater Thomas eius nepos, qui 13 annis manet Dublini, percipit totum fructum huius capitalis, vix aliquot tribuendo conventui.

<sup>31</sup> On the bishop's papers, similarly confiscated and similarly preserved, see H. Fenning, Michael MacDonogh O.P., Bishop of Kilmore, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (Sept. 1966) 147.

<sup>32</sup> 14 Nov. 1739. Ripoll to Fottrell. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 54-55. Fottrell probably did this visitation hastily: he seems not to have signed the books in Galway or Athenry.

<sup>33</sup> The convents of Coleraine and Gola (near Enniskillen). It is curious that the Dominicans of Coleraine should have claimed in 1743 that they had had a "domicilium" there for more than 20 years. This was mentioned in the course of a dispute about questing between the Franciscans and Dominicans in the diocese of Connor. SCAR, Codex IV, docs. 24, 28.

<sup>34</sup> This is the former provincial (1717-1721) who died at Dublin on 4 July 1724. See above, pp. 80-92.

Pater Dominicus Burgo, Conaciensis, qui ab octo annis male vivit, ante annum apostatavit a fide. Patres Thomas Roche et Iacobus Nune, Conacienses, carceribus per 15 menses ab haeretico magistratu addicti sunt ob assistentiam clandestinis matrimoniis. Similibus matrimoniis assistit pater Ambrosius Gillman, qui se subtraxit obedientiae superiorum. In Momonia sunt similes inobedientes, patres Iacobus Condon, Patritius Hurly, Iohannes Ryan. In monasterio Waterfordiensi duae sunt sorores et una novitia [Catharina Wyse]: priorissa [Anastasia Wyse] desiderat adhuc aliam Dublini sororem Barbaram Esmond, sed Dublinienses nolunt ei dare fructum dotis. In causa falsificationis patentum examinavit patrem Philippum Lynham, qui totum negat. Patri magistro commissario [Iacobo Dillon] in causa patris [Edmundi] Stones ad omnia quaesita respondit. Si necdum per hoc sit satisfactum Reverendissimo, mittatur alius commissarius, etc.

#### THE FOREIGN COLLEGES, 1738-1740

Since the Roman college of SS. Sixtus and Clement had exchanged the jurisdiction of the Irish provincial for that of the master general in 1726, it gave Father Fottrell little cause for concern. His only duty was to send enough students there and to ensure that they arrived on time. At Lisbon, the situation had changed somewhat since 1728 when foreign jurisdiction (whether from Ireland or Rome) was prohibited by royal decree and the Irish Dominican college left to its own devices. After a few years, correspondence with Father Thomas Ripoll was renewed and the Irish provincials began to appoint, or at least to recommend candidates for the various offices in the convent. The Irish priests at Lisbon, finding themselves under the direction of two distinct and very distant superiors, tended to play one off against the other according as it suited the domestic politics of the house. There, as at Louvain, rivalry between members of the four "provinces" was intense.

It was only a matter of time before the community had to pay for its independent policy. The Irish provincials lost much of their interest in so troublesome a college and ceased to maintain the supply of students. According to a calculation made in 1736, the college was capable of supporting a minimum of sixteen students and a maximum of twenty, which number (with seven professors or other officials) would have constituted a total community of at least twenty-three<sup>35</sup>. Two years later, however, only fourteen were assigned to the college, and seven of the fourteen

<sup>35</sup> 8 Sept. 1736. Ripoll to the rector, John Donnelly. AGOP IV, 214, p. 139.

were from the province of Munster<sup>36</sup>. Some interesting details on Lisbon students of this period (1738-1740) have been preserved in the registers of the master general, details which it would be a pity not to mention here since the records of the college have been lost and one knows so little about those who studied there<sup>37</sup>.

The lector of philosophy began class in the autumn of 1738 with one solitary student, so that when another five later arrived (most of whom were destined for convents in Spain) the rector kept them all, even though four of the five were from Munster, appealing with convenient piety to an old ordination whereby students were to be admitted irrespective of their provinces of origin. Father Ripoll told him to keep the one student who was not from Munster, to send the other four to their arranged destinations, and to write to the Irish provincial for students from Leinster, Ulster, and Connacht. Reluctant to obey, the rector (Dominic Ferrall) sent away only two of the Munster students, which left him in April 1739 with a total of seven students, three of philosophy and four of theology. Although he had written to Father Fottrell asking for a priest who might act as vicar and sacristan, he had neither received a reply nor did he expect one: "for since Lisbon was withdrawn from his jurisdiction, the Irish provincial has no regard for the common good of the college, if indeed he does not injure it". Father Ripoll eventually wrote himself (11 July 1739) to the provincial, telling him to send out more students with strict regard for the parity of the four provinces.

By a happy accident, the registers give more details on the sequel than is usually the case. Christopher Fottrell came out from Ireland early in 1740 to be sacristan and vicar, while a lector named Eugene MacCrohan came to teach the "second course" of philosophy. The three philosophy students of the course begun in 1738 were Patrick MacDonogh of Connacht, and Thomas Keaghy and Hyacinth Sheasty, both of Munster<sup>38</sup>. Those who began the new course in 1740 had been carefully chosen by Father Fottrell, for each of the four belonged to a different province: John Frihy (Leinster), Dominic Kiernan (Ulster), Laurence Connillan (Connacht), and Louis Walsh (Munster). The master general assigned all seven philosophers to the college on 2 July 1740.

<sup>36</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> The details are in AGOP IV. 217, pp. 36-44, 63-64.

<sup>38</sup> The name is given as Kheacki in the text, but as Keaghy (a much better form) in the index to vol. 217. Sheasty or Cheasty was from Waterford.



Even before beginning his visitation in 1739, John Fottrell wished to visit Louvain, and Father Ripoll agreed that a canonical visit was necessary. Once his tour of the Irish houses finished in October, Fottrell set out for Holy Cross, the first provincial to leave Ireland since O'Shaghnessy's ill-fated expedition in 1728. He reached the college before Christmas and stayed there for two or three months. During the priorship of James Cormick, then drawing to a close, regular observance at Holy Cross had become rather slack, largely because the prior suffered from some form of paralysis which confined him frequently to bed. The provincial had to deal with James MacNamara, one of the lecturers, who had seriously injured the cook with a blow, and also with Paul Slattery who circulated copies of letters written by another member of the community (John Goulden) to a woman of his acquaintance. MacNamara was also guilty of retaining some of the goods, notably a watch, left on his death by John MacGhee, formerly vicar-provincial in the Low Countries. There was another domestic problem too. Edmund O'Reilly, a lecturer, Thomas Browne, the bursar, Joseph Joyce, and a student named Philip O'Reilly, had invested a sizeable sum in the lotteries of Ruremund and Mons instead of putting it into the common fund in favour of the building program on which the college had recently embarked.

All these difficulties were quickly solved. James Cormick resigned his priorship on 3 February 1740 and was replaced in the following August by Albert O'Brien of Cork. MacNamara, Slattery, and probably Goulden too, were sent back to Ireland after some months of severe penance. The lottery money was restored to the convent; Goulden's incriminating letters were burned; and Father Fottrell supervised the construction of a conventual prison, explaining to the General that it would at least serve as a deterrent<sup>39</sup>.

While still at Louvain, the provincial received Father Ripoll's dispensation from the holding of an intermediate provincial chapter on the plea that no one (save four of the Dublin community) wanted to have one<sup>40</sup>. He was referring to the circle surrounding Laurence Richardson — whom Fottrell described as an old enemy — a group which had twice already mistreated him: once by procuring his removal from office as prior of Dublin with the help of forged letters, and a second time by representing his treatment of Edmund Stones as a public scandal.

<sup>39</sup> All these details are taken from AGOP IV, 217, pp. 44, 53-59.

<sup>40</sup> 27 Feb. 1740. Ripoll to Fottrell. Ibidem, p. 58.

## THE IRISH REFUGE AT BRUSSELS, 1738-1740

An outline history has been given on an earlier page of the refuge for Irish nuns which Sister Julia Browne began to prepare in 1733 and actually founded in 1737. The story was brought up to the summer of 1738, at which time Sister Julia was living at Brussels in a rented house with the English sister Margaret Compton and Sister Mary Browne of Galway. A fourth nun, Sister Mary Evangelist O'Kelly, obtained on 5 July 1738 the General's permission to join them, and was by the same authority made prioress of the infant foundation on 30 May 1739<sup>41</sup>. Two other sisters from Galway — Elizabeth Browne and Catherine Lynch — though long expected, never came.

Their basic problem was a lack of money, whether because the interest on their dowries was too little or because Galway was slow in remitting it. Father Ripoll would not permit them to receive choir novices, nor would Sister Julia buy the house outright, until the refuge proved a success. Lack of money also prevented them from having Mass celebrated daily in the house. They could, and did take in pensioners or student boarders, but there were only two spare rooms and two of the nuns (Sisters Compton and Mary Browne) would not tolerate pensioners at any price.

Whatever the causes, their situation in September 1739 was described as desperate. The first to feel the strain was Sister Margaret Compton who asked leave to return to the monastery of the English nuns: after refusing repeated requests, Father Ripoll finally allowed her to go in October. The next was the prioress, Mary Evangelist O'Kelly, who said she had accepted office "as a pure act of obedience" and complained that the Brussels refuge did not at all correspond to what she had been led to imagine before leaving Ireland. The General insisted that the three Irish sisters should remain in Brussels until the provincial, John Fottrell, came out in person to see them.

The visitation at Brussels was held about Christmas 1739, and Father Fottrell's impressions were gloomy. The house was small and unsuitable. What few girl students they had withdrew to the English monastery on 2 January 1740. The prioress was suspicious of Julia Browne's intentions and fearful lest Galway should withhold the interest on their dowries. Father Ripoll, who favoured the project to the very last, thought that their only hope lay in the education of boarders, insisting indeed

<sup>41</sup> AGOP IV, 217, pp. 29-30, 43. The following section is based entirely on Vol. 217, pp. 43-76 *passim*.

(and this is a new detail) that that had been the primary aim of the foundation and the reason why the Queen of Portugal had lent it her support. Accordingly, he fell in with the provincial's suggestion that Sister Mary Browne (who would not or could not teach) should return to Galway and that two other Galway sisters, Catherine Lynch and Elizabeth Browne, should come out to Brussels in her stead.

While the provincial and the master general were solving the problem on paper, the sisters found another solution themselves. In February 1740 the prioress again insisted on returning to Ireland and Father Ripoll had not the heart to say no. Sister Mary Browne simultaneously withdrew to Antwerp *en route* to Ireland, leaving the foundress Sister Julia Browne on her own to witness the final collapse of her plans. Catherine Lynch could not afford to travel out from Galway, and a scheme (suggested in April 1740 by the bishop of Kilmore) to send Sister Henrietta Plunkett to Brussels from Drogheda came to nothing. Eventually, in September or October 1740, Sister Julia Browne admitted defeat and went to stay with her brother at Paris. She moved to London before November 1741 but soon returned to her own monastery at Dublin where she died in 1747<sup>42</sup>.

Her most faithful supporter, Thomas Ripoll, was deeply disappointed, regretting most of all that the opposition of her own Dominican brothers and sisters in Ireland had caused Julia's plan to fail. On the other hand, the increasingly more favourable political climate in Ireland soon removed whatever justification there might have been for such a refuge.

#### JOHN FOTTRELL'S LAST YEARS, 1740-1785

On finishing his work at Louvain in March 1740, John Fottrell proposed to visit the nine members of the province who worked in London as assistant priests in the various embassy chapels, but the General insisted that they were subject to the provincial of England and not to him. The provincial had to take fifteen pounds from the funds of Holy Cross to pay his passage home; it had already cost him as much for the single passage out from Dublin, and the province (he complained) was too poor even to pay his postal expenses<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> The date of death is given, without reference, in the published annals of the Cabra community in Dublin. Fr. Luke Taheney tells me that there is a note "Mass offered for Mrs. Browne" under the date 1747 in one of the books of Taylor's Hill monastery, Galway, which is an indication that she died in that year.

<sup>43</sup> 26 Mar. 1740. Ripoll to Fottrell. AGOP IV, 217, pp. 59-60.

The rest of Father Fottrell's provincialate was uneventful, save for another dispute he had with the Dublin community. It concerned a certain John Byrne, a son of the convent and a schoolmaster, who transferred his school from Dublin to county Kilkenny about 1735. After some years he was ejected by the Protestant bishop and returned once more in 1741 to teach in the capital<sup>44</sup>. Although assigned to the convent, as was his right, the community refused to receive him and it fell to the provincial to patch the matter up.

Father Fottrell performed a second visitation of all the Irish houses in the course of 1741. One may pick up his traces at Athenry where he signed the account-books on 8 August. In this case too, the provincial sent his report to the General in late autumn, but the surviving details chiefly refer to nine reprobate priests and tell us almost nothing of the state of the convents<sup>45</sup>.

Quidam tamen sunt qui male se gerunt, ut p. Dominicus Doyle qui ab uno anno cum femina malae famae vadit de loco in locum. Pater Philippus Lynham a duobus annis propter debita contracta Dublino fugit, et pariter est suspectus de mala familiaritate. Patres Thomas Roche et Iacobus Nune ex carceribus dimissi irreligiose vivunt; sicut et p. Ambrosius MacDonnel qui propter assistentiam matrimonii clandestini 16 mensibus fuit incarceratus. Pater Iohannes Connor ab aliquo tempore exercet artem medicam nec ab ea vult desistere: uno anno non celebravit et adstitit aliquot matrimoniis. Pater Iacobus Condon a 5 annis se subtraxit obedientiae. Pater Patritius Reynolds propter assistentiam matrimonio et ebrietates a 10 mensibus est suspensus a divinis. Pater Dominicus Burgo a fide apostata modo religiose vivit.

Soror Iulia Browne est Londini. Moniales volunt eam suscipere Dublini, si consignet suam dotem monasterio, velitque ibi manere assignata. Cum patres Lovanienses pacifice vivant, ad parcendum expensis rogat se dispensandum a visitatione ultra. Quidam fratres habentes curam animarum, frequenter tamen venientes ad conventum ad praestandam obedientiam superiori, in quibusdem conventibus admittuntur ad vocem activam, excepto conventu Pontanensi. Petit ut Rmus determinet, ut aut ubique gaudeant voce, aut ubique careant illa »<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> Jn. Byrne took the habit at St. Sixtus in 1714, returned from Bologna to Dublin in 1720, went to Rome again as first regent at St. Sixtus (from 1726) and returned to Dublin for the second time in 1728. On the dispute mentioned above, see AGOP IV. 217, pp. 71, 73-75.

<sup>45</sup> 30 Dec. 1741. Ripoll to Fottrell. AGOP IV. 217, p. 76.

<sup>46</sup> With regard to the active voice, Ripoll merely said: "disponat ipse secundum Deum et conscientiam". AGOP IV. 217, p. 76.



John Fottrell ceased to be provincial on 8 May 1742 and spent the rest of his long life in his native convent of Dublin. One finds details of his activities as prior of Dublin (1745-1748), vicar-provincial of Leinster (from 1748), confessor to the nuns of Drogheda (1749-1756) and those of Channel Row (1754). In 1749 he was named a master of sacred theology *titulo missionis*<sup>47</sup>. One of his letters (Dublin, 30 November 1781) to the rector of the college in Lisbon is still preserved in the provincial archives<sup>48</sup>. The *Freeman's Journal* on 18 January 1785 noted his recent death, so that Father Fottrell must have reached the great age of about eighty-four years<sup>49</sup>. He left some £ 400 in his will to the Roman convent of St. Sixtus, with a very light obligation to say Masses for the repose of his soul<sup>50</sup>.

#### PETER KILLIKELLY, 1742-1745

The new provincial, elected on 8 May 1742, was evidently born to rule: his whole early life (until he became a bishop) was a rapid passage from one position of responsibility to another, so rapid a passage indeed that he rarely finished a term of office before yet higher duties were thrust upon him. Even his provincialate was shortened in this way. Killikelly was a Galwayman, born near Kinvara about 1699, who took the habit in the convent of Galway, and went to Spain after profession for his studies. Like many another at that time, he was already in his early twenties when he entered the order. He first appears in the records in May 1727 when he was professor of philosophy and sacred scripture at Holy Cross, Louvain, although not yet a deacon<sup>51</sup>.

Peter Killikelly's progress at Holy Cross from one academic duty to another is well documented. He was master of students for some time

<sup>47</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 76, 80, 94, 113, 116, 142, 161.

<sup>48</sup> TA, Lisbon 6, bound in at the back of the volume.

<sup>49</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century Press*, Maynooth 1965, 321.

<sup>50</sup> The sum was 1,500 scudi. SCAR, No. 57. House-council book (1749-1797), p. 141.

<sup>51</sup> He was said on his death (29 May 1783) to have been in his 84th year. J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century Press*, 222. The inscription on his tomb in the Dominican chapel at Galway has fortunately been preserved in the journal of the Association for the Preservation of the Memorials of the Dead: Ireland, Vol. IV (Dublin 1900) 58. His novitiate at Galway (1723ca) and studies in Spain are attested only by T. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana*, 509, 531. His duties at Louvain in 1727 are mentioned in AGOP IV. 201, pp. 137, 140.



before 5 June 1728 when he was appointed second regent at the request both of the provincial and of his fellow-teachers in the college. Subsequently he was promoted first regent on 18 March 1730 and took up the duties of that office in the following June. Father Ripoll named him a bachelor of theology (S.T.P.) on 8 July of the same year. As if all this did not suffice, the community unanimously elected him prior in November 1730 and the master general granted him the unusual dispensation to be both prior and regent at once. This confidence was not misplaced: Peter Killikelly's rule at Louvain, though not untroubled, reflected only credit on himself. Greatly pleased with the *relatio status* submitted by the prior at the close of his three-year term, Father Ripoll expressed the hope that Killikelly's successor would do as well. On finishing his priorship (November 1733) and his regency (June 1734), Killikelly left for home in the company of Sister Julia Browne who was, like himself, a native of the Galway area <sup>52</sup>.

At Galway, as at Louvain, Peter Killikelly's presence is well attested. One finds his name at the head of the community in the MacHenry list of 1734-1735. His signature appears for the first time in the conventual account-books under the date April 1735 <sup>53</sup>. In the following year (6 October 1736), Father Ripoll promoted him master of theology at the request of the provincial chapter, giving him the title vacated by Colman O'Shaghnessy, then but recently named bishop of Ossory <sup>54</sup>. Believing Killikelly to be the provincial's vicar of the Galway nuns — whether rightly or wrongly one cannot say — the General asked him a month later to settle a dispute which was troubling the peace of the monastery. Apparently the prioress, Sister Mary Browne, was unable to control two of her subjects (Sisters Cecilia Kelly and Anastasia Vaughan) who were at odds with their confessor, Anthony O'Dogherty O.P., because he had forbidden them to correspond with a certain young Jesuit of the town <sup>55</sup>. Peter Killikelly was prior of Galway between December 1736 and August 1738 (for he signed the books as such within those dates), and the fact is partly confirmed by the acts of the provincial chapter which he signed in April 1738 as prior of Galway and definitor for Connacht.

The future provincial's residence in Galway was brought to a close

<sup>52</sup> Details taken from AGOP IV, 214, pp. 5, 7, 26, 31, 42, 95, 103, 108.

<sup>53</sup> This and other details on K.'s career were supplied to me by Fr. Luke Taheney O.P. in a letter of 9 June 1961. The account-books are now in Tallaght.

<sup>54</sup> AGOP IV, 214, p. 141.

<sup>55</sup> 17 Nov. 1736. Ripoll to K. Ibidem, p. 144. The "young Jesuit" may have been Michael Fitzgerald.

by his election (10 December 1739) as *theologus Casanatensis*: he set out early in 1740 to take up his new duties at the Minerva in Rome<sup>56</sup>. Killikelly was the third Irishman to be honoured in this way, and by a strange coincidence his two predecessors were both from Connacht as he was himself: Patrick Plunkett of Roscommon was theologian of the Casanatensian from 1700 to 1728, and Edmund Burke of Athenry from 1729 until his death on 23 May 1739. The third Irish theologian, however, was not destined to grace the Minerva for quite as long as the first two. Hardly had he settled into his new duties than the Irish provincial chapter elected him provincial in May 1742. He left Rome in July, after attending a special recreation which the community of St. Sixtus held in his honour<sup>57</sup>.

Some of the decisions of the elective chapter deserve mention. The second ordination, for instance, reveals that some of the brethren had been writing defamatory lampoons or songs against the Order: the fourth added two years "or at least one" to the course of studies followed in the foreign colleges. There were also two petitions concerning the nuns of Lisbon, petitions intended to exclude useless postulants and to protect the Irish element in that monastery from being overwhelmed by the Portuguese. The postulations too had a novel feature, for they indicated the age and years of profession of each priest put forward for a degree. The number of the dead for the period 1738-1742 was somewhat higher than it had been in 1734-1738: a total of thirty-one as against the earlier figure of twenty-three. The province was now losing eight a year instead of six, but the loss was still being outweighed by the number of fresh recruits annually received.

Father Thomas Ripoll confirmed the election on 19 July. When confirming the acts on the 31st, he commanded all students of the province to study theology for four full years. With regard to the monastery of Bom Successo he declined to make a new ruling, preferring to insist on the observance of the appropriate ordination framed by the general chapter at Bologna in 1706<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 55. P.K. was recommended for the post by Denis O'Daly, the Irish procurator in Madrid, which may corroborate Burke's statement that K. studied in Spain. The Spanish prior in Salamanca also proposed an Irish candidate whose name does not appear in the registers. AGOP IV. 209F, ff. 102<sup>r</sup>, 111<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>57</sup> SCAR, Account-book 1730-1747 (expenses), p. 270. P.K.'s place at the Minerva was taken by Pat. Brullaughan (mentioned above in connection with his uncle's book, *De Missione*), who was elected *theologus* on 25 Sept. 1742. AGOP IV. 217, p. 81.

<sup>58</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 78, 80. On the Bologna chapter and Ireland see above pp. 38-41.

## MISSIONARIES FROM LOUVAIN, 1722-1743

While travelling back to Ireland, the provincial passed through Louvain where he made a visitation of Holy Cross of which almost no details survive<sup>59</sup>. Presumably he reached Dublin before Christmas 1742. Roman archives are virtually silent on his provincialate, partly because he did not finish out his term of office, partly because the war of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) disturbed postal services, and partly because of the severe persecution of ecclesiastics in Ireland in the first three months of 1744. So far as the master general was concerned, the chief event of Irish interest was the promotion of John Brett, penitentiary of Mary Major's, to the see of Killala in August 1743. Brett had the warm recommendation of his confrère, Michael MacDonogh of Kilmore, who described him as "the son of a gentleman, more worthy than many who killed horses" galloping about in search of postulations in their favour<sup>60</sup>.

Although one knows so little about Peter Killikelly's day-to-day activities, some interesting lists of Irish Dominicans survive from precisely this troubled period, and in some respects they more than compensate for the silence of the records on which one usually depends. Two of them concern Holy Cross, Louvain, which was still obliged to seek the renewal of its annual subsidy from Propaganda Fide and therefore obliged to furnish some account of its activities. Mgr. Tempi, the nuncio at Brussels, wrote a fine appeal to cardinal Petra, prefect of the Congregation, in their favour on 7 June 1743, explaining their financial distress, praising the quality of their community life, and naming many of the thirty-three religious who had left the college for Ireland since 1722<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> The provincial visitation, which I presume to have been P.K.'s and not Fottrell's, is mentioned in AGOP IV. 217, p. 86 under date 5 Oct. 1743.

<sup>60</sup> 30 May 1743. MacDonogh to Edgar, Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 250, no. 43. Brett left Rome on 10 October and went to Ireland via Avignon whence he wrote to the Stuart court in February 1744. Ibidem, Vol. 252, no. 194; 255, no. 167. He obtained the General's licence to accept the bishopric on 9 July 1743. AGOP IV. 217, p. 84.

<sup>61</sup> The letter is misfiled in APF, SC Collegi Olandesi ed Irlandesi di Lovanio, Vol. 1, ff. 308-309. It should be in the SOCG series, for it was discussed at a general congregation on 19 Aug. 1743, no. 29, when the subsidy was in fact renewed. APF, Acta 113, ff. 278-281.

Emo e Rmo Signore, Signore Padrone Colendissimo,

Colla dovuta rassegnazione agl'ordini di cotesta S. Congregazione, che V. E. si degnò ingiungermi fin sotto il 23 Marzo prossimo scorso, mi dò l'onore di renderla informata dello stato presente del convento di S. Croce dei Padri Domenicani Irlandesi di Lovanio in seguito delle diligenze da me fatte per averne una vera ed intiera notizia.

In questo convento adunque vengono intrattenute ordinariamente trenta-quattro persone, cioè ventiquattro religiosi (parte professi e parte studenti) oltre il Priore, sei frati laici, e tre serventi secolari. Per sostentamento dei suddetti, e per tutte le altre spese di riparazione di fabbriche ed altro, viene annualmente e necessariamente impiegata la somma di quattro mila fiorini di questa moneta. Le rendite poi dello stesso convento, oltre l'essere per la maggior parte incerte e casuali, vengono ad essere inferiore alle spese, conforme costa dai Libri de Conti, di maniera che, con tutta la parsimonia e strettezza in cui vivono i religiosi, si trovano soggetti ogn'anno all'escrescenza di qualche debito, per non aver essi altre rendite certe e fisse che la pensione annua di cotesta S. Congregazione e la somma di quattrocento fiorini annui di fondazioni perpetue di Messe.

Il casuale o incerto che proviene ogni anno dalla sagrestia per le Messe ed altro ascende alla somma di cinquecento fiorini in circa; quello che si ricava dalle cerche di grano, pane, carne, legna, fa annualmente la somma di cinquecento fiorini. Le cerche di denaro che fanno ordinariamente in una o due diocesi circonvicine, all'or che piace ai Vescovi di accordar loro la permissione, è intorno a mille fiorini. A tutto questo si aggiungerebbe la pensione che questo Governo aveva altre volte accordata al convento di seicento fiorini, ma per la penuria dei tempi presenti è come perduta da due anni in qua, poiche con tutte le suppliche fatte alla Regina appena ne ha potuto ottenere per una sol volta la somma di quattrocento fiorini, di modo che le rendite casuali non ascendono ora di la di duemila fiorini, e non ostante tutta l'economia colla quale si vive appena arrivano ordinariamente alla metà delle necessarie per far sussistere il detto convento.

Con tutto questo il caritativo sussidio che cotesta S. Congregazione ha la bontà di fornirgli ogni anno viene effettivamente impiegato per il fine prescritto al sostentamento di quattro religiosi per abilitarli al servizio delle Missioni del regno d'Irlanda, costando apertamente dai registri del sudetto convento, che nello spazio di venti anni prossimi scorsi, cominciando dall'anno 1722, ha mandato alla missione trentatre religiosi da uno fino a quattro per volta nominati anno per anno, quantunque in detto spazio non fusse obbligato mandarne più di quattro ogni cinque anni, che è il termine del corso de studi, e perciò solamente sedici.

Di questi trentatre soggetti propri alle missioni, eccettuati due o tre che sono già passati a miglior vita, alcuni travagliano in Irlanda utilmente come sussidiari de Parochi, dai quali sono impiegati nel governo dell'anime; cinque



di essi sono Parochi attuali, cioè nella diocesi di Kilmore il P. Bernardo Mac-Henry, altre volte lettore in Lovanio, poi vicario provinciale, quindi Provinciale. Nella diocesi Midense il P. Giacomo Cruise ed il P. Giovanni Byrne. In quella di Cashel il P. Antonio Meagher, ed in quella di Dublino il P. Ambrosio O'Connor.

Il P. Domenico Colgan è attualmente missionario in Scozia. Li padri Patrizio Ferrall e Giovanni Brennan a Londra. Il P. Vincenzo Lonergan è missionario nell'Indie soggette agl'Inglesi. Tra gli altri poi che sono usciti da venti anni in qua dal detto convento sonosi segnalati il P. Pietro Killikelly, prima Priore e Regente, poi missionario, quindi teologo Casanattense, ora attualmente Provinciale. Il P. Lorenzo Richardson, prima Regente a Lovanio, poi predicatore per tredici anni a Dublino ed esaminatore sinodale. Il P. Giacomo Dillon, Regente e Priore in Lovanio, poscia due volte vicario provinciale, ora missionario molto zelante. Il P. Giacomo Sexton, predicatore molto applaudito nella chiesa principale di Waterford da sei o sette anni in qua, e finalmente i padri Giacomo Watson, Antonio Dogherty, e Ambrosio Magrath ad istanza del capitolo provinciale dichiarati Predicatori Generali in Irlanda dal P. Maestro Generale a causa del loro zelo ed eloquenza.

Questo è il frutto che la missione d'Irlanda ha nel decorso di venti anni riportato dalla carità della S. Congregazione, a cui venendomi supposto esser già noto quello che si è ritratto avanti l'anno 1722, mi è parso per ora sufficiente spazio il di sopra menzionato, dal che mi giova con molto fondamento sperare che non sarà per essere minore in avvenire; poiche rendendo giustizia alla verità, posso assicurare l'EE. loro che il convento di S. Croce di Lovanio è un'ottima scola di dottrina, di disciplina regolare, e di edificazione per i religiosi che quindi partono per l'Irlanda, dei quali ho molto di che lodarmi in particolare, e pochissimo o niun soggetto di dolermi, quanto al generale della maniera che colà si comportano i soggetti che da Lovanio si trasportano alle missioni. Tanto devo umiliare a V. E., e profondamente m'inchino.

Umilissimo, Divotissimo, Obligatissimo Servitore  
Brusselles, 7 Giugno 1743. L[uca] A[rcivescovo] di Nicomedia.

While one is grateful to the nuncio for preserving these details so carefully, one also regrets that he supplied the names of only sixteen of the thirty-three missionaries who left Louvain for Ireland between 1722 and 1743. Fortunately there is a second list, intended like the first for Propaganda Fide but now preserved only in the archives of San Clemente<sup>62</sup>. This second list (composed about 1747) gives fifteen names for the period 1732-1743, and it is a very curious circumstance that only three names occur both in this list and in the nuncio's one.

<sup>62</sup> SCAR, Miscellanea (shelf-number 22), doc. 42. For the purposes of the above edition, the initial titles of these priests have been omitted. Only the former regents



Patres qui iverunt ad Missionem ex conventu S. Crucis ord. praed. Hibernorum  
ab anno 1732 ad annum 1743

- f. Dominicus O'Kelly, regens, qui modo est in insulis Anglorum in America.
- f. Petrus Killikelly, regens, qui modo est episcopus in Hibernia.
- f. Iacobus Sexton, lector, est Waterfordiae in Hibernia.
- f. Bonaventura Nagle, lector, est in domo Cassellensi [Cashel].
- f. Iohannes Kennedy, lector, obiit in Hibernia.
- f. Iohannes Golden est in Hibernia.
- f. Ambrosius Magrath est in Hibernia.
- f. Thomas Hurly est in Hibernia.
- f. Thomas [Patritius?] O'Kelly est in Hibernia.
- f. Iacobus Murry missus in carcerem anno 1745 et transmissus in exilium 1746.
- f. Dominicus Colgan per aliquot annos missionarius in Hibernia et postea in Scotia, ex qua compulsus fuit aufugere cum Principe [Carolo Stuart] anno 1746.
- f. Michael MacDermott est in Hibernia.
- f. Augustinus O'Kelly est in Hibernia.
- f. N. Davidt [*lege* Iohannes Davett] est in Hibernia.
- f. Thomas Walsh obiit in Hibernia.

#### THE PERSECUTION OF 1744

Yet another promotion, this time to the episcopate, prevented Peter Killikelly from finishing his term of office as provincial. James III nominated him bishop of Kilmacduagh (his native place) on 1 January 1744; Thomas Ripoll permitted him to accept the honour on 11 January; and his brief of appointment was issued on the 22nd<sup>63</sup>. A second brief (30 January) addressed to James III assured him that his right of nomination was in no way prejudiced by the fact that it had not been mentioned in the first<sup>64</sup>. While it was not unusual for regulars to be appointed bishops in Connacht — John Brett, for instance, had been provided to Killala only the year before — there may in this case have been good

and lectors were accorded the title "reverendus". The rest were given merely as "pater frater".

On putting the two lists together one gets a total of 28 names out of 33, so that only five are missing. One may suggest the following additions: Cornelius Egan (1722), Jas. Moran (1730), Jas. Aug. Plunkett (1733), Jas. MacNamara and Paul Slattery (both 1740).

<sup>63</sup> *Hierarchia Catholica*, VI, 201, AGOP IV, 217, p. 86. The brief is published in *Hibernia Dominicana*, 509-510.

<sup>64</sup> The brief is preserved in Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 255, no. 111.

reason for not giving Kilmacduagh to one of the secular clergy. On the one hand, it was very small and poor: and on the other, Father John Lacy of Madrid, although warmly recommended for Kilmacduagh in 1741, had been excluded at the request of the archbishop of Tuam<sup>65</sup>. Unfortunately, the archives of Propaganda throw no light on the affair.

The provincial can scarcely have received word of his promotion when persecution broke out in Ireland. It began about 17 February 1744 with the arrest of some priests in Dublin (among them Dominic Kelly and Thomas Nolan, Dominican chaplains to the nuns of Channel Row) and was formalized by government decree on the 28th<sup>66</sup>. Large rewards were offered for information leading to the arrest of bishops and priests, while severe penalties were threatened against those who harboured them. According to Thomas Burke, who narrowly escaped capture, this was the only *general* persecution after the death of Queen Anne (1714), as it was also the last ever inflicted on the Catholics of Ireland. Father Killikelly had to postpone his consecration until the storm died down.

As usual, the bishops bore the full brunt of the onslaught. Ambrose O'Callaghan, the Franciscan bishop of Ferns, died at Dublin on 13 August, worn out by his efforts to avoid arrest<sup>67</sup>. Michael MacDonogh O.P., bishop of Kilmore, had to change house twelve times in two months because high treason was sworn, and a bench-warrant issued, against him<sup>68</sup>. Another Franciscan bishop, Sylvester Lloyd of Waterford, already mentioned as protector of the Dominican nuns of that city, escaped to the continent "by a miracle". Although blind and so paralysed as to be hardly able to mount a horse, he avoided his pursuers for three weeks, took ship by night, reached Jersey in five days, and went on thence to La Rochelle<sup>69</sup>.

The second target, as in all persecutions, was the regular clergy, less obnoxious to the government than the bishops were, but still considered

<sup>65</sup> Loc. cit., Vol. 232, nos. 118-121.

<sup>66</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 175-176 and 717-719, at which latter place the full text of the decree is supplied in Latin translation. Slightly different dates are given by J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century* Press, 65.

<sup>67</sup> 15 Aug. 1744. Linegar to Corsini. Calendared by Giblin in Coll. Hib. No. 10 (1967) 99-100. There is a better, dated copy in SCAR, Codex I, Vol. 2, f. 306.

<sup>68</sup> H. Fenning, Michael MacDonogh, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (1966) 151. Also Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 256, no. 15.

<sup>69</sup> Windsor, Stuart Papers, Vol. 249, no. 98. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 147-148. This latter is a letter (Brussels, 2 May 1744) from the nuncio to cardinal Petra.

more dangerous or more of a nuisance than the diocesan priests. Dominican records tell us nothing of what happened to the friars, but it appears from government or judicial sources that many of them absconded before being cited to appear in court. One could compile an incomplete but interesting list of Dominicans sought by the magistrates at this time, using the details provided by W. P. Burke in his *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, but that is something the reader may easily do for himself. The book is particularly valuable in that it names almost every member of the Dominican communities in Dundalk, Drogheda, Galway, Esker, Portumna, Sligo, Ballindoon, and Rathfrán, the last three lists being based on the examination of Ambrose Gilligan, a Dominican of Sligo <sup>70</sup>.

When the persecution died out with the approach of summer 1744, the provincial was able to write once more to the master general. It was still practically impossible to hold an elective chapter, so he obtained leave (on 29 August) to continue as provincial, although a bishop, until Sunday, *Deus qui errantibus*, or in modern terms until 5 May 1745 <sup>71</sup>. His bulls were still (in August 1744) at San Sisto in Rome where John Rocheford was keeping them until they could safely be despatched. Thanks to a lull in the war on the continent, Peter Killikelly received these essential documents soon afterwards and was consecrated at Channel Row in Dublin on 14 October <sup>72</sup>. For the following seven months the province was ruled by the bishop of Kilmacduagh, just as it had been ruled by Stephen MacEgan, bishop of Clonmacnois, from September 1725 to April 1726.

#### THE FOREIGN COLLEGES, 1745

Thanks to what is probably a unique coincidence, one can list the members of the three foreign colleges as they were in the first half of 1745. For Lisbon, the most poorly documented of all, there is a letter

<sup>70</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests*, Waterford 1914. The page references to the various Dominican communities are: Dundalk (292), Drogheda (293), Kilkenny (323), Mullingar (332), Longford (336), Cashel (359), Waterford (369), Limerick (397), Galway (417-419), Esker and Portumna (428), Sligo, Ballindoon and Rathfrán (437-438). This Amb. Gilligan may be the "Amb. Gilman" of whom Jn. Fottrell complained in 1739. See above, p. 175.

<sup>71</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 88. It would perhaps be better to say that he continued to rule the province as vicar general, but that term is not used in the register.

<sup>72</sup> *Hibernia Dominicana*, 509. The consecrating prelates were Jn. Linegar, archbishop of Dublin, Stephen MacEgan O.P. of Meath, and Ml. MacDonogh O.P. of Kilmore.

(9 February 1745) from the rector, Charles O'Kelly, to the master general indicating the sums contributed by the various members of the college to the expenses occasioned by the canonization of St. Catherine de Ricci <sup>73</sup>.

Reverendissime Pater,

Desideratam notitiam canonizationis S. Catharinae de Ricciis communicavi R. Patribus collegii et monialibus Boni Successus. Deum optimum maximum pro tanto beneficio laudamus et exoramus quatenus V. R. P. gratiam et vires concedat ad ulteriorem suam, Ordinisque nostri gloriam promovendam.

Libentissime vellem largius concurrere ad expensas canonizationis, verum tanta est paupertas utriusque communitatis quod nihil quidquam contribuere possunt. Enimvero nova edificia et reparationes quae utrobique actualiter facimus, nos ad magnam redigunt angustiam; sed temporis decursu redditus utriusque communitatis notabiliter augebunt. Interim, ne ingrati videantur particulares collegii V. R. Paternitati (cui addictissimi et devinctissimi sunt et semper erunt) contribuerunt pro posse (licet non aequaliter omnes) ad importantiam acclusae litterae cambialis. Videlicet

R. P. Magister F. Bernardus Brullaughan	Regalia	1200
R. P. Magister F. Iohannes Fitzmaurice		4800
R. P. Praes. F. Dominicus O'Kennedy		1200
R. P. Praes. F. Dominicus O'Ferral		3000
R. P. Dominicus MacDonnell, procurator Boni Successus		4000
R. P. Christopherus Fottrell, vicarius		0960
R. P. Iosephus Lynham, capellanus navis Indicae		4800
R. P. Antonius Dun, capellanus navis Indicae		1600
R. P. Thomas Burk, lector vesperarius		0480
R. P. Eugenius Crohan, magister studentium		1200
R. P. Ricardus Nugent, lector artium		1200
R. P. Iacobus Dillon, lector artium		0960
Quattuor studentes (caeteri enim non habuerunt unde contribuerent)		2080
Soror Anna Butler, quae unica fuit in monasterio monialium Boni Successus quae contribuit		4000
		<hr/> 31480

Mille regalia communiter efficiunt unum scutum Romanum, quod igitur ultra triginta unum scutum cum dimidio receperit V. R. P. ut tantulum servire poterit, et licet totum simul parvi sit momenti, defectum non arguit meae incuriae aut R. Patrum benevolentiae, sed potius mediorum, quae si uberiora essent largius contribuissimus. Nos ergo excusatos habeat, meque specialiter V. R. P. debita obedientia, veneratione et amore prosequentem. Liceat hic

<sup>73</sup> The original is in AGOP XIII. 68098.



agere gratias pro litteris patentibus quas recepi pro R. P. Laurentio Connelane. Brevi se itineri accinget et V. R. P. se sistet. Benedictionem vestram implorans, maneo omni qua par est humilitate,

Ulissipone in Collegio SSmi. Rosarii

fratrum Praed. Hibernorum

die 9 Februarii 1745

R. P. Vestrae

Obsequentissimus ac devinctissimus

filius ac servus

fr. Carolus O'Kelly

The Fr. Laurence Connelane or Connillan mentioned in the final paragraph was a student, assigned by the master general to the college of St. Thomas at Rome on 19 December 1744. Father Ripoll had asked for another student-priest, Patrick MacDonogh, but since he had to return to Ireland to visit his sick mother, the General accepted Connelane in his stead<sup>74</sup>. The names of three other contemporary students, missing from our list, may be supplied from other sources. Fr. Louis Walsh of Kilmallock, for instance, is noted in the registers because of a scruple he had about the validity of his profession<sup>75</sup>. Two others, Vincent Nangle and James Bereford, left Lisbon in the first half of 1746 to continue their philosophical studies at St. Sixtus in Rome<sup>76</sup>.

For Holy Cross, Louvain, there is an undated *relatio* which may confidently be dated either in April or May 1745. Father Ripoll replied to it on 29 May by appointing John Mahony as lector of philosophy there<sup>77</sup>. It is better in two respects than the Lisbon document, for it supplies not only the names of the students but even the classes to which they actually belonged. On the other hand, being limited in scope to the members of the *studium*, it tells us nothing, for example, about the lay-brothers attached to the house. The report appears to have been submitted by the master of students, John Maguire, who grouped the professors and students according to their "provinces" of origin: Connacht, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster.

<sup>74</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 88.

<sup>75</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 89. See also a letter (Lisbon, 12 Jan. 1745) from Jn. Fitzmaurice in AGOP XIII. 68098. On the day of Walsh's profession, no copy of the Constitutions could be found, and the prior (unassisted by any other member of the community) performed the ceremony from memory.

<sup>76</sup> SCAR, No. 53, Liber de Ratione Studiorum (1743-1788), f. 23<sup>v</sup>. They reached St. Sixtus between July and September 1746.

<sup>77</sup> The reply is in AGOP IV. 217, p. 90: the original petition in XIII. 68095. Mahony, as appears from an affidavit (dated at the convent of St. Dominic in Xeres, 29 Dec. 1743) studied, and was approved to teach philosophy, at the Spanish convent of Xeres de la Frontera. AGOP XIII. 68098.



Eximie Pater,

Quoniam secundum statuta ordinis magister studentium debeat statum studii capitulo vel superiori referre, aequum duxi vobis exhibere exactam huius studii relationem.

Omnes professores actuales pacifice de praesenti cohabitant, regularem observantiam studio adiungunt, et ad studium promovendum strenue laborant. Studentes cura et industria quorum interest studiis omnes incumbunt; alique ex illis egregie progrediuntur in litteris, alii tamen vix ullum fructum afferunt, quorum incapacitates professoribus nequaquam impropere debet. A primo enim die quo novi hunc conventum, studium nunquam sicut de praesenti vi-guit. Faxit Deus ut cum eodem ardore diutius promoveatur. Ecce catalogus omnium suppositorum ad hoc studium spectantium.

#### Supposita ex Conacia sunt

- R. A. P. Prior [Augustinus O'Kelly]
- R. P. Petrus MacKeon, regens primarius 3<sup>o</sup> anno
- R. P. Thomas Plunkett, S. Scripturae professor. Finit hoc anno.
- P. Patritius Welsh, theologus 4<sup>o</sup> anno
- P. Dominicus O'Connor, theologus 3<sup>o</sup> anno, sine fructu
- P. Martinus French, philosophus
- Fr. Petrus Kelly, novitius simplex

#### Ex Lagenia

- R. P. Edmundus Reilly, regens secundarius. Finit hoc anno.
- P. Iacobus O'Heine frustra occupat scholam theologicam a 3 annis
- Fr. Laurentius Fitzgerald, insignis theologus 2<sup>o</sup> anno
- Fr. Thomas Dalton, bonus theologus 2<sup>o</sup> anno
- Fr. Iohannes Reilly, novitius simplex

#### Ex Momonia

- P. Nicholaus Quin, magister novitiorum
- P. Dominicus MacGrath finivit per dispensationem Reverendissimi
- Fr. Nicholaus Fitzgerald, inutilis, scholae theologicae a 3 annis
- P. Antoninus O'Ryan bonus theologus 2<sup>o</sup> anno
- P. Iacobus Flin nomen dedit scholae theologicae hoc anno

#### Ex Ultonia

- P. Fr. Iohannes Maguire, magister studentium
- P. Thomas MacIver, philosophiae lector
- P. Thomas Fitzsimons, procurator
- P. Iohannes Dogherty insignis theologus 1<sup>o</sup> anno
- P. Matthaeus Higgins, philosophus
- Fr. Georgius Dogherty nondum assignatus: studet tamen philosophiam.

Potest sua eximia Paternitas colligere ex numero et conditione subditorum quod novus Lector Philosophiae necessario instituendus pro cursu inchoando in initio anni scholastici.

While there is no comparable list of this date for the Roman college of SS. Sixtus and Clement, it is no very difficult matter to manufacture one. Using the vestiary book (which is already in print), the two successive registers *De Ratione Studiorum* (1701-1743-1788), the book of receptions and professions, the account-books of the convent, and (if necessary) the registers of the master general, one can compile a complete and relatively detailed list of all the people at San Sisto for almost any given date in the century<sup>78</sup>. The following table, for instance, shows the Irish Dominican community in Rome as it was on 30 April 1745, a date sufficiently close to the Lisbon and Louvain documents transcribed above.

A. R. P. M. fr. Iacobus Fitzgerald, prior	
R. P. fr. Iohannes Rocheford, syndicus	
R. P. Praes. fr. Iohannes B. Lynch, regens primarius	
R. P. fr. Dominicus Morragh, regens secundarius	
R. P. fr. Thomas Hope, magister studentium	
R. P. fr. Patritius MacAmbrose, lector artium	
R. P. fr. Patritius Kirwan, studens theologiae ultimo anno	
R. P. fr. Thomas L. Netterville	} studentes
R. P. fr. Mathaeus Casey	
R. P. fr. Iohannes F. Netterville	
	} theologiae
	} 3 <sup>o</sup> anno
R. P. fr. Dominicus Delamar	} studentes
R. P. fr. Bernardus O'Hogan	
Frater Barnabas Mangan	
	} philosophiae
	} 2 <sup>o</sup> anno
Frater Lucas Armour, studens philosophiae 1 <sup>o</sup> anno	
Fratres conversi: Hermannus Black [Schwartz], Iohannes B. Grollier,	
Dominicus Marchesi, Mathias Vogler.	

<sup>78</sup> H. Fenning, *The Vestiary Book of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, 1727-1796*, in *Coll. Hib. No. 10* (1967) 60-71. The first book of studies (1701-1743) is now AGOP XI. 3600; the other is SCAR, No. 53. The book of receptions and professions is in *Coll. Hib. No. 14* (1971), 13-35.

## BISHOP KILLIKELLY'S LAST YEARS, 1745-1783

With the election of his successor, Michael Hoare, on 4 May 1745 bishop Killikelly ceased to rule the province and also ceased to play an active part in its affairs. He was prepared, however, to help his former brethren whenever he was asked to do so. In 1767, for instance, he acted as an intermediary between the archbishop of Armagh and the provincial with regard to the novitiate question<sup>79</sup>.

Being bishop of Kilmacduagh brought him more honour than advantage, for the diocese contained only nine parishes, from each of which he received one pound sterling a year<sup>80</sup>. In 1750 he was given the administration of the neighbouring diocese of Kilfenora — a diocese even smaller than his own — and he ruled both until his death. An interesting report of his on the two dioceses (1771) has appeared in print<sup>81</sup>, but he has yet to be the object of an historical study which would do justice to the considerable surviving evidence of his episcopal activity. To judge from his letters, he was a rather dry, direct man of few words who lent his name to many a good cause over a period of forty years. He died on 29 May 1783 and was buried in the Dominican church in Galway. The tombstone came to light in 1890 before the building of the present church, but has since been lost through the neglect of his own brethren.

<sup>79</sup> Two of his letters on the subject are in Coll. Hib. No. 8 (1965) 88-89.

<sup>80</sup> The detail comes from the Propaganda discussions of 22 Sept. 1750 when the diocese of Kilfenora was united to Kilmacduagh. APF, Acta 120, ff. 254-256; SOCG 745, ff. 204-211.

<sup>81</sup> Anon., *Dioceses of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, 1771*, in *Mantle* (= Galway diocesan magazine), Vol. IV, no. 2 (summer 1961) 22-30.

## APPENDIX

*Notes on convents and their members made by Bernard MacHenry, provincial, during his first visitation of the province, autumn 1734 to autumn 1735. The original document is in the PRO (Belfast), D. 1449/14. For the purposes of this edition, the two separated sections on the Ulster convents have been joined, and the note on the Galwey nuns brought forward from the very end to follow that on Portumna. In the original, four Ulster convents (Coleraine, Derry, Gola, and Cavan) are inserted in that order between Galwey and Roscommon.*

## LAGENIA

*Conventus S. Salvatoris Dubliniensis.* Inter multos filios habet unum magistrum et unum praedicatorem generalem. Habent plurima ornamenta, calices, et alia spectantia ad capellam. Non tenuerunt hactenus refectarium. Visitatus est mense Septembri anno 1734. Non habentur cubacula pro medietate communitatis. Ibidem tenetur archivum regni. Bene inserviunt capellae.

*Conventus Sororum Dubliniensis:* Habet multa preciosa ad usum capellae. Sunt circiter 28 numero.

*Conventus S. Mariae de Trim.* Habet domi sex filios: unum praedicatorem generalem et magistrum. Bene regulatus est in cohabitatione pacifica, habens beneficium pastorale et limites non spernendas. Tres calices argenteos et ornamenta pauca.

*Conventus Assumptionis B. M. de Mullingar.* Paucos habet filios. Incipiunt cohabitare sub patrocinio Mathaei Casey.

*Conventus S. Brigidae Longfordiensis.* Filios habet circiter 10 domi et extra. Domus eorum anno elapso eversa est. Calices argenteos habent 7 cum ornamentis, etc.

*Conventus S. Trinitatis Kilkenniensis.* Paucos habet filios regulariter cohabitantes, inter quos unum habet magistrum, praesentatus duos, praedicatores generales duos.

*Conventus S. Dominici Rossensis [Rosbercon].* Filium proprium non habet praeter p. Andream Mulloy. Pauca vel nulla bona habet. Prior modernus est p. Dominicus Mullany. Sunt et alii tres assignati: viz., antiquus Mulloy, [Iohannem] Byrne et [Edmundum] Stone. Habent limites non exiguas.

*Conventus S. Crucis Arkloensis.* 29 Iunii. Filios proprios non habet praeter p. Andream Fottrell. Prior modernus est p. Iacobus Williams; est et p. Ambrosius O'Connor ibidem assignatus et p. [Petrus] Corr.

*Conventus Athyensis.* Unicum habet filium, p. [Christophorum] Coonan.

*Conventus de Achaboe.* Omnino destitutus.

*Conventus Monialium Dubliniensium.* Habet circiter 27 sorores. Habent ornamenta plura aliaque praeciosa ad sacellam spectantia.

## MOMONIA

- Conventus S. Hyacinthi Lorchensis.* Filium habet p. Antoninum Carroll et unum novitium Gulielmum Walsh. Habent parva ornamenta, etc.
- Conventus S. Salvatoris Limericensis.* Filios habet Dionisium Gallagher, magistrum [Iohannem] MaGee, Patritium Sarchfield, Iacobum MacNamara, Vincentium Cahill, Michaellem McMahon, Antonium Loughlin. Bona quaedam habent in S. Malo et aliqua in patria.
- Conventus S. Dominici Kilocensis [Kilmallock].* Habet quosdam iuvenes filios. Tres calices argenteos cum vestimento integro et Missali ordinis. Quasdam imagines ex cupro, etc.
- Conventus S. Crucis Glanuriae [Glanworth].* Filios habet Iohannem Dooly, Patritium Hurley, p. Mauritium Gibbons et [Philippum?] Finn, etc. Pauperimus est. Habet tamen duos calices argenteos.
- Conventus S. Mariae de Insula Corcagiensis.* Regulariter vivunt sub directione r.a.p. Iohannis O Brien magistri, habentes domum et sacellum, bona considerabilia in communi et particulari. Filios habet, praeter magistrum O Brien, Petrum MaCarthy praesentatum tit. praed., Albertum O Brien, Dominicum Morrow, Nicholaum Walsh, Iohannem Lynch, Dominicum Curtin.
- Conventus Casseliensis [Cashel].* Filios habet Antoninum Kent praed. gen. tit. missionis, Thomam McLoughlin postulatum in loco p. Iacobi Ferrall, Iohannem Ryan nunc Limerici. Quaedam habent ornamenta et alia bona.
- Conventus S. Salvatoris Waterfordiensis.* Regulariter vivunt et habent bona considerabilia. Filios habet magistrum [Antoninum] Sal, Iacobum Dominicum Ferrall praesentatum tit. miss., et Robertum Elliott.
- Conventus de Tralee.*

## CONACIA

- Conventus S. Dominici Athenriensis.* [16 Iulii 1735?]. Filios habet in patria mag. [Colmanum] O Seaghnessy, Thomam Burk praed. gen. pro suo conventu, Iohannem Moran praed. gen. pro Portumny, Dominicum Burk praed. pro Tombeola, etc. Absentes vero: mag. Edmundum Burk, Humbertum Burk, Dominicum French praes. tit. scholae. Regulariter vivunt et habent multa bona. Alios habet filios domi et foris. Fundatus per Birmingham.
- Conventus S. Mariae Galviensis.* [14 Iulii 1735?]. Filios habet domi Petrum Killikelly praesentatum, Nicolaum Banks, Stephanum Kirwan, Thomam Geoghegan. Absentes vero: Vincentium Gavan, Dominicum Lynch in Indiis, et alium [Dominicum Lynch] Romae. Augustinum Vaughan, Iohannem Lynch Romae. Robertum Brown Lovanii et Gregorium Joyce. Humbertum Morpheu Ulissiponensi. Andream Mory Romae, et [Nicholaum] Kinny in Gallia. Habent ornamenta et alia bona.



*Conventus S. Mariae Roscomanensis.* In patria filios habet Thomam Mulledy praed. gen. pro suo conventu, Thomam Hylan, Petrum Caslan, Antonium Dogherty, Thomam Hanly, Ambrosium O Connor, Dominicum Kelly redeuntem, Petrum Girroraghty, Thomam Egan, Gulielmum Burk, Patri-tium McDermott, Thaddaeum Tully, Thomam Brannan, Petrum Corr, Gulielmum Connelly, et Iohannem Kearny cum multis aliis domi et foris. Habent bona considerabilia. Fundatus est per Carolum Manus Rubrae O Connor.

*Conventus S. Crucis de Cluainseanvill.* Filios habet in patria Bernardum MacDermott praed. gen., Michaellem McDermott, Hieronymum Duignan, Petrum Connaghton, Laurentium Mulloy, cum aliis. Absentes vero: Do-minicum MacMahon, Petrum MacOyny [= MacKeon] Lovanii, etc. Pau-per est. Fundatus est per MacDermott.

*Conventus S. Crucis Stradensis.* Filios habet in patria Dominicum Ruan praed. gen., Iacobum McNicholas, Thomam Roche, Mathaeum Higgins, Thaddaeum Thouly, Iacobum Nunne, Dominicum McNicholas, Iacobum Mannin, Antonium Burk, Petrum Laughnan. Absentes autem Antonium Ruan, Dominicum Gavan. Habent quosdam calices et vestimenta.

*Conventus S. Dominici Urlarensis.* Filios habet in patria Antonium Mac Donnell prm. [I], Hugonem Morelly, Laurentium O Hoyns, Iohannem Costello, Ricardum Jordan, Andream Costello, Petrum Philips, Dioni-sium Daze. Habet quosdam absentes. Pauper est.

*Conventus S. Mariae Borrisoulensis.* Filios habet in patria Patritium Walsh, Iacobum Williams, Thomam Miles, Iacobum Lowell, Ambrosium et Antonium MacDonnel, Dominicum Barrett, Iacobum Keyn, Bernardum Maley, Thomam MaKeal, Franciscum Moran. Absentes autem Edmun-dum Girroraghty in S. Malo, Franciscum MacDonnell, Iacobum Ruan, Iacobum Grevan in Hispania. Iohannem Maley, etc. Habent 10 calices argenteos cum 9 ornamentis.

*Conventus S. Crucis Rafranensis [Rathfran].* Filios habet in patria Domi-nicum Philbin, Thomam O Flanagan, Gregorium Judge, Laurentium Healy, Iohannem O Harte, Thomam Barrett, etc. Dictus Philbin po-stulatus [est] in loco Francisci Conmy de Sliggo.

*Conventus S. Mariae de Ballindune.* Filios habet in patria Petrum O Connor, Bernardum Connilan, Iohannem Crean, Thomam Higgins in Lagenia, p. Ambrosium Higgins ibidem, Dominicum Mullany, Conn Rorke vagantes ibidem. Absentem p. Dominicum McDermott in Hispania.

*Conventus S. Crucis Sliggoensis.* Filios habet in patria Dominicum Mulfinn mag. tit. missionis, Iohannem Gildea praed. gen. pro suo conventu, Mi-chaelem Kilhaly, Iacobum Fiaghny, Petrum Cluan, p. Felicem Griffin, Ambrosium Gilligan, Michaellem Hart, Danielelem Raughnin, Iacobum Scan-lon, Franciscum King, Iohannem MacHenry, Michaellem Winn, Antonium

McTeernan, Iohannem O Hart laicum. Absentes autem Iohannem Brett r[egentem] S. Sixti et postulatum. Fundum habet 220 libr. sterl. in manibus Domini Iohannis Philips de Ballintoghir, cum aliis bonis apud se.

*Conventus de Tombeola.* Nunc sub vicario Martino Mulchrone et Borsoule. Filios habet Iohannem Glinn in patria, extra vero Gulielmum Costelo in Hispania. Habet alios 3 vel 4 ultra mare. Pauperimus est.

*Conventus S. Petri Martyris Portumniensis* 18. [!] 1735. Filios habet domi Hyacinthum Tully, Dominicum Burk, Thomam Maddin, Patritium Danielem Maddin, Michaellem Kelly, Iohannem Dooly praed. gen pro Galvia loco Gulielmi Kenny. Absentes autem: Petrum Mulloy, Hogan, Antonium Dunne, Edmundum Allan, Eugenium Glinn. Habent: praedium, domos, pecora et ornamenta quaedam. Fundatus per Maddin.

*Conventus Iesus Mariae Iosephi Sororum Galviae:* Sunt numero 24.

#### ULTONIA

*Conventus S. Mariae Culraniensis [Coleraine].* Filios habet mag. [Dominicum] Brullaughan, Dominicum Smith, Bernardum MacHenry theol. praes., Bernardum Brullaughan theol. praes., Patritium Brullaughan theol. praes., Patritium Brullaughan iuniorem, Dominicum Brullaughan iuniorem, Archibaldum Patritium MacAmbrose, et Ill. Kilmorensem [Michaellem] McDonogh. Habent ornamenta, libros, et calices. Fundatus erat prius per O Cahan, 2<sup>o</sup> per MacQueelin.

*Conventus S. Dominici Derriensis.* Fundatus per O Donell. Filios habet p. Iohannem O Donell, patres Antonium Dogherty, Antonium McFory, Dominicum Egan, Patritium Renaulds, Dominicum Colgan, Iohannem Davett, et Iacobum Murry.

*Conventus Gaulensis [Gola].* Praeter quaedam ornamenta et calices habet 15 libras sterl. per annum. Filios habet patres [Thomam] Nolat, Thomam MacMahon, Dominicum Corrigan, Iohannem Maguire, Antonium Maguire, Patritium Kieran, et Dominicum Creaghan.

*Conventus Cavaniensis.* Fundatus per O Reilly. Filios habet patres Ricardum Nugent, Patritium Sheridan, Thomam Fitzsimons, Patritium Becan, et Dominicum Keernan.

*Conventus Mariae Magdalenae Pontanensis [Drogheda].* Filios habet in patria Hyacinthum Watson magistrum, Eugenium Lennan postulatum praedicatorum, Iohannem Byrne, Iacobum Watson, Eduardum Samson, Augustinum Fleming. Absentes vero Patritium Dugan, mag. Iohannem Donnelly, lectorem Iohannem Vincentium Meany, Iacobum Hill. Habent plura ornamenta et quaedam alia bona. Fundator fuit Netherfield.

*Conventus Carlingfordiensis.* Filios habet in patria Dominicum Roddy, Iohannem Smith, [Stephanum] Kearny et [Eugenium] Carroll. Absentes autem

p. Thomasin [= Dominicum Thomas vel McThomas] et [Eduardum] Drumgoole.

*Conventus de Villa Nova* [Newtonards]. Filios habet p. Thomam Byrne praed. gen., patres [Iohannem] Morgan, [Iohannem] Gribbin, et MacIlboy [= Patritium MacElvay].

*Memorandum.* Est unus Minorita, Nicholaus O Donel, existens in districtu Kilociae, etc. Est et unus [Carmelita] Discalceatus qui facit collectionem ibidem.

[altera manu addita]

Dominican Convents in Ireland in 1738 [!].

## CHAPTER THREE

# The Beginning of Decline 1745 - 1761

The great irony of these years was that the regular clergy, having survived the penal laws, went into decline as soon as persecution lost its sting. To what extent this may have been due to the severe frosts, famine and epidemics of 1739 to 1741, or to a general malaise in religious life across western Europe, one cannot say. What is certain is that after 1744, once the state ceased to be an active enemy, the friars were more strictly controlled by the bishops on the one hand and by Propaganda Fide on the other. Thanks to the Roman "decrees of the year fifty", it became impossible to receive novices in Ireland, while the bishops were enabled to take what friars they pleased to work in parishes. This quickly undermined the conventual existence of many communities. Even the few bishops and Catholic nobles who began in 1755 to negotiate with parliament were quite ready to sacrifice the friars on the first makeshift altar of Catholic emancipation. Richard Lincoln, archbishop of Dublin, who sought total jurisdiction over the regular clergy, was the first to realise that he could achieve his goal quite simply by the limitation or refusal of faculties to preach and hear confessions. His warm exchange with the "lazy, idle friars", to use a phrase of his own, led to the Propaganda decrees of 1761 which bring this chapter to a close.

On the brighter side, some Dominicans undertook in 1758 a difficult mission to St Croix in the Danish West Indies, while their great champion Thomas Burke, known to history as "de Burgo", published his *Hibernia Dominicana* in 1762. This *apologia* for the regular clergy was significantly dedicated to cardinal Nereo Corsini, protector of Ireland and of the Order of Preachers.

### MICHAEL HOARE, 1745-1749

When writing his *Hibernia Dominicana* in the late 1750s, Thomas Burke devoted only a few lines to each of the provincials still alive at that time and it is not easy now, two hundred years later, to say much more about them than he did. The early career of Michael Hoare, elected on 4 May 1745, is as obscure as any. Nothing is known about



his parents, the place of his birth, or the convent in which he made his novitiate. He was born, at all events, about 1705 and made his profession for the convent of Kilmallock in Munster in or around 1723. For his ecclesiastical studies, he stayed with the French Dominicans of Provence and may have been a student of Patrick O'Diamond who taught in the convent of Marseilles from 1727 to 1734<sup>1</sup>. On 22 November 1733, the master general ordered Michael Hoare — since he had finished his studies — to leave Marseilles for Ireland and to consider himself no longer a “son” of Kilmallock but of Limerick<sup>2</sup>.

The interesting point about this change of affiliation is that it had been requested by John MacGhee, prior of San Sisto in Rome. MacGhee, one of most senior members of the province, was himself a son of Limerick, though he had not lived in Ireland for more than thirty years. Most of his long life was spent at Holy Cross, Louvain. Furthermore, when asking the general to change Hoare's affiliation, he claimed that no son of Limerick was actually working in the city. Be that as it may, it is clear that MacGhee did what little he could to help his native convent. Some weeks after finishing his Roman priorship, he prevailed on the general to transfiliate yet another priest to Limerick<sup>3</sup>. This was James Murray, a son of Derry then living at Louvain. Murray does not seem ever to have gone near Limerick, but Michael Hoare did reach that city eventually and spent all his life there.

If, as is likely, the future provincial reached Ireland in the early months of 1734, he found himself in the midst of the most severe persecution of the century. This outbreak began in December 1733 and did not subside until the following April<sup>4</sup>. Perhaps he waited for a while in Cork to let the storm die down. At all events, he signed the

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<sup>1</sup> Pat. Diamond, S. T. M., died at Drogheda, where he was v.g. of the nuns about June 1729. This is his nephew, Pat. Dom. O'Diamond, assigned to Ireland from Marseilles on 4 Sept. 1734. AGOP IV. 214, pp. 22, 99, 105. He was prior of Coleraine by 1737. *Ibid.*, 217, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> AGOP IV. 214, p. 90. Transfiliation issued subject to provincial's approval. Though a son of Kilmallock, Hoare may have been clothed and/or professed elsewhere. He may have taught briefly in France, since he was later considered eligible as prior of Holy Cross, Louvain. AGOP IV. 217, p. 134 under date 25 Aug. 1753.

<sup>3</sup> MacGhee's term of office ran from 17 Oct. 1732 to 17 Oct. 1735. This second transfiliation was issued on 8 Nov. 1735, after which MacGhee left Rome at once for Louvain. AGOP IV. 214, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> The persecution is described above, pp. 187-189.



profession book there as a witness on 4 December 1735<sup>5</sup>. One suspects, not only that Hoare spent a year or two in Cork after his arrival, but that he was a native of the city or its neighbourhood. On the other hand, since Irish friars of the time were usually of "no fixed abode", the fact that he signed the profession book at Cork may mean no more than that he was there on a visit.

The provincial chapter of 1738, which postulated him as preacher general of Kilmallock, does nothing to clarify the situation<sup>6</sup>. On the one hand, it said that he had been preaching in Limerick and its neighbourhood for five years, which is impossible; on the other, it asserted that he was thirty-six years of age and thirteen years professed, which cannot be reconciled with the similar information available from 1756 and 1767<sup>7</sup>. Three years passed before the master general heeded the chapter's request, and when (on 10 June 1741) the promotion was actually made, it was to the preacher-generalship of Glanworth in county Cork and not to that of Kilmallock<sup>8</sup>. At the following chapter, held at Dublin during May 1742, he was elected definitor for Munster and signed the acts as prior of Limerick. During the great scare of 1744 — and this is the final detail on his early life — he and other Limerick priests were denounced to the lord lieutenant. They were accused of obliging their penitents to give them money to be "remitted abroad to a foreign prince"<sup>9</sup>.

Michael Hoare cannot have been short of good advice during the chapter of 1745. Two of the four definitors — John Fottrell and Bernard MacHenry — were ex-provincials; the others — Dominic Burke of Athenry and Albert O'Brien of Cork — were priors of important convents. The new provincial must have known Albert O'Brien quite

<sup>5</sup> Archives of St. Mary's Priory, Tallaght (hereafter TA), Cork profession and confraternity book.

<sup>6</sup> The original acts are in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>7</sup> The figures given for 1756 are 51 years of age, 33 of profession. T. Burke, *Hibernia Dominicana* (hereafter Hib. Dom.), Cologne 1762, 214. Those for 1767 are 62 : 44. H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission, 1733-1774*, in *Collectanea Hibernica* (hereafter Coll. Hib.) 8 (1965) 97. These two later sets of figures agree perfectly with each other.

<sup>8</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 73.

<sup>9</sup> The original acts of 1742 are in AGOP XIII. 68095. On the accusation of 1744 see W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford 1914, 397. J. J. Carbery asserts that Hoare was made prior of Limerick in 1740. A *Chronological and Historical Account of the Dominican Convent Limerick, Limerick 1866*, 21.

well, for they had been together at Limerick about 1736 when the struggle with the Augustinians was at its height<sup>10</sup>. As usual, the main work of the chapter was to postulate individual friars for the degrees of the order so that they might attend future chapters as preachers general or masters in theology. Only occasionally do the chapter acts allow a glimpse of the real problems of the province. It was decided, for instance, that any member of the province who should bless a marriage, without the express leave of the parish priest and his own religious superior, would incur an automatic suspension *a divinis*. The chapter put two requests to the master general. The first was to change the customary date on which provincial chapters were held. Normally they began on the third Sunday after Easter (*Deus qui errantibus*), a season of heavy rain during which food was short for traveller and horse alike, and the vocals were busy hearing the annual confessions of the faithful. Better to hold chapters later on, on the fifth Sunday after Pentecost (*Deus qui diligentibus*). The general was also asked to give his opinion on a legal problem: whether friars who had charge of parishes, but lived within the "limits" of the convents to which they were affiliated or assigned, were entitled to an "active voice" in prioral elections. This was a point on which John Fottrell had tried and failed to get a ruling from Father Ripoll in the summer of 1741<sup>11</sup>. Thomas Ripoll, still master general, gave the province what it wanted on 28 August 1745: chapters might in future be held after Pentecost, and friar pastors might legally vote in prioral elections<sup>12</sup>.

One advantage of holding chapters in April or May was that the new provincial might begin his term of office with a visitation of all the convents. This meant a tiring journey of several hundred miles on horseback, a journey only to be attempted in summer by a healthy and active man. Michael Hoare held such a visitation in the summer of 1745, and in the course of it wrote the following letter to the master general<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See above, pp. 155-158. The original acts of 1745 are in AGOP XIII. 68095, with a covering letter (Louvain, 2 June 1745) from Aug. O'Kelly, prior of Holy Cross, and a draft (28 Aug.) of the general's comments.

<sup>11</sup> See above, p. 180.

<sup>12</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 90-91. The election was confirmed on 19 June and the acts on 28 Aug. 1745.

<sup>13</sup> The original is in AGOP XIII. 68095.

Reverendissime Pater,

Pro confirmatione meae auctoritatis paucis abhinc diebus recepta gratias referre uti par est, usque nunc ex industria distuli. Hoc unicum meum motivum erat, ne forte quidquam subito superveniat quod me iterato ad vestram Rev.mam paternitatem scribere impelleret, et ita repetitis litteris V. R. P. non consolari sed gravare videar, taliter R.me Pater verebar.

Evenit nam in actuali visitatione existenti (nec sine maerore et cordis tristitia referro) conventus noster Youghallensis in natione Momoniae quondam florens, nunc vero velut eremus, omni subsidio unde reviviscat et vigeat penitus destitutus; et cum nobis incumbat, nostraeque solitudinis sit, praefatum conventum pristinae quantum (in hac perversa patria) fieri poterit restituere dignitati, V. R. P. suppliciter et enixe rogamus, quatenus R. P. fr. Vincentium Kenedy a suo nativo conventu Killocensi [Kilmallock] utpote gravato amovere pro conventu Youghallensi, qui duos tantum extra provinciam habet filios, affiliare dignetur: quo facto nos pluribus gratis antea obstrictos arctius devinciet.

Praeterea necesse est ut non ignoret V. R. P. quod in conventu nostro Sanctae Crucis Lovanii commoratur quidam fr. Thomas Brown qui praedictae communitati molestissimus est (ut certiores facti sumus). Itemque non omnimodo praeceptis nostris obediens, et etiam, quia nullo fungitur officio, locum studentis possidere non debeat, quapropter quam humillime precamur R. P. V. quatenus non gravetur curare ut dictus P. Fr. Thomas Brown a conventu nostro Sanctae Crucis expellatur <sup>14</sup>.

Insuper prior et fratres conventus Trimensis in natione Lageniae humiliter exponunt V. R. Paternitati quatenus R. P. Fr. Michael Voin [Wynne] nostri ordinis pluribus annis in dicto conventu assignatus existat, cuius conversatio religiosa et morum candor, necnon diligentia in exequendis negotiis conventus ipsum patribus dicti conventus Trimensis in omnibus et per omnia commendabilem exhibet; quapropter cum conventus eius nativus nimirum Sligoniensis in natione Conaciae maiori numero fratrum quam commode pascere valeat sit gravatus, quod onerosum est, maxime in provincia desolata, humiliter rogant V. R. P. quatenus dictum R. P. Fr. Michaellem Voin in conventu Trimensi affiliare dignetur, quo facto novo titulo dictum R. P. simul cum omnibus patribus conventus Trimensis pro salute tam spirituali quam tem-

<sup>14</sup> Many letters on this question, from Brown himself and Aug. O'Kelly, his prior at Louvain, are in AGOP XIII. 68095. This was Rob. Th. Brown who received orders from tonsure to diaconate at Malines in 1733-1734. On 1 June 1737 he was described as a priest, was said to have been "scarcely four years at Louvain", and was permitted to continue for one more year at his studies. AGOP IV. 217, p. 7. By 1739 he was syndic of Holy Cross and continued to claim that title even after he was replaced by another. Ibid., pp. 42, 51, 57, 67, 90.



porali V. R. Paternitatis in perpetuum orare devinciet. Nomina fratrum qui hanc affiliationem postulant, videlicet fr. Iacobus Dillon s.t.m., fr. Franciscus Lynagh p.g., fr. Thomas Hussey p.g., omnes filii conventus Trimensis<sup>15</sup>.

Datum in loco refugii hac die 17<sup>a</sup> mensis Septembris 1745,

fr. Michael Hoare, prior provincialis Hiberniae.

Haud facile est hisce temporibus ab hinc ad vos mittere epistolas.

Though of minor interest, this is almost the only surviving letter of Hoare's provincialate. Perhaps he would have written again to Rome in the ordinary course of business, but the war of the Austrian Succession interrupted postal services until autumn 1746. In any event, the provincial continued to live at Limerick and seems to have been as much interested in that convent as he was in the province at large. He did, however, try to improve the staffing of the convents. Michael Wynne, mentioned in the letter above, was transiliated from Sligo to Trim. So was Thomas Healy, from Burrishoole to Strade<sup>16</sup>. Vincent Kennedy of Kilmallock, transiliated to Youghal in 1745, was later joined there by Thomas Kelly of Roscommon, transiliated in 1747<sup>17</sup>. Thomas or Robert Browne, whom the provincial wanted back in Ireland, was a Galwayman (a novice there in 1731-1732) who had been troubling the community of Holy Cross, Louvain, since 1735. Despite the best efforts of his prior, provincial, provincial chapter and master general, and despite all the censures it was in their power to impose, Browne held on at Louvain for years and Galway did not see him again until 1751<sup>18</sup>.

Michael Hoare held a second visitation in the summer of 1746 and sent a report to Rome about it afterwards. That report has been lost, but some of the elements in it emerge from the general's reply<sup>19</sup>. At the

<sup>15</sup> Mich. Wynne is an obscure figure, professed for Sligo about 1719 and active on the mission from about 1726. He died at Donore, the house of refuge from Trim, on 5 May 1758. His translocation to Trim, and that of Vin. Kennedy to Youghal, were granted on 13 Nov. 1745. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 92-93.

<sup>16</sup> On 18 Feb. 1747. AGOP IV. 217, p. 98. This appears to be the Th. MacKeal of the MacHenry list, living at Burrishoole in 1734-1735, and also the Th. MacHeal of the Netterville list, living at Strade in 1767.

<sup>17</sup> On 11 Nov. 1747. AGOP IV. 217, p. 105. Th. O'Kelly, probably the same, was prior of Youghal in 1756. Hib. Dom., 274.

<sup>18</sup> The absolution from censures was issued at Rome on 17 Apr. 1751 at the request of John Bodkin, prior of Galway, where Brown had recently appeared. AGOP IV. 217, p. 123.

<sup>19</sup> 18 Feb. 1747. AGOP IV. 217, p. 98.

provincial's request, and that of the *patres graviores*, the province was dispensed from holding the intermediate chapter planned for the summer of 1747. The provincial was also allowed, because of the war, to postpone his intended visitation of Holy Cross, Louvain. One can see from the general's registers that the political situation did more than interrupt the post: it prevented prospective missionaries from returning to Ireland<sup>20</sup>, and prevented prospective students from reaching either Rome or Louvain<sup>21</sup>. Father Hoare sent two youths from Ireland in the course of 1746, intending them to begin philosophy at San Sisto in Rome. They got as far as Spain, where some friendly convents took them in, and went no further. For this, Father Ripoll rebuked the provincial in February 1747: he should have taken care to stock the *studia* of the province, and not have left the lector of philosophy at Louvain idle for a whole year, or his Roman counterpart with only one (dull) student to lecture to.

The most remarkable event of the years 1745-1747, so far as the Irish province was concerned, had nothing to do with the provincial. It had to do with the nuns of Bom Successo in Lisbon. The statutes of their monastery decreed that the community was never to exceed forty, of whom two were to be Portuguese (descendants of the foundress) and the rest Irish. That absolute limit on the size of the community was faithfully observed, but by 1747 no less than ten of the choir-sisters were Portuguese. Differences of language and temperament soon produced their effect, first in disagreement over the choice of a regular confessor, and then in a prioral election during the summer of 1747 which surprised even the veteran officials of the Roman curia. Vincenzo Maria Ferretti, who became vicar of the order after Ripoll's death on 22 September 1747, thought that so scandalous a prioral election had not been heard of in the Dominican order for a century<sup>22</sup>. The friars of Corpo Santo, the cardinal archbishop of Lisbon, the Queen of Portugal and the Holy See itself, all had a hand in the affair.

Another of the provincial's letters, written at Limerick on 25 August 1747, has been preserved among the papers of Patrick Brullaughan O.P.,

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<sup>20</sup> e.g. Ch. O'Kelly from Lisbon and Edm. Reilly from Louvain, both in Oct. 1745. AGOP IV. 217, p. 92.

<sup>21</sup> Mentioned under date 30 July 1746 in AGOP IV. 217, p. 97.

<sup>22</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 106a, under date 22 Nov. 1747. There are innumerable details on this dispute in the same register.



the Roman agent to whom it was addressed<sup>23</sup>. Apparently Brullaughan worked at Rome for bishop Robert Lacy of Limerick, with whom Father Hoare was on excellent terms. He also took care of the provincial's bills at the Dominican curia. Father Hoare referred to this business in his opening paragraph, but the main point of his letter was to ask Brullaughan to reopen the lawsuit first brought by the Dominicans and Franciscans of Limerick against the Augustinians in 1733, and settled to the advantage of the Augustinians in 1739<sup>24</sup>. Bishop Lacy himself wanted the lawsuit revived, seeing that the Augustinians had since opened a chapel within a few feet of the Dominican one: "at our very door and in the very same lane we live in". It is interesting that Father Hoare should describe these Augustinians as "Conachians", meaning that they had come into the city from Connacht, a distinct ecclesiastical province. Whatever about the provincial's request, the two orders lived side by side in Fish Lane, Limerick, until the Augustinians went elsewhere in 1778.

A more important dispute began in Dublin about January or February 1747. It concerned the confraternity of the Holy Name which some diocesan priests and Jesuits wished to establish on a national scale, and actually did establish with papal approval in some twelve parishes. The Dominicans of the capital immediately entered their veto on the grounds that any such confraternity, aiming at the elimination of blasphemy and profanity, was the exclusive property of the Dominican order, guaranteed to it by the bulls of several popes. Besides, they claimed to rely completely on confraternities for their support, and said that if the diocesan clergy were not forced to yield on this point, the Dominicans would be "utterly undone in these parts, and must immediately think of dispersing into different regions"<sup>25</sup>. Although this implies that the Holy Name confraternity was long and solidly established at the chapel in Bridge Street, the only supporting evidence

<sup>23</sup> Archives of San Clemente, Rome (hereafter SCAR), Codex IV, doc. 156c.

<sup>24</sup> See above, pp. 155-158. Some hold that the Dominicans of Limerick then lived in Gaol Lane, not Fish Lane as stated here.

<sup>25</sup> Dublin, 22 Oct. 1748. Mich. Shanly, prior, to Pat. Brullaughan at Rome. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 27. For a longer account of the dispute, see H. Fenning, Laurence Richardson, O.P., Bishop of Kilmore, 1747-1753, in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (March 1968) 150-152. Several letters on the same subject, from the archives of the Irish College in Rome, have been edited by H. Fenning, *Letters from a Jesuit in Dublin on the Confraternity of the Holy Name, 1747-1748*, in *Archivium Hibernicum* 29 (1970) 133-154.

to which one can appeal is that Edmund Burke included "the Rosary of the Most Holy Name of Jesus" in a booklet he printed at Dublin in 1725. One feels that the Dominicans of Dublin discovered their own Holy Name confraternity only when the secular priests brought it to their attention. Thomas Brenan, a Jesuit of Dublin, could say in February 1747: "this sodality of the Dominicans never has been mentioned or put into execution here, or even heard of, till of late, so as to enroll people in it"<sup>26</sup>. There was more reason, if less chivalry, in a second protest the Dublin Dominicans made at this time. They wanted to close down the Rosary confraternity established in the chapel of the Dominican nuns, for the good and sufficient reason that it drew people away from their own<sup>27</sup>.

#### GENERAL CHAPTER AT BOLOGNA, 1748

General chapters of the order, during the eighteenth century, were few and far between. None was held from 1725, when Thomas Ripoll was elected at Bologna, until a year after his death. Michael Hoare attended this second chapter, celebrated at Bologna in June 1748, and thus took part in the election of Antoninus Bremond as master general. The other Irish representatives were Dominic Kennedy of Dublin, a lector at Corpo Santo, Lisbon, and Patrick Brullaughan of the Casanatensian library in Rome. Two other definitors, in the list of ninety-five vocals, bore distinctively Irish names: Joseph Thomas Wadding of the Canary Islands and William Dermott of the French province of St. Louis the King. There is no evidence to show what route Father Hoare took to Bologna, or whether he visited either Louvain or Lisbon on his way.

The secretaries of the chapter seem to have misbehaved themselves, for as soon as the petitions of the Irish province and the college of Lisbon had been read aloud, complaints were heard that some had been "reduced, confused or omitted"<sup>28</sup>. Antoninus Bremond calmed the

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>27</sup> Dublin, 17 Nov. 1747. Mich. Shanly, prior, and four priests of the convent, to the vicar general. They refer to the erection of this confraternity in the nuns' chapel by letters patent dated 19 Sept. 1733. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 26bis. The other signatories were Jn. Fottrell, Th. Burke, Jn. Ryan (subprior) and Jn. Archer.

<sup>28</sup> AGOP III. 56, sine fol. The incident occurred during the 9th session on 7 June.

waters by asking for and obtaining the permission of the chapter to discuss and settle the petitions of each province with the interested parties. Since only some of the papers have survived, it is not easy to trace exactly what happened to the Irish petitions at the chapter, but we do know what the province originally wanted and what it finally obtained. Only the intermediate stage — the stage which caused the protests — is obscure. The province's eleven original requests survive in an unsigned copy at San Clemente. Although somewhat long and diffuse, the document does give a general view of the canonical difficulties with which the Dominicans of Ireland were faced at the time, and for that reason it is worth printing the full text here <sup>29</sup>.

Prior provincialis Hiberniae, nomine provinciae suae magnopere afflictæ, utpote sub immani hæreticorum iugo miserum in modum gementis, quam demisse enixeque supplicat r.mo magistro ordinis noviter electo, necnon admodum rr. pp. provincialibus ac definitoribus in comitiis generalibus convocatis, quatenus pro consolatione dictæ Hiberniae provinciae benigne dignentur.

1<sup>o</sup> Confirmare omnia et singula privilegia huic provinciae ab anterioribus capitulis generalibus, et magistris ordinis peculiariter concessa, signanter quod in duobus ultimis capitulis generalibus sancitum fuit.

2<sup>o</sup> Confirmare salubrem dispositionem studii in collegiis, Romano scilicet, Ulissiponensi et Lovaniensi, a nuper defuncto r.mo p. magistro generali f. Thoma Ripoll, ad petitionem provinciae factam, ut nempe iuvenes studio theologico integrum impendant quadriennium, eo consilio, ut scilicet, in polemicis ac moralibus proficiant, sicque aptiores reddantur ad excolendam vineam Domini.

3<sup>o</sup> Confirmare etiam praesentem studii dispositionem in collegio SS. Sixti et Clementis de Urbe quoad numerum professorum, ut nimirum, praeter regentem, baccalaureum, et lectorem artium, adsit semper magister studentium, qui controversias fidei et casus conscientiae in consuetis circulis exponat. Et quandoquidem ob maximam huius collegii a provincia distantiam, alternativa quatuor nationum Hiberniae observari nequeat absque exclusionem quandoque idoneorum subditorum ipsiusmet provinciae, cum tamen alii commode haberi non possint, et absque ingentibus impensis in solutione viatici pro

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<sup>29</sup> SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 25bis. Marked "duplicate", but in fact a more polished version, not just a copy, of the preceding document. Both the hand and the paper suggest that it was written at Lisbon, perhaps an indication that the provincial came that way. The earlier draft (doc. 25) is on Irish paper with a GR watermark.

accessu et regressu superiorum, dignentur indulgere, sive nunc pro tunc dispensare, ut sine ullo respectu dictarum quattuor nationum, indiscriminatim ac promiscue ex toto genere Hibernorum recipiantur iuvenes, et instituantur lectores ac studii moderatores, eligenturque conventus priores, si, et quotiescunque lex alternativae commode servari nequeat, ut specialiter pro hoc conventu ordinatum fuit Romae 1686.

4<sup>o</sup> Inhaerentes constitutionibus nostris dist. 1, cap. 13, text. 3, et in glossa lit. i, ubi statuitur ut nullus recipiatur in fratrem clericum ad probationem vel professionem, nisi a priore provinciali, vel ab eo cui super hoc dederit licentiam specialem, nec debeat in alienis conventibus ad professionem recipi, nisi de voluntate illorum conventuum pro quibus sunt recepti, dignentur distincte inhibere, prout plura capitula provincialia, ipseque r. mus magister ordinis bonae memoriae p. Thomas Ripoll in eorundem litteris confirmatoriis diserte inhibuerant, ut nullus iuvenis, nedum in hoc regno, sed nec etiam in supra recensitis tribus conventibus extranationalibus ad habitum ordinis recipiatur sine licentia prioris provincialis huius provinciae in scriptis obtenta et consensu prioris et fratrum illius conventus in Hibernia, pro quo professionem est emissurus, et si secus factum fuerit, totum sit irritum et inane. Enimvero funesta experientia constat, aliquos iuvenes in Hibernia iustis de causis reiectos, in praefatis conventibus postmodum ad habitum et professionem admissos fuisse.

5<sup>o</sup> Cum pro votis proxime praeteriti capituli generalis Bononiae celebrati, nondum fuerit impetratum diploma apostolicum ad effectum impediendi ne imposterum affiliarentur fratres in saepe recensitis tribus conventibus extranationalibus, in notabile missionis apostolicae detrimentum, et cum ex eo ipsissimo tempore nonnulli similes affiliationes obtinuerint, dignentur committere moderno patri provinciali, ut diploma istud expediri satagat, insimul declarare, sive in memoriam revocare, quod tales imposterum affiliandi possint ad nutum provincialis Hiberniae pro tempore in provinciam suam vocari, quoties eos necessarios iudicaverit in obsequium missionis apostolicae, sive originalium suorum conventuum, quos desolatos relinquunt, vocationis suae prorsus immemores, atque panem otiosi comedere volentes.

6<sup>o</sup> Confirmare, et quatenus opus fuerit, innovare privilegium huic provinciae dudum concessum, ut nempe quoties ob temporum calamitates non sint in conventibus tres patres vocales ad canonice eligendum suum priorem, possit provincialis pro tempore conventibus illis priores praeficere cum omnibus iuribus priorali muneri competentibus, eo vel maxime ne scilicet memoria illorum conventuum sensim sine sensu deleatur, in haud modicum ordinis ac provinciae praeiudicium; flebili quippe experientia compertum est, nonnullos in hoc regno conventus, ea de causa, in dubium revocari, tanquam si ad ordinem nostrum nunquam spectassent, adeo ut verisimiliter, etiam post molestas lites, ordini omnino perderentur, si, benedicente Domino, Catholica religio in hac regione umbrae mortis iterum efflueret.



7<sup>o</sup> Cum iuxta taxatum graduatorum numerum pro hac provincia, ubi haeresis regnat, debeant esse tres magistri pro unaquaque natione, et totidem praesentati titulo scholae, et unus dumtaxat magister, unus praesentatus, titulo missionis sive praedicationis, dignentur ampliare et protendere numerum graduatorum, taliter ut praeter tres magistros et tres praesentatos titulo scholae pro singulis nationibus, adsint duo magistri duoque praesentati titulo missionis, ut nimirum stimulus detur divini verbi praedicatoribus merita sua in vinea Domini adaugendi, utque missionarii isti dictos gradus in praemium laborum consecuti, iisdem veluti nobilibus calcaribus magis magisque incitati, ferventius in laudata vinea operentur pro incremento Catholicae religionis et decore ordinis.

8<sup>o</sup> Confirmare concessionem a pia memoriae r.mo magistro ordinis p. Thoma Ripoll ad supplicem provinciae instantiam in proxime praeterito capitulo provinciali factam, ut scilicet pro maiori commoditate patrum capitularium imposterum capitulum provinciale electivum celebrari valeat Sabbato ante Dominicam 3 post octavam Trinitatis: Deus qui diligentibus. Siquidem Paschali tempore ut plurimum maximae abundant pluviae in hoc regno, vigetque penuria alimentorum tam pro itinerantibus quam pro ipsismet equis sustentandis necessariorum, adeo ut sine ingentibus difficultatibus, incommodis et expensis ad capitulum provinciale tunc temporis celebrandum accedere non possint patres vocales, qui aliunde eo ipso tempore in excipiendis annuis fidelium utriusque sexus confessionibus summo opere occupari solent.

9<sup>o</sup> In memoriam revocare declarationem r.mi Ripoll saepe laudati in literis confirmatoriis ultimi capituli provincialis, quod scilicet fratres curam animarum habentes, et intra limites conventuum ad quos spectant habitantes, gaudeant voce activa in conventibus quorum sunt filii aut quibus assignati existunt, quemadmodum aliorum ordinum religiosi in hoc afflicto regno gaudere solent.

10<sup>o</sup> Quod moniales conventus nostri Pontanensis sint subiectae immediato regimini patris provincialis pro tempore.

11<sup>o</sup> Quod definitores capituli generalis eligantur ex quatuor nationibus nostrae provinciae, servata alternativae lege eo modo quo fit in electione provincialium.

None of the first five points set forth in this document was mentioned in the public acts of the general chapter. Nor were the nuns of Drogheda placed under the provincial's control. All the other requests were granted: the extra mastership and baccalaureate *titulo missionis*, the later date of the provincial chapter, the right to take part in prioral elections even though non-resident, the right of the provincial to appoint priors in "small houses", and the election of definitors-general in turn



from the four "provinces"<sup>30</sup>. The friars and nuns of Lisbon also presented petitions to the chapter. A mutilated copy of their requests — by the very same hand (Dominic Kennedy's?) as that in which the requests of the province were written out — was signed at Corpo Santo on 26 March 1748 by the leading priests of that establishment: Bernard Brullaughan, the rector, Eugene MacCrohon, Thomas (Myles) Burke, Mark Bodkin and Richard Nugent, lectors, Bernard Deas, vicar and sacristan, James Dillon, master of students, and Hyacinth Sheasty, procurator<sup>31</sup>. Although this paper was discussed at Bologna, the published acts of the chapter do not refer to their requests, most of which aimed at keeping Corpo Santo and Bom Successo in Irish hands and discouraging lay interference in their concerns. The document makes the surprising claim that there were several thousand natives of Ireland "and the adjacent islands" resident at Lisbon who depended on the Irish friars for confession and instruction. The petitioners conveniently forgot to mention the English College of Lisbon.

The general chapter also promoted to the degrees of the order several candidates who had already been postulated by the provincial chapter at Dublin. This was probably done after many of the vocals had gone home, for the official documents were issued between 6 and 21 August 1748<sup>32</sup>. Michael Hoare himself led the list, with a *praesentatura* or baccalaureate *titulo missionis*. All save one of the other recipients were officials of the colleges at Rome, Lisbon or Louvain. That left Father Hoare with just one degree to bring back home to Ireland — a mastership for Bernard MacHenry, the former provincial — but he also brought permission for the succeeding provincial chapter to postulate eight more candidates than usual: one extra mastership and one baccalaureate *titulo missionis* for each of the four "provinces".

If the provincial did other business in Italy, little trace of it has survived. He was asked, with four priests of San Sisto, to sign a statement with regard to the practice of questing in Ireland. In this, undated document he mentioned that he had visited all parts of the country over the previous eighteen months, and attested that whereas the diocesan clergy lived on stole-fees and other dues, the regular clergy lived by the quest and by collections taken up at their chapel-doors on Sun-

<sup>30</sup> MOPH XIV, 159-160 and Hib. Dom., 177.

<sup>31</sup> Original in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Registered in AGOP IV, 217, p. 109.

days and holidays<sup>33</sup>. With this affidavit, the Irish Dominicans of Rome were simply helping their Franciscan brethren who were then at odds with the bishop of Ferns. The dispute was amicably settled at Wexford in January 1749.

#### CONFRATERNITY OF THE HOLY NAME, 1748

The San Sisto community gave six scudi to Michael Hoare in July 1748 "as alms on his departure for Ireland"<sup>34</sup>. Despite that indication from the account-books, he probably remained during the first half of August to collect his new degree (issued on the 6th) and to sign that statement on questing which it would be straining the evidence to date any earlier. In all likelihood he had already gone on 30 August when the earlier difficulty about the Holy Name confraternity in Dublin took a decided turn for the worse with the appearance of a papal brief permitting the bishops of Ireland to erect the confraternity in their dioceses.

Exactly one month later, on 30 September, a second brief appeared which redressed the injury done to the Irish Dominicans in the first, and explained that branches of the confraternity were to be erected in Ireland only in collaboration with the Dominicans there<sup>35</sup>. This, as the historian Thomas Burke rightly says, was the work of the newly elected master general, a personal friend of the pope. Antoninus Bremond took credit for it in a letter of 30 November 1748 to Laurence Richardson, Dominican bishop of Kilmore, when enclosing copies of the new brief<sup>36</sup>. Later still, at the close of December, he wrote to Michael Hoare and his vicar-provincial, John Fottrell, urging them to ensure that the Dominicans, of Dublin especially, showed greater respect to the bishops and collaborated freely with them in the erection

<sup>33</sup> Archives of Propaganda Fide (hereafter APF), SC Irlanda 10, ff. 249-250. To be dated about Aug. 1748. Signed also by Pet. MacKeon, prior, Dom. Morrogh, regent, Th. Hope, subprior and second regent, Pat. Kirwan, lector of philosophy. On the dispute with the bishop of Ferns, with which this petition was connected, see H. Fenning, Laurence Richardson, Bishop of Kilmore, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (March 1968) 150.

<sup>34</sup> SCAR, Accounts (1748-1770), in the section on expenses. The same volume, under date May 1748, notes sums paid to painters and carpenters for work on the provincial's room.

<sup>35</sup> The full text of the brief is given in *Hib. Dom.*, 177-178. The original is in ASV, Fondo Domenicano, Pergamene, no. 464.

<sup>36</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 112. Also *Hib. Dom.*, 177-178.

of the confraternity<sup>37</sup>. Unless such cooperation were given, no member of the confraternity might lawfully obtain the indulgences attached to it.

While Father Hoare's return journey from Rome to Limerick is just as obscure as the route he first took to Bologna, it is not unlikely that he paid a call to Lisbon. Lisbon had always tended to be a "Munster" enclave, and one might easily get shipping there for Cork. The community thought highly of him, so much so that they asked the master general to let him become rector of the college on finishing his provincialate. It was in fact arranged that Bernard Brullaughan, the out-going rector, would continue from 17 November 1748 as vicar *in capite* of both college and monastery until such time as Michael Hoare should arrive as rector<sup>38</sup>. This plan was upset by the provincial's illness, for he had no sooner returned to Ireland from the chapter than his health gave way, to such an extent indeed that he was "despaired of by his physicians". That he recovered at all, he attributed to a miracle. By his own account, he heard a voice telling him to get up and look at a certain page of an old book in the convent library at Limerick, for there he would find an immediate cure. The reference was to Justinus Miechoviensis, *Discursus praedicabiles super Litanias Lauretanas Beatae Virginis Mariae*, Paris 1642, vol. 2, p. 495, where the Polish Dominican author speaks of Our Lady as the *Salus Infirmorum*. Unfortunately, on that one page there are so many examples of Our Lady's healing of the sick that it is not possible to say what precise means Michael Hoare took to effect a cure. Perhaps, to pick one example, he may have eaten a piece of bread dipped in the oil of a lamp burning before a statue of the Virgin<sup>39</sup>.

The provincial's original term of office expired on 4 May 1749, and there is nothing in the registers to suggest that he was expressly continued in office for the six weeks or so separating that date from the opening of the provincial chapter. His successor, Bernard MacHenry, was elected only on 17 June, in line with the new arrangement made for holding chapters later in the year. Father Hoare being still unwell,

<sup>37</sup> 28 Dec. 1748. Bremond to Hoare. AGOP IV. 217, p. 113.

<sup>38</sup> 12 Oct. 1748. Bremond to community. AGOP IV. 217, p. 111. It was stated in 1753 that the nuns of Bom Successo expected that their confessors would always be from Munster. *Ibid.*, p. 131, under date 20 June 1753.

<sup>39</sup> Fr. Hoare had this book rebound in gratitude and wrote a note on it describing his cure. The book survived into modern times and copies of the note may be read, e.g., in TA, Ryan V, 109-110.

despite his cure, the general released him from the rectorship of Lisbon he was due to assume, and he continued to live at Limerick until again elected provincial in 1761<sup>40</sup>. He was prior there in 1756, as Thomas Burke notes in his *Hibernia Dominicana*, and one also finds his name in the list of subscribers to that book. In autumn 1752 he intervened in Dominican affairs when it seemed likely that the brethren at Louvain would refuse to elect a prior from Munster, and when the bishop of Waterford was denying the right of the order to have a public chapel in that city<sup>41</sup>. In fact, Michael Hoare was asked in August 1753 to take the Louvain priorship himself, but turned it down. Later on, in autumn 1755, he had to go to Galway to judge a dispute between the members of the convent there; although some had made very serious charges against the others, Father Hoare established that their accusations were completely false<sup>42</sup>.

He was also quite prominent in the diocesan affairs of Limerick, and clearly one of the more "responsible" priests of the city. His name first occurs as a witness to an ecclesiastical agreement in 1749, and as a protonotary apostolic in 1750<sup>43</sup>. When a new bishop of Killaloe was being sought in April 1752, three parish priests of that diocese declared that they would prefer Hoare to any other candidate<sup>44</sup>. Later still, in 1760, he was honoured by being named delegate of the archbishop of Cashel for the induction of a new bishop of Limerick in the chapel of St. Mary<sup>45</sup>.

#### BERNARD MACHENRY, 1749-1753

Because of the *alternativa*, that system of rotation devised to give each of the four "provinces" its due, the new provincial had to be from Ulster. When the final choice was made, on 17 June 1749, the

<sup>40</sup> Released from rectorship on 11 June 1749. Bremond to Hoare. AGOP IV. 217, p. 114. On the same occasion, at Hoare's request, the general transiliated Jas. Dillon of Lisbon from Athy to Trim.

<sup>41</sup> 25 Oct. 1752. Bremond to Hoare. AGOP IV. 217, p. 128.

<sup>42</sup> 24 Jan. 1756. Vinc. M. Ferretti to Hoare. AGOP IV. 217, p. 159.

<sup>43</sup> Limerick Diocesan archives, White Mss., pp. 122, 124. SCAR, Codex I, vol. 4, f. 873.

<sup>44</sup> Mentioned in APF, SC Irlanda 17, ff. 62-63. Unfortunately, the Propaganda papers (which must have been considerable) on this vacancy of Killaloe, have been mislaid.

<sup>45</sup> L. F. Renehan, Collections on Irish Church History, vol. II, part 2, Dublin 1874, 107, 115.



voters picked a man who had once been provincial before: Bernard MacHenry, who had already ruled the province from 1734 to 1738 and had spent at least part of his interregnum as parish priest of Drumlane in the diocese of Kilmore <sup>46</sup>. He was the first provincial since the previous century to be elected twice. Although the capitular fathers only vaguely realized the fact, this was a highly delicate moment in the history of the province and it was particularly desirable to have an experienced hand at the helm. Father MacHenry was about fifty-six on taking up office for the second time.

The chapter, which met as usual in Dublin, took four days to finish its business and the acts were sealed on 21 June <sup>47</sup>. One of the four definitors was Thomas Burke, a member of the Dublin community since 1743, later bishop of Ossory and author of *Hibernia Dominicana*. Michael Hoare, the outgoing provincial, and Michael Shanly, prior of Dublin, were chosen to attend the following general chapter. Strictly speaking, little of the capitular legislation was new, but one senses in the acts a general feeling of anxiety, a certain determination to repress familiar abuses, even if only to disarm the hostile. While it had, for instance, been customary to name the four archbishops as *privilegiorum conservatores*, the chapter named three Dominican bishops (Stephen MacEgan of Meath, Laurence Richardson of Kilmore and Peter Kilkelly of Kilmacduagh) as well as Robert Lacy of Limerick whom they obviously expected to prove more friendly than the archbishop of Cashel. Two of these bishops were former provincials. And one of them, Stephen MacEgan, was asked to defend the privileges of the order in Leinster, whereas his diocese lay in a different ecclesiastical province.

With respect to internal discipline, the chapter again insisted (ord. 1) that monthly theological conferences should be held in each convent;

<sup>46</sup> See above, p. 170.

Mr. MacDonogh O.P., bishop of Kilmore, conferred the parish of Drumlane on B. MacHenry between 1740 and 1746 and, so far as he could, united the parish to the convent of Cavan. His undated petition to the pope, asking that the union be made perpetual, is in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 23. A priest named Dom. Farnen was described in 1744 as "generally residing at Drumlahan in the parish of Feenagh". W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford 1914, 445. Since a list of the pastors of Kilmore, drawn up on 4 Oct. 1750, does not include MacHenry's name, while giving that of Thomas Fitzsimons O.P., pastor of Drumlane, it would seem that MacH. relinquished his parish on becoming provincial in 1749. P. O'Connell, *The Diocese of Kilmore*, Dublin 1937, 497-499.

<sup>47</sup> The original acts are in AGOP XIII, 68095.



that all confessors should submit to three successive examinations at three-year intervals (ord. 2); and that no one should quest outside the limits of his own convent, nor even within them without the permission of his local superior (ord. 6). Another ordination (3) reveals that some novices were still being admitted to the habit without the necessary guarantee that their parents or friends would provide travelling expenses when the time came for them to go abroad for study. Likewise the foreign colleges occasionally admitted postulants to the habit without the provincial's express permission, sometimes all unknown to the convents for which these candidates would later make profession. Father MacHenry was told to look into such matters, to name examiners for the junior confessors of the province, and to ensure in the course of visitation that both preachers and confessors were capable of promoting devotion to "both rosaries", namely the rosary of the Holy Name and that of the Blessed Virgin (ord. 5).

The chapter also framed some petitions to the master general. One struck a familiar note by asking him to send stray Irishmen home from the continent to help the "desolate" convents for which they had been professed but never served. Another requested that the nuns of Drogheda be placed under the provincial's jurisdiction. A third, probably inspired by the provincial himself, mentioned that objections had been raised to the legitimacy of the foundation at Cavan and asked for a papal brief to lay all doubts at rest<sup>48</sup>. The list of the dead appended to the acts reveals that twenty-nine of the brethren had died since the chapter of 1745, an average of six or seven a year. To judge by these capitular obits, exactly one hundred died over the fifteen-year period from 1734 to 1749. Although that loss was surely made good by those professed in that time, the chapter would clearly have liked to increase the manpower of the province, if only to build up communities in remote country places to which it had a claim but could not fully staff.

Antoninus Bremond duly received and, on 13 September, duly commented on the acts. He simply ignored two of the petitions and answered the third, concerning the nuns of Drogheda, with a curt "*nihil omnino*

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<sup>48</sup> No such brief seems to have been issued. The petition is cited by Th. Burke, *Hib. Dom.*, 288. There is now evidence to show that there were Dominicans resident at Clonfad, parish of Drumully, diocese of Clogher, before the death of Hugh Connallach O'Reilly in 1596. J. Carney, *A Genealogical History of the O'Reilly's*, Cavan 1959, 49, 95.

*innovandum* " 49. The nuns would remain under his own immediate jurisdiction. The general also pointed out that the election of Michael Shanly as *socius* to the definitor general was actually illegal, since that election pertained to the full provincial chapter, not to the definitors alone. To resolve the problem, Father Bremond simply appointed Michael Shanly as *socius* on his own authority. Frankly, his comments contained only one constructive element: an ordination that no one was to be admitted to the clerical habit without a knowledge of Latin and grammar. Candidates were to be examined on this score either in a *studium* of theology or, if elsewhere, in the presence of the provincial, by examiners chosen by the whole conventual chapter, while the examination itself was to take place before the full house council. The general must have felt strongly on the matter, since this command went out to all concerned as a formal precept and under pain of excommunication. Three weeks later, in somewhat more gracious mood, Father Bremond promoted no less than twenty-seven members of the province to various degrees of the order, a gesture which must have brought joy to many a smoky fireside. Two former provincials, John Fottrell and Michael Hoare, thus became masters of theology in recognition of their services to the mission <sup>50</sup>.

#### REGULAR AND SECULAR, 1741-1749

There was good reason for the uneasiness implicit in the acts of the provincial chapter, as there was for the general's insistence on the proper screening of postulants. But the Dominicans who met at Dublin for the chapter of 1749 were not at all sure who their opponents were nor what form the expected attack would take. At most one may say that they distrusted the four archbishops, and that both they and Father Bremond feared some impending restriction on the admission of novices. Relations between regular and secular in Ireland had always been less than cordial. The "war of the two altars" was something the friars accepted as a fact of life. Time and again Irish bishops had tried to curb the privileges of the regular clergy, but the influence of the friars at Rome had always managed to avert that danger. The only satisfaction

<sup>49</sup> There are copies of these comments in AGOP XIII, 68095 and SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 29. They are registered in AGOP IV, 217, p. 115.

<sup>50</sup> On 4 Oct. 1749, at the request of the chapter. AGOP IV, 217, p. 116.

the bishops ever got was Propaganda's decree of 1695, reissued in 1730, putting the regulars under their control in all matters pertaining to the *cura animarum* or the administration of the sacraments<sup>51</sup>. However, times had changed. During the 1740s quite a new situation slowly matured with the emergence and eventual alliance of three distinct groups (at Armagh, Dublin and Paris), all equally intent on the reform of the Irish church, during the reign of a pope, Benedict XIV, who was not inclined to overlook the failings of friars or to shrink from a radical decision.

The first suggestion of change in the status of the regular clergy came in January 1741 from Bernard MacMahon, archbishop of Armagh, who asked Propaganda to treat religious missionaries exactly as they were treated in Scotland; in other words, to give them an annual subsidy and place them directly under the bishops<sup>52</sup>. In May of the same year, the nuncio at Brussels held a series of meetings with four Irish bishops to discuss, among other topics, the problem of a too numerous clergy. The four bishops, one of whom was a Dominican, Michael MacDonogh of Kilmore, suggested that the regulars be told to teach the faith to those from whom they collected alms; that Rome should reconsider its support of orders such as the Carmelites and Capuchins who were trying to reestablish themselves in Ireland where the religious already settled could scarcely subsist; and that the size of each community should be determined by the religious superior in consultation with the local bishop<sup>53</sup>.

These and other similar reports led Benedict XIV to call a special meeting of Propaganda Fide, on 30 July 1741, at which it was decided to send a special visitor to Ireland in search of more detailed information<sup>54</sup>. According to the visitor, John Kent of Louvain, who carried out his task in the summer of 1742, the chief complaint of the bishops was that some religious entered the country and lodged even in convents of their own orders unknown to their major superiors or against their will<sup>55</sup>. Both male religious and nuns claimed exemption from the bi-

<sup>51</sup> On the earlier difficulties between regular and secular in Ireland, see above, pp. 126-132, 166-168. The decree of 1730 is mentioned on p. 132.

<sup>52</sup> H. Fenning, John Kent's Report on the State of the Irish Mission, 1742, in Arch. Hib. 28 (1966) 62.

<sup>53</sup> The letter of the four bishops is published *ibidem*, 74-76.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, 64-67.

<sup>55</sup> The full text of Kent's report is given *ibidem*, 76-98.

shops, to whom they denied the right of visiting their oratories. The regulars did not observe their constitutions even in those particulars which lay well within their power. At Dublin, for instance, where there were convents of every order, many religious lived outside them, loafing about in taverns with their friends. Even those resident in the city convents did not recite the divine office in common. While admitting that there were many learned and excellent friars, Kent insisted that there were "far many more useless, ignorant idlers". Missionaries of this stamp baptized and married in country parts without anyone's permission. Some scoffed at their own superiors. Some became Protestant ministers.

This is not the place to discuss the truth of these charges. The point at issue is the effect they had at Rome. One of Kent's tasks had been, in fact, to relay whatever practical suggestions the bishops and *zelanti* had to propose. Significantly, each of the five suggestions which eventually found their way into his report dealt with the regular clergy. Clearly, the friar-bishop was anathema; if more simply had to be appointed, the consent of the other bishops should first be obtained. Religious superiors should be forbidden to move their subjects from one civil province to another. The foundation of new convents or stations ought to be banned. The number of priests was too great for the inhabitants to support them easily, yet if the bishops were authorized to place religious where they were most needed, the actual number of the clergy (distributed more evenly over the whole country) would not be excessive. As a parting shot, Kent remarked that the friars might take an interest in teaching Christian doctrine, or even set up small schools beside their country stations.

Once this report reached Rome, nine decrees were immediately framed (7 May 1743) to remedy the worst "abuses"<sup>56</sup>. In future, no religious would go to the mission without testimonials from a papal nuncio and his own direct superior. Religious living outside formal convents would be subject in every respect to the local ordinary. The bishops would even control the assignation of religious in and out of their dioceses, and be permitted to move them around as they pleased. No provincial would assign any subject without the ordinary's permission. Nuns too would be completely subject to the bishops. Finally, the Capuchins, Carmelites and Discalced Carmelites were told to with-

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<sup>56</sup> The decrees of 1743 are published *ibidem*, 99-102.

draw from Ireland at once. Then came the anticlimax: these revolutionary decrees were set aside to gather dust on the shelves of Propaganda Fide.

This whole movement of reform, of which the regulars knew practically nothing, revived again in 1747 once the true "penal era" was over in Ireland and the war of the Austrian Succession, which distracted Benedict XIV from many ecclesiastical projects, drew slowly to an end<sup>57</sup>. In 1749, the Irish *zelanti* found a new leader when Michael O'Reilly, bishop of Derry, was promoted to Armagh and therefore to the primacy. Basically, O'Reilly objected to the fact that James III nominated regulars as bishops, and that Patrick Brullaughan O.P., a mere Roman agent, should have more say in such matters than the bishops themselves. On a much broader front, the new primate campaigned for "an absolutely necessary reformation" which he expected the friars to oppose: "they are filled with a lust for vengeance against those suspected of attacking their privileges, a term to which they attach enormous significance, even when the public good of religion is at stake". The archbishop spoke more harshly still of "scandalous friars such as are to be found amongst us, and always will be found so long as they show themselves so careless in their choice of novices"<sup>58</sup>.

Similar ideas prevailed in Dublin, at this date the true home and fatherland of the Irish antiregulars. For that, the friars themselves were much to blame, being more numerous and less edifying in the capital than they had any need to be. Michael O'Reilly found kindred spirits in the archbishop of Dublin, John Linegar, the two vicars general (John Clinch and Patrick Fitzsimons) and a young curate named John Murphy who (in 1748) had been the prime mover behind the scheme to break the Dominican monopoly on the confraternity of the Holy Name. Apart from Armagh and Dublin, there was yet a third focus of reform: the Irish college in Paris, largest of all the Irish continental seminaries, where archbishop O'Reilly had himself been trained. It was an Irish priest of Paris, Myles MacDonnell, who wrote to James III in 1745 (and again in 1747) complaining that there were too many priests on the mission, particularly in Dublin, and asking that the reception of

<sup>57</sup> For a fully documented account of this reform movement see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland: a study of the novitiate question in the eighteenth century*, (*Recueil de Travaux d'Histoire et de Philologie*, 6<sup>e</sup> série, fascicule 1), Louvain 1972, 154-187.

<sup>58</sup> H. Fenning, *op. cit.*, 159-160.



novices be controlled until such time as more religious were really needed <sup>59</sup>. MacDonnell's views eventually came, as did those of Michael O'Reilly, to the attention of Propaganda Fide.

With the confluence of these three currents of reform, and the ever more public hostility between regular and secular, cardinal Corsini, protector of Ireland, made two independent enquiries in the summer of 1749, at much the same time as the Dominicans were holding their chapter. On the one hand, he sent a former member of his household, canon John MacNamara, on a secret visit to Ireland, and on the other he asked Richard Reddy, a physician of Dublin, for an impartial account of the situation. Reddy replied on 28 July 1749 to say that while there were not too many priests, there were too many priests who should never have been ordained at all. Very many clergymen, secular and regular, were incapable, unworthy, factious or idle. Religious missionaries neglected to preach and catechize, especially in country places where such work was most required. At Dublin, the secular and regular clergy were equally matched in strength and in the number of chapels they possessed. Both lived by begging alms at their church-doors and elsewhere. "Whence", Richard Reddy concluded, "your eminence may discern one of the well-springs of their quarrels" <sup>60</sup>.

#### RUMOURS OF A CONSPIRACY, 1749-1751

Some faint hint of these developments came, by accident as it were, to the attention of the Dominican superiors. Propaganda, for instance, sent extracts from Kent's report to the community at Holy Cross, Louvain, shortly before January 1748 when the Congregation proposed to withdraw its annual subsidy to the college <sup>61</sup>. The college authorities retained their slender subsidy, thanks to a spirited critique of the report, but there is no indication that they knew of the dormant decrees of

<sup>59</sup> The full text has been published by H. Fenning, *Clerical Recruitment: documents from Windsor and Rome*, in *Arch. Hib.* 30 (1972) 10-13.

<sup>60</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 181. Reddy, one may note, was a beneficiary of the will of Laur. Richardson O.P., bishop of Kilmore, in 1753. W. Carrigan, *Catholic Episcopal Wills*, in *Arch. Hib.* 1 (1912) 184.

<sup>61</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 217. An interesting letter (19 Apr. 1748) from the nuncio at Brussels to Propaganda has been calendared by C. Giblin, *Catalogue... Nunziatura di Fiandra*, in *Coll. Hib.* 10 (1967) 107. The nuncio favoured the renewal of the subsidy, praised the college, and said that there were thirty-four in the community.

1743, much less that they were on the point of publication. Nor did canon John MacNamara's visit to Ireland pass unnoticed. The regular superiors at Dublin, led by Michael Shanly and John Fottrell, the Dominican prior and vicar-provincial respectively, wrote about him to cardinal Corsini and Father Bremond on 4 November 1749. They had just learned that some bishops and priests, more hostile to the regular clergy than parliament itself, encouraged by a canon MacNamara of Cambrai, were planning the final extermination of the friars. By calumniating the regulars at Rome, just as they had already tried to discredit them among the Irish laity, these enemies would attempt to despoil the regulars, not only of their present privileges, but of whatever favours their superiors and protectors were entitled to grant them<sup>62</sup>.

At much the same time as the priors and guardians of Dublin sought to offset possible calumnies at Rome, a young deacon named Joseph Kelly presented a long list of Irish "abuses" to the Roman authorities<sup>63</sup>. Kelly too was from Dublin, a great admirer of the leading reformers there, and recently a student at Paris. In point of fact, his most severe criticisms concerned the bishops and secular priests. He had only three remarks to make about the regulars: that novices in some areas lived in their own homes, that nuns were put out on the street whenever their relatives failed to pay their annual pensions, and that many bishops (including, presumably, the Dominicans MacEgan and Richardson) spent the winter at Dublin although holding parishes, even rich ones, in their own dioceses.

Matters came to a head on 17 January 1750 when the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin appointed John Murphy, by now a canon, as their agent and plenipotentiary to seek some remedy at Rome for the abuses prevalent on the mission. The name and seal of the archbishop of Cashel were then attached to the document, without his knowledge or consent, and Murphy set off *via* Paris as the self-styled spokesman for the "four" archbishops<sup>64</sup>. Reaching Rome about May or June, he found the ground well prepared, not merely by Joseph Kelly, but also by several memorials from Paris portraying the Irish clergy in a rather lurid light. Murphy too had many complaints to make about the bishops and diocesan clergy. With respect to the regulars, his chief object was

<sup>62</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 182. The letter to Bremond has not survived; only a summary of the answer (3 Jan. 1750) in AGOP IV. 217, p. 117.

<sup>63</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 184-186.

<sup>64</sup> *Op. cit.*, 186-187.

to reduce their number and improve their quality by suppressing novitiates in Ireland. He told the cardinals that friar-bishops gave parishes to their former brethren, that the friars never taught catechism to the poor, and that the religious orders supplied the greater number of dissolute or apostate priests. Since he had a special interest in nuns, canon Murphy provided Propaganda with some relevant statistics. There were, he claimed, thirty Dominican nuns in Dublin, twelve or thirteen in Drogheda, two or three at Waterford and thirty in Galway<sup>65</sup>. He suggested that they take more interest in teaching poor girls, and stressed their lack of formal cloister, their wearing of lay clothes, the scandal they gave by going out so often in public, and their weak bonds with the superiors general. This was to hint, not to demand, that they be subjected to the bishops.

Canon Murphy was still at work in Rome when the Dominican nuns of Dublin and Drogheda were warned of this very danger. The Dublin nuns seem to have been alerted first, for they obtained the (insincere) testimonial of their archbishop, John Linegar, on 15 July and wrote two days later to cardinal Corsini and James III, directing their letters to John Rochefort at San Sisto. No less than twenty-six nuns signed these documents<sup>66</sup>. From Drogheda, where eleven signed, the nuns wrote to cardinal Corsini on the 24th, evidently basing their letter on the text already composed at Dublin<sup>67</sup>.

Most Eminent Sir,

The great confidence we have in your eminences goodness emboldens us to apply upon this occasion to your eminence as protector of our order, most earnestly requesting that you may prevent our being subjected to the jurisdiction of any bishop, excepting in such cases as the law prescribes since we are morally certain that such a change would tend greatly to our disadvantage & disquiet nay we would rather dye than that the like should happen or that we should be wrested out of the power of the superiours of our own order under whose prudent and religious government and directions we have en-

<sup>65</sup> *Op. cit.*, 199. The Dominican friars would claim in 1767 that in 1750 they had had 176 on the mission. *Ibidem*, 278.

<sup>66</sup> APF, CP 110, ff. 182-197. There are copies of the nuns' letters from Dublin and Drogheda in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 59-60.

<sup>67</sup> APF, CP 110, f. 188. The enclosed testimonial of 21 July from Phil. O'Reilly is on f. 187. Although v.g. of Armagh, a relative and protégé of the primate, O'Reilly testified to the good conduct of the nuns and the high esteem they enjoyed. Note that both he and the prioress bore the same surname.

joyed these 28 years past profound peace and spirituall comfort in this town of Drogheda where we have educated many young ladys in the principles of our holy religion and behaved soe peacably and exemplarly as to defye any person whatever to sensur our conduct which [Philip O'Reilly] the vicar generall of the Diocess of Armagh and parish priest of this town does us the justice to send an attestation of by this post we therefore in the most earnest manner beg your eminences protection and that you may please to preserve us in the power of our superiours and we shall as in duty bound continue to pray to god that he may preserve you remaining

Most eminent Sir,

Your eminences most respectfull, most devoted and most humble servants  
Drogheda july y<sup>e</sup> 24 1750

Sr. Ellinor O Neill sup.s

Sr. Mary Plunkett

Sr. Mary Balfe

Sr. Bridget Taaffe

Sr. Mary Bellew

Sr. Mary Reilly prioress

Sr. Elinora Jolly

Sr. Rosey Bellew

Sr. Bridget Dillon

Sr. Frances Reilly

Sr. Margaret Savage

This charming appeal was written much too late to affect the course of events in Rome, but in fact there was no need for the nuns to worry. The great danger for them was that Propaganda might have promulgated the sixth decree of 1743 which, in turn, would have resurrected that of 4 February 1664, subjecting nuns in Ireland to their local ordinaries. As it happened, the Congregation (on 28 and 31 July 1750) endorsed only the first four decrees of 1743 and then framed fourteen new ones, largely inspired by canon John Murphy, of which only one in the least affected nuns: the bishops were commanded to ensure that pastors, religious and nuns taught catechism<sup>68</sup>. Even that fleeting reference was deleted before the final promulgation of the decrees. Antoninus Bremond would later claim that his personal intervention alone had "saved all the nuns of Ireland" from any change in their juridical status<sup>69</sup>.

It would have taken rather more to save the friars, who soon began to hear rumours of what was in store for them. On 14 September the Dominican bishop of Kilmore, Laurence Richardson, in his capacity

<sup>68</sup> This was the twelfth decree. For a summary of them all, see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 206.

<sup>69</sup> 12 June 1751. Bremond to the Dominican bishops of Meath and Kilmore. AGOP IV. 217, p. 123.



as *privilegiorum conservator*, began to collect the attestations of several bishops who denied all knowledge of the affair. The most valuable testimonial was that of the archbishop of Tuam, in whose province (Connacht) there were nearly as many regulars as there were in the rest of Ireland; a province, moreover, in which the tension between regular and secular had been more acute than anywhere else just twenty years before. The friars, he said, were "outstanding for solid doctrine and piety and... no less careful in bestowing the religious habit on young candidates... instructing these novices... in all religious duties and exercises, in regular observance and austerities". He also praised the "exemplary life" of the friars, "our hard-working fellow-labourers in the vineyard of the Lord"<sup>70</sup>. On 22 September 1750 the religious superiors at Dublin again wrote to Propaganda, criticizing archbishop O'Reilly, canon Murphy, and a Jesuit named Michael Fitzgerald whom they suspected of helping Murphy in Rome. Once more John Fottrell and Michael Shanly were the only Dominican signatories<sup>71</sup>.

Bernard MacHenry may not have been in Dublin at the time, or may not have wished to enter the fray until the facts were certain. None of the provincials, save George Vaughan the Augustinian, put his name to the protest of 22 September, nor to a later appeal sent to Rome on 22 November after some foul comments on the impending decrees appeared in the *Whitehall Evening Post*<sup>72</sup>. The same newspaper item prompted two Dominican bishops, MacEgan and Richardson, to attest the good character of the Irish nuns, mentioning that the citizens of Dublin had contributed generously in the recent past so that the Dominican sisters might build themselves a new house<sup>73</sup>. When Laurence Richardson wrote to the master general on the subject — asserting that some of the Irish clergy were trying to destroy the regulars "with greater fury than Queen Elizabeth herself" — Father Bremond replied that the decree subjecting nuns to the bishops had already been suspended, and as for the rest, he would do the best he could<sup>74</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 214.

<sup>71</sup> APF, CP 110, ff. 220-223. There is a copy in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 171.

<sup>72</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 216-217.

<sup>73</sup> 28 Nov. 1750. There are two sealed originals: one in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 172; the other (with allied documents) in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 55-58, where it is expressly stated (doc. 55) that the Dominican nuns of Dublin constantly wore the habit "in choir and refectory" and helped poor girls in their spiritual and temporal needs.

<sup>74</sup> 2 Dec. 1750. AGOP IV, 217, p. 120. The bishop's letter has not been found.



In actual fact, the nuns alone escaped. All the other appeals from Dublin were ignored, and whatever interventions the superiors general made at Rome proved ineffective. On 2 January 1751, Propaganda sent a copy of the new decrees to Antoninus Bremond. Bremond, on 9 January, posted them on to Bernard MacHenry, exhorting him to foster peace, respect for the bishops and due obedience to the Holy See<sup>75</sup>.

#### "THOSE DECREES OF THE YEAR FIFTY"

At this point the reader might legitimately ask what precisely these dreaded decrees contained. To start with, the term "formal convent" was restricted to houses in which the regulars lived a common life. Those living outside them would henceforth be subject, *in omnibus et per omnia*, to the local ordinary. Regulars arriving in Ireland without letters of obedience from their superiors general or provincials were to be treated as apostates (i.e. from the religious state) and expelled from the country by the bishops. On the other hand the prospective missionary, even though armed with appropriate letters of obedience, had also to obtain a written testimonial from the nuncio at Brussels, and then present all these papers to the bishop of the diocese in which his religious superior wished him to work. And not only that, for the bishop would then be free to place the missionary wheresoever he wished within his diocese. Should it become necessary to move a friar from one place of duty to another, the regular superior might do so only with the consent of the ordinary. Another decree warned the provincials to ensure that new missionaries would be learned, good-living and sufficiently old to win the respect of the faithful. Visitators (in point of fact a breed virtually unknown in Ireland) were not to approach the mission without both testimonials and instructions from the nuncio at Brussels. And finally, *in cauda velenum*, it was forbidden to give the religious habit to candidates in Ireland. Those wishing to join a religious order would have to do so abroad, in some Catholic country where novitiates were conducted in accordance with canon law.

So far, the provincial had taken little or no part in the affair. Apparently he was away from Dublin during the summer and early autumn of 1750. On 10 June he was at Coleraine, probably occupied in the work

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem., p. 121. The full Latin text of the decrees is in Hib. Dom., 179-181. And in L. F. Rénéhan, Collections on Irish Church History, vol. 1, 468-470.

of visitation <sup>76</sup>. But he did remark, in his subsequent report to the general: "how unjustly all the regulars of this kingdom are vilified by some evil men, as will plainly appear from the testimonials of many bishops lately sent to Rome" <sup>77</sup>. The reference to these testimonials means that MacHenry's first complaint must have been written after 30 October, probably during November. Later still, on receiving a summary of the new decrees, he subjected them (on 21 February 1751) to masterly analysis in a letter to Father Bremond. This impressive document survives only in the pages of *Hibernia Dominicana* and it is not improbable that the author of that book, Thomas Burke, had a hand in writing it <sup>78</sup>.

In Father MacHenry's opinion the new decrees, despite the best intentions of Propaganda, would injure the Irish church. The prohibition of home-novitiates would destroy the regular clergy who had first brought the faith to Ireland and had maintained it ever since. Both morally and physically it would prove impossible for the friars to survive with foreign novitiates alone. Not even the remnants of the Catholic nobility could afford to maintain their children abroad for a year. Besides, the novices might be trained just as religiously and more conveniently on the mission itself, where they would experience more mortification in food and lodging than they would abroad. If they were later to serve in Ireland, it were better for them to be initiated at home in the harsh physical conditions they would have to endure as priests. One had only to think of all those Irish religious who, having been trained abroad and grown used to the comforts of life, found employment on the continent because unwilling or simply unfit to return. Just as the provincial opened his letter with the novitiate question, so he ended it with a practical suggestion on the same subject: that the Dominicans be allowed one novitiate for each of the four ecclesiastical provinces, at Dublin, Drogheda, Athenry (Esler) and Cork.

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<sup>76</sup> On this date he witnessed at Coleraine John Brullaughan's resignation of the see of Derry in favour of Pat. Brullaughan O.P., rector and first almoner of the Sardinian chapel at London. Pat. Diamond O.P., S.T.M., also signed. APF, CP 110, ff. 234-235.

<sup>77</sup> Known only from Bremond's reply of 10 Feb. 1751, registered in AGOP IV, 217, p. 122.

<sup>78</sup> The full text is in Hib. Dom., 181-183. The author remarks that the provincial, at the time he wrote, had seen only a summary of the decrees. Th. Burke of Dublin probably played a part in the composition of the letter, to judge from the easy style and the learned quotation from Gratian.

Turning then to the question of formal convents and the "common life", the provincial was able to say that in the course of his recent visitation he had found his subjects living together so far as that was possible. Sometimes, to avoid offending the government, they lodged and boarded separately, while yet holding all things in common. In some places the magistrates permitted them to open and serve a chapel at certain hours of the day, but not to maintain a convent. Although there were still Dominicans in Kilkenny and Waterford, their convents had been closed six years before<sup>79</sup>. At Dublin, on the archbishop's instructions, the chapels opened only in the mornings during the six-month period every two years when parliament was in session. After the scare of 1744, when four Dublin priests were arrested (one taken in his vestments from the very altar), the chapels of the capital stayed shut for a long time. How, in such circumstances, could the regulars live the common life? Would it even be prudent for them to do so?

As for the other decrees, Father MacHenry felt that anyone acquainted with Irish affairs would consider them very difficult, if not impossible, to obey. Most of the regular clergy studied in Spain and elsewhere, hundreds of miles from Brussels. Not having a travelling allowance from Propaganda (unlike English or Scottish missionaries), they found it hard enough to pay for lay clothes and their tickets home from the ports of France, Portugal or Italy, without embarking on a costly detour simply to obtain testimonials from the nuncio in Belgium. And surely the provincials were better judges than the bishops as to where their own subjects might best be placed! If in this respect the friars were to be subject to the bishops, the bond between the religious superior and his subjects would slowly weaken, and there would be endless disputes between the bishops and provincials. Finally, the question of regulars returning to Ireland without letters of obedience. In thirty-three years as a missionary, the provincial had never even heard of such a case.

The only apparent weakness in this letter is that Father MacHenry should have proposed the Dublin convent as one of four novitiates,

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<sup>79</sup> On this point there is some ambiguity. MacHenry is referring to the general persecution of 1744, on which see above, pp. 187-189. But after their dispersal in 1744, did the Dominicans have a chapel in Waterford? MacHenry implies that they did. Yet Michael Hoare, in August or September 1752, complained to the general that the bishop of Waterford refused to "admit" a chapel. 25 Oct. 1752. Bremond to Hoare. AGOP IV. 217, p. 128.

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## PRAYER

*Lord, you gave your servant Fr Peter, an extraordinary love of neighbour in time of persecution, and the grace to bear witness to your love by dying for the faith, help us to grow in love of you and of our neighbour.*

*Our Lady of the Rosary, Queen of Martyrs, we invoke your intercession for the beatification of Fr Peter O'Higgins, if it be the will of your divine Son.*

**AMEN.**

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Imprimatur: +Laurence  
Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; 19/9/88



Peter O'Higgins OP  
- Died 23rd March 1642 -



## FR PETER O'HIGGINS OP

The story of Peter O'Higgins is one that should appeal to all who hold freedom of conscience dear. There is an ecumenical dimension to his short life which makes him very relevant to our day.

Peter O'Higgins grew up in Dublin in the early seventeenth century, in the neighbourhood of Bridge Street. Nearby, on the site of the present Four Courts, stood all that remained of the Dominican Priory of Saint Saviour, so Peter felt himself called to be a Dominican. As catholic studies were forbidden he had to go abroad. He was ordained in 1627 in Spain, and returned to Dublin to join the Dominicans who were living secretly in Cook Street.

Some years later he was Prior at Naas where the Dominicans had returned in 1635, and opened a 'Mass-House'. In 1641 he showed himself a minister of religion who did not lose the sense of true religion. In and around Naas Fr Peter sheltered the homeless, restrained violence and was fearless in protecting both Catholics and Protestants.

On the 2nd of February, 1642 a punitive expedition sent out from Dublin entered the deserted town of Naas and found a priest who had remained in the town. It was Fr Peter who had not fled, because, as he said, he was not a party to rebellion. He requested

and obtained from the commander a promise of safe conduct to Dublin.

They brought him back with them, but he was imprisoned in Dublin Castle. Twenty protestants who testified to the Priest's innocence and charity had their testimony ignored.

Frozen and half starved, Fr Peter was held prisoner for seven weeks during which time the two Lord Justices offered him a choice. If the priest became protestant he would be released and rewarded. If he refused their offer he would hang as a rebel. In this dark hour God granted Fr Peter a clear head as well as a loving heart. He asked that the offer be put in writing and handed to him on the scaffold. On the 23rd of March, 1642 this was done. Fr Peter held the document up before the crowd and spoke to them. "This proves that it is for my faith I stand here. But these men want me to deny my religion. I spurn their offer. I die a Catholic and a Dominican priest." He threw the document to the crowd and nodded to the hangman. The last words that were heard from his lips were: Deo Gratias, thanks be to God.

Fr. Peter O'Higgins is among the Irish Martyrs whose cause is being examined in Rome. His dying for the faith is an inspiration for us who are called to live that same faith. Your prayers are asked for his beatification.



while stating almost in so many words that conventual life in Dublin was a practical impossibility<sup>80</sup>. On the other hand, he had not seen the full text of the decrees nor (more important still) the detailed complaints which lay behind them, he was perfectly right in his forecast of their eventual effect on the regular clergy, he was right too in recognizing the suppression of novitiates as the heart of the matter, and his proposal for a limited number of novitiates was precisely the compromise Propaganda would accept in 1774. More than anything else, his letter underlines how imprudent (not to say unjust) Rome had been in framing laws for the regular clergy without asking the opinion of the Irish provincials or even telling them of what they stood accused.

Once a full text of the new decrees reached Ireland, the leaders of the regular clergy, led by Bernard MacHenry and Michael Shanly, wrote a much longer and more detailed letter (Dublin, 27 April 1751) asking that they be revoked<sup>81</sup>. Although the petitioners did not follow Father MacHenry in suggesting the erection of a small and fixed number of novitiates, they did point out that there were many places in Ireland where novitiates might be conducted with the greatest regularity. They also protested that they should have been calumniated and judged unheard, and asked that an impartial commission of six bishops be appointed to hear their answers to whatever complaints lay behind the decrees. Similar appeals were later sent to Rome from time to time, as the effect of the decrees became ever more obvious, but Rome ignored them all for twenty years.

#### BERNARD MACHENRY'S FINAL YEARS, 1751-1757

On 29 January 1751, as though to take the sting out of the decrees, Patrick Brullaughan, O.P., was appointed bishop of Derry. This priest, sometimes called Brolcan or Bradley, had served the public chapel of the Sardinian embassy at London since 1737, but is often confused with his namesake, theologian of the Casanatensian at Rome (1742-1756). The new bishop was consecrated at London on 3 March, wrote

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<sup>80</sup> The truth appears to be that while there was a convent in Dublin, and at Drogheda too, not all the members of the community were resident, and even those permanently at home were liable to be dispersed by the magistrates from time to time.

<sup>81</sup> Shanly signed as prior of Dublin. For an analysis of the document, see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 222-226.

from Paris on 15 May to thank James III for his nomination, and then paid a brief visit to his diocese<sup>82</sup>. Soon after, he returned to London and (on 21 December) resigned his bishopric within a year of receiving it. One may say, as he did, that he resigned for reasons of health, his doctor advising two or three annual visits to Bath. One may follow Thomas Burke, according to whom the bishop, realizing that it would prove impossible to work effectively both in Derry and London, decided in favour of the embassy. Or one may agree with Burton that Rome "exacted" Brullaughan's resignation in view of his scandalous life<sup>83</sup>. Whatever the reason, he remained at the Sardinian embassy until his death in 1760.

After the appearance of the decrees and the futile protests they evoked, the latter half of Father MacHenry's second term had to be, and proved in fact, anticlimatic. With regard to the home mission we know that he made a visitation in the summer and autumn of 1750, during which he found all his subjects obedient but failed to arrange for those "scattered here and there by the difficulties of the time" to live together. He sought and obtained what was fast becoming a mere formality: a dispensation from holding an intermediate chapter. No middle chapter had in fact been held since 1732. About November 1752 he put his name to an appeal by the "convent" of Drogheda to the master general with regard to the effects of Richard Nugent, a son of Drogheda who had recently died at Lisbon. And finally, perhaps in the first half of 1753, he decided in favour of Waterford against Rosbercon in a case concerning the right to quest in certain border parishes<sup>84</sup>. The chapter of 1749 had commissioned Father MacHenry to settle the question,

<sup>82</sup> Windsor, *Stuart Papers*, vol. 321, nos. 96, 97. A useful notice of his career (*Hib. Dom.*, 511) has led many astray by dating the beginning of his chaplaincy to 1730, and his resignation to 1752.

<sup>83</sup> E. H. Burton, *The Life and Times of Bishop Challenor*, vol. II, London 1909, 11-12. See also W. Gumbley, *Obituary Notices of the English Dominicans*, London 1955, 68-69. The date of resignation (21 Dec. 1751) is given by Ritzler-Sefrin, *Hierarchia Catholica*, vol. VI (Padua 1958) 194. For material at Propaganda, see *Acta* 130, ff. 14-19; *SC Irlanda* 10, ff. 339-340; *SC Anglia* 4, ff. 443-444; *CP* 133, f. 151. A proper analysis of his case cannot be attempted here.

<sup>84</sup> The visitation, the middle chapter, and the business of Drogheda and Rosbercon, are all mentioned in *AGOP IV*, 217, pp. 122, 130, 134. A similar difficulty about questing limits led Maur. Fitzgibbon, prior of Glanworth, to protest on 28 Apr. 1755 against the Franciscan house and chapel of Mitchelstown. *SCAR*, *Codex I* vol. 4, f. 765.

but the prior of Rosbercon, James Heynes, accused him of judging the case without calling witnesses. Heynes, who first wrote to Antoninus Bremond on the subject in the summer of 1753, continued to ply the curia with letters until 1755 when he was commanded to write no more<sup>85</sup>.

With respect to the Irish abroad, Father MacHenry obtained in 1752 a dispensation "for this year" from visiting Holy Cross, Louvain, where, he said, "*omnia sunt in pace*"<sup>86</sup>. He thus implied that the provincials were accustomed to go there annually, though that does not appear to have been the case. His other worries, so far as one can judge, chiefly concerned three Irish interests in Spain: the procuratorship at Madrid, the hospice at Bilbao, and the provision of confessors at Seville. Denis O'Daly, procurator at the Spanish court since 1726, offended the provincial by claiming the right to appoint, not only the Irish confessors at Seville, but even the vicar and *socius* of the hospice at Bilbao<sup>87</sup>. Considering that O'Daly had given almost thirty years' service at Madrid, the general was not inclined to take him to task. The problem, in fact, solved itself in the summer of 1751 when the procurator took sick while on holiday in Ireland. During his illness, Father MacHenry proposed (summer 1752) that John Reynolds, then at San Sebastian, should replace O'Daly at Madrid, but the general very charitably made no move until Denis O'Daly died at Clonbrosk near his native convent of Athenry, on 6 July 1753, just one week before MacHenry went out of office<sup>88</sup>.

Father MacHenry was less interested in Seville. He simply objected to the fact that O'Daly should claim the right to name Irish confessors at San Pablo. On hearing this complaint, the master general asserted his own prerogative in the matter and the provincial did not even later suggest a candidate, probably because no actual vacancy existed<sup>89</sup>. He was more preoccupied with Bilbao, where Dominic O'Connor was

<sup>85</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 134-135, 138, 141, 143. None of Heynes' letters survive, nor do the names of the disputed parishes appear.

<sup>86</sup> 7 Oct. 1752. Bremond to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 128.

<sup>87</sup> 10 Feb. 1751. Bremond to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 122.

<sup>88</sup> 7 Oct. 1752. Bremond to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 128. The Athenry chronicle mentions the profession of Denis Daly of Clonbrosk on 15 Sept. 1717, his death at Clonbrosk on 6 July 1753 and his burial at Athenry on the following day, mentioning that he was procurator at Madrid for 25 years. H. Fenning, *The Athenry House-Chronicle, 1666-1779*, in *Coll. Hib.* 11 (1968) 44, 52.

<sup>89</sup> 10 Feb. 1751. Bremond to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 122. On Irish confessors at San Paolo el Real, see above, p. 154.

vicar in 1751 and where O'Daly had placed Dominic Allen as *socius*. Despite the best efforts of MacHenry and Bremond, Dominic Allen remained in Spain, refusing to go back to Ireland. His place at Bilbao, however, was taken in June 1751 by Patrick MacHenry, nominated by the provincial and appointed by the general<sup>90</sup>. The provincial also recommended candidates for the vacant posts of second regent at Rome and Louvain. His nominees, Patrick MacAmbrose for Rome and Thomas MacIver for Louvain, were (like Patrick MacHenry and perhaps John Reynolds too) from his own province of Ulster. While this may not betray partiality, it does show that Father MacHenry was looking after his own<sup>91</sup>. Finally, there are two details concerning Lisbon. Dominic Kennedy of Corpo Santo asked the provincial to refund the expenses he had incurred (four years earlier!) by going to the general chapter at Bologna and falling sick in the course of the journey. Father MacHenry refused to pay<sup>92</sup>. Another member of the community, the regent Thomas Myles Burke, published an English *Catechism Moral and Controversial*, a stout octavo volume printed at Lisbon in 1752<sup>93</sup>.

Bernard MacHenry, who came to the end of his term in July 1753, seems to have returned to his native convent of Coleraine rather than to the scene of his former labours in Cavan. Although, on 17 December 1755, he became vicar-general and confessor of the nuns at Drogheda, these offices did not entail residence in Drogheda itself<sup>94</sup>. At Coleraine, where the friars had had a house for about twenty years up to the persecution of 1744, there was no longer any convent or chapel of the order. In 1756, Thomas Burke could name only two members of that community *in districtu conventus versantes*, one being Patrick Dominic

<sup>90</sup> 23 June 1751. Bremond to Bern. Brullaughan at Lisbon. AGOP IV. 217, p. 123. There was a large Irish colony at Bilbao, and frequent merchant shipping between Bilbao and Dublin. From Bilbao, Dublin imported iron, while Bilbao imported salted meat, butter and hides from Dublin. J. Meagher, *Glimpses of Eighteenth-Century Priests*, Reportorium Novum, vol. II, no. 1 (1958) 146.

<sup>91</sup> 7 Oct. 1752. Bremond to MacHenry. AGOP IV. 217, p. 128.

<sup>92</sup> Ibidem, pp. 126, 128. Kennedy had first applied to Bremond who thought his request reasonable.

<sup>93</sup> There is a copy in Corpo Santo. It has been wrongly attributed to Th. Burke, bishop of Ossory, in the Catalogue of the Bradshaw Collection, vol. II, Cambridge 1916, 930-931. The licence to print is registered under date 23 Aug. 1752 in AGOP IV. 217, p. 127.

<sup>94</sup> The appointment is noted in AGOP IV. 217, p. 157. And it is mentioned (ibidem, p. 161) that MacH. had held these offices before.

Diamond, the other the prior, Bernard MacHenry, then sixty-three and in the thirty-ninth year of his profession <sup>95</sup>. O'Lavery may well be right in saying that MacHenry served in his native parish of Glenravel, in the diocese of Connor. Glenravel is more than twenty-five miles from Coleraine, but the friars of Coleraine no longer had a home and they had always quested more widely within Connor than in their own diocese of Derry <sup>96</sup>.

Towards the close of 1756, or early in the following year, Father MacHenry became prior of Drogheda but died there soon after, on 15 August 1757 <sup>97</sup>. Unaware that he was dead or dying, the community of Holy Cross, Louvain, chose him as their prior, but he passed away before receiving word of his election <sup>98</sup>.

#### MICHAEL SHANLY, 1753-1757

The new provincial elected at Dublin on 14 July 1753 was the Michael Shanly mentioned already in connection with the confraternity dispute and the first protests against Propaganda's decrees. Shanly, who was born about 1704, was anything but a "wandering friar". Save for his years of study abroad, his connections were exclusively with the convent of Dublin, so that one may presume that he was a native of the city and a novice at Bridge Street about 1720. A spy's report of 1722 mentions "five friars and some novices" attached to the Dominican chapel in the capital, and although Michael Shanly had left for the continent more than a year before, this report streng-

<sup>95</sup> Hib. Dom., 246. Two interesting documents show that in 1743 the Dominicans had had a house at Coleraine for more than twenty years, that their questing district lay almost entirely within the diocese of Connor, and that the Franciscans long opposed their right to quest there. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 24, 28.

<sup>96</sup> J. O'Lavery, *An Historical Account of the Diocese of Down and Connor*, vol. III, Dublin 1884, 470-471.

<sup>97</sup> Hib. Dom., 531. The account-books of the convent of Drogheda, still in the possession of the community, show that a Father MacHenry (probably our Bernard) was resident there in 1729, which would mean that he finished his missionary career where he began it.

<sup>98</sup> AGOP IV, 217, pp. 169, 171. Another sign that his death was quite unexpected comes from the provincial chapter which, on 2 July 1757, elected him definitor general.



thens the presumption that he was received and professed in Dublin<sup>1</sup>. For his studies he went to some convent of the Dominican province of Spain (which occupied, roughly, the northern half of the peninsula) and stayed on there for four years as an assistant lecturer in philosophy<sup>2</sup>. In October 1729, the royal treasury was asked to issue a viaticum for his journey home to Ireland<sup>3</sup>.

Although Father Shanly was again resident in Dublin from 1731, the first sign of his presence there dates only from December 1737 when he was subprior of the community<sup>4</sup>. In the following year he was elected prior and so remained until 1741<sup>5</sup>. Part of his time, from 1738, was devoted to teaching moral and dogmatic theology in the convent — a task he continued until at least 1749 — though it does not appear whether these classes were given within the community (to novices, perhaps) or to a wider audience<sup>6</sup>. Later on, from 1747 to 1750, he was prior once more, after which (if one may trust an anonymous complaint) the provincial, Bernard MacHenry, reappointed him prior, announcing that decision during dinner in St. Saviour's, to the amazement of the community<sup>7</sup>! Certainly he was still prior on 27 April 1751, which indicates a further term<sup>8</sup>, but the acts of the elective chapter of 1753 do not describe him as prior of Dublin.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Brady, John Garzia's Report, in *Repertorium Novum*, vol. II, no. 1 (1958) 219. Shanly's age and years of profession are mentioned, with some variation, in *Hib. Dom.*, 197 and various provincial chapter acts (letter of the definitory in 1738, acts of 1745 and 1749) in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>2</sup> Mentioned on his postulation for the mastership by the chapter of 1749.

<sup>3</sup> In the same month, Denis Daly, the procurator, asked 50 ducats each for 16 Irish Dominican students. Simancas, *Segretaria de Hacienda*, no. 966 (Viaticos, 1709-1759). From the notes of Reg. Walsh in the Irish provincial archives.

<sup>4</sup> This appears from the dispute arising from the reception in Dublin of a forged letter from the master general cassating the election of the prior, John Fottrell. See H. Fenning, Laurence Richardson, Bishop of Kilmore, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (March 1968) 144.

<sup>5</sup> Jn. Fottrell was prior of Dublin when elected provincial in April 1738. Shanly must have succeeded to the priorship in 1738, though not perhaps until autumn. He is mentioned as prior of Dublin in 1739 and (before Aug.) 1741 in AGOP IV. 217, pp. 47, 74. He was still prior on 5 Sept. 1741 according to SCAR, Accounts, under date Nov. 1741 where he is mentioned in connection with the Mulryan Masses.

<sup>6</sup> Mentioned in the chapter acts of 1745 ("per 7 annos") and 1749 ("per 11 annos"). AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>7</sup> The complaint, signed "Philaethes", was written after Shanly's election as provincial. It is reproduced below.

<sup>8</sup> On this date he signed, as prior of Dublin, a protest against the decrees of

Three topics, intimately linked, dominated all others at the chapter: money, distribution of manpower, and recruitment. If, at this particular time, they absorbed the attention of the definitory, it was largely due to the decrees of 1751. On the one hand, the home novitiates were closed; on the other, the wider powers just granted to the bishops meant that a greater and growing proportion of Dominicans on the mission were serving as parish priests or curates. Such friar pastors were now told (ord. 4) to submit their accounts to the provincial twice a year, to keep only as much money as they really needed, to give the balance to their convent of assignation, and to live in that convent if it were at all compatible with their parochial duties. This was partly an attempt to strengthen the small country houses, those most in need of men and money, and the first to suffer from the appointment of friars as parish priests. Since 1745, these "parochial" Dominicans had taken part in prioral elections, though only with an active voice: they might vote, but not be voted for. The chapter now asked (pet. 1) that they might also have a passive voice, since otherwise the small convents, already understaffed, would have to content themselves with second-rate superiors. The difficulty was that the bishops, when they needed a friar for a parish, were careful to choose the best. A Franciscan provincial made an apposite comment on this point in 1766: "the bishops call, invite, nay threaten and compel regulars to accept of [parochial] charges, and as they call and take the best, their own houses, wanting such, are left forsaken"<sup>9</sup>.

The weakness of the rural convents — many of which were in fact already doomed — was equally reflected in another ordination (3) whereby the goods of any friar dying in Ireland were to be divided into three parts: one for his convent of assignation, one for his original convent (of affiliation), and one for Masses for the repose of his soul. With respect to those dying abroad, the chapter endorsed (ord. 2) the decision already made in 1721 whereby their effects would pass to the nearest of the three foreign colleges. By this ordination the definitors may have hoped to brace the colleges for another (9) urging them to receive as many pensionless novices as they could, with due regard to the *alternativa*. Since novices might no longer be received in Ireland,

1750. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 167. There is an even later reference to his being prior on 7 Aug. 1751 in Hib. Dom., 287.

<sup>9</sup> H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 85. The original acts of the chapter of 1753 are in AGOP XIII. 68095.

the colleges at Rome, Louvain and Lisbon would have to carry this extra burden and sacrifice themselves for the good of the province.

Besides drawing up the acts, the provincial and definitors wrote a special letter to the general, asking whether something might not be done about the decree forbidding novitiates. During the preceding three years (1750-1753) more than thirty members of the province had died, while over the same period scarcely ten had made profession. More would certainly have entered but for the expense of going abroad, and supporting oneself abroad for the novitiate year, while still uncertain of profession<sup>10</sup>. Considering that the chapter thus appealed to Father Bremond, and appealed to the colleges to accept novices *gratis*, it is hard to understand another of its ordinations (6) on the same subject: "no one is to be admitted to the habit... who is not certainly provided with enough money to carry him abroad and to present himself abroad with decency". Only two months after this strange ruling was made, the familiar "four archbishops" complained that novices were still being received and that the regulars rejected the decrees on the grounds that Propaganda had no legal competence in their regard<sup>11</sup>. The most likely explanation is that the Dominicans simply screened postulants in Ireland, perhaps even giving them the habit in a purely ceremonial way, on the understanding that they would legally take the habit and thus begin their canonical novitiate only after reaching some continental convent.

The master general confirmed the acts on 17 November 1753<sup>12</sup>. Essentially, his comments were a lesson in Dominican legislation for the definitors, telling them of earlier laws with which, obviously, he imagined they would have been familiar. For instance, since the chapter had appealed to Father Bremond to send home all stray Irishmen on the continent, he reminded them of the general chapter of 1644 which gave the Irish provincial full authority to summon any member of the province home, under solemn censures if necessary. Their only other petition, concerning friar pastors, was partially granted: such priests might in future be elected priors, but only if permanently resident in

<sup>10</sup> The letter is known only from the unhelpful reply of 25 Aug. 1753. AGOP IV. 217, p. 134.

<sup>11</sup> Even Th. Burke, in his *Hibernia Dominicana*, hinted that the existence in Ireland of a full episcopal hierarchy excluded the jurisdiction of Propaganda. H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, 228-229.

<sup>12</sup> Registered in AGOP IV. 217, p. 135. There is a draft of the comments in AGOP XIII. 68095.

the convents concerned. The general also declared that neither the provincial nor the chapter was entitled to appoint an Irish procurator at Madrid. The chapter had in fact endorsed Bernard MacHenry's earlier nomination of John Reynolds for that particular post, and even "instituted" him procurator, so far as that was necessary. In the event, once Reynolds heard of the nomination he wrote at once to Father Bremond, offering a dozen excuses why he should not go to Madrid; *inter alia*, he would have no means of support, and in any case there were now few Irish students in Spain because of the Pope's veto on the clothing of novices in Ireland<sup>13</sup>.

#### TROUBLES IN GALWAY, 1754-1756

Soon after the chapter of 1753, two anonymous letters of complaint reached the Minerva in Rome. The first, signed simply "Philaethes", concerned the appointment of priors whenever there were not enough vocals to elect them. Such appointments were made either by the provincial or the vicar of the "province" concerned. The writer objected that this was being done without consulting the masters of theology. Father Hoare, for instance, in his capacity as vicar of Munster, appointed a prior of Youghal without a word to Dominic Morrogh, a master in Munster if not in Israel. Morrogh protested at the chapter, and Hoare at once apologized, but yet the prior of Youghal (irregularly appointed) was admitted to the provincial election. Another abuse troubling this "lover of truth" was that the provincials were accustomed to habilitate priors for re-election, as Bernard MacHenry had done for Michael Shanly when the latter was prior of Dublin<sup>14</sup>. The laws of the order then discouraged successive terms of office, so that a dispensation or "habilitation" was required before an out-going prior, for example, might take up office again.

The second was a longer and more interesting letter, written in December 1753 after Father Shanly had begun his first visitation<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> 21 Nov. 1753. Bremond to Reynolds. AGOP IV. 217, p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> Philaethes' letter is in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 30. With regard to Youghal, one may note that Th. Kelly of Roscommon was allowed transfiliate to Youghal on 11 Nov. 1747. AGOP IV. 217, p. 105. In 1756, Kelly or O'Kelly, preacher general, was prior of Youghal and lived in that town, having in his possession the medieval ivory image of Our Lady of Graces. Hib. Dom., 273-274.

<sup>15</sup> Now in AGOP XIII. 68095.

Rme Pater,

P. Provincialis Hiberniae aliqualem fecit circuitum per principales civitates, sed conventus rurales, ubi maior est visitationis necessitas, reliquit P. Stephano Kirwan de Galvia, viro prorsus inepto et debili, qui et postulatus est pro praedicatione generali etsi nunquam praedicaverit, sed sit omnino inhabilis et ignarus, inde tamen de industria disponitur pro futura provincialatu. Praevalet hic factio debiliū, hinc semper erit unus ex ipsis nisi V. Rma Paternitas de suprema sua auctoritate provinciales instituat, uti mos erat ante annum 1721, quod videtur unicum remedium pro honore ordinis, et contra ingrassantem in dies invasionem presbyterorum, qui magnopere exultant videntes apud nos superiores tam debiles, qui iura sua tueri nesciunt. Principales conventus, nominatim Corcagiensis et Athenriensis, etsi petierint, non potuerunt habere copias actorum capituli provincialis, aut litterarum confirmatarum Rmae P. V. In visitatione pater provincialis indigebat quosdam dumtaxat paragraphos legendos. Iniuriam fecit diffinitorium non postulando pro magisterio titulo praedicationis P. Dominicum de Burgo de Athenriae, etsi insignem et antiquiorem Conaciae concionatorem, quia non est de factione debiliū, quae in diffinitorio etiam praevalet ob pluralitatem debiliū, hinc vere dicere possunt: nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati. P. [Patritius] Brullachan de Minerva videtur factioni huic patrocinari. Haec scripta sunt pro profectu missionis et decore ordinis.

What one has here is a letter from Connacht, most probably from Galway or Esker, written by someone who had his eye on the election of the *next* provincial (necessarily from Connacht) in 1757, by someone who wished to exclude Stephen Kirwan, prior of Galway, as a possible candidate. On a broader front, the writer claimed that the province was being controlled by a "faction of the weak" which guaranteed its own survival by postulating (or not postulating) whom it pleased at provincial chapters. To break this vicious circle, the master general would have to take the appointment of provincials into his own hands. Father Shanly, by implication, belonged to the faction and was therefore a weakling, unworthy and incapable of office. More explicitly, he was accused of visiting only the city convents, leaving Stephen Kirwan to take care of the rest, and of allowing the brethren of Cork and Esker to glimpse only a few paragraphs of the chapter acts. That final charge need not be taken seriously, since the provincial cannot have received confirmation of the acts until about Christmas 1753, and he would have acted *ultra vires* by circulating them sooner. The writer was also unjust in blaming his superiors for not knowing how to protect the rights of the regular clergy. If the reference was to the decrees of 1751, St. Dominic himself could not have prevented their promulgation.



On the other hand, the letter retains some points of interest. The existence of a faction, weak or strong, is not to be dismissed too lightly. As the century progressed, the work of provincial chapters became ever more confined to the postulation of candidates for the degrees of the order. Once appointed, preachers general and masters of theology, some of whom had rarely preached or never taught, might vote in every provincial election until they died, and these privileged votes must often have equalled, not to say outnumbered those of the priors and their *socii*. Simultaneously, with the decline of the country convents, the number of priorships in the gift of the provincial tended to increase. The rotation of the provincialate itself between the four nations must often have excluded the best available man from office. The system did reduce the temptation for any provincial to pack chapters, but it still left room for the far-sighted and the patient to play politics on a twelve-year basis.

Even the master general was somewhat sceptical about this flood of postulations and Father Shanly lost no time in providing him with an opportunity to show it. Within weeks of his election, thinking that the chapel in his own native Dublin could do with a good preacher to draw the crowds, he put a far-fetched proposal before the Roman curia: James Hall might go from Ireland (from Drogheda in fact) to take the place of Francis Macarthy at Seville, and thus leave Macarthy free to return and preach in the capital. Not surprisingly, Father Bremond thought it unnecessary to make so great a change, at such enormous expense, merely to provide a preacher in Dublin: "the province", he remarked, "has plenty of preachers general, at least some of whom should prove capable of taking on the duty"<sup>16</sup>.

An awkward start to a provincialate, but there was worse to come. One error in the chapter acts passed unnoticed when they were being confirmed. Apart from postulating twenty-two for degrees (one in eight of those on the mission), the chapter authorized the provincial to postulate others according as vacancies should arise during his term of office. This Father Shanly did, in a letter of 13 June 1756, only to be told that such a practice was contrary to the laws of the order, old or new. This time, Father Bremond having died in the interval, he had to deal with a new master general, Juan Tomas de Boxadors, but the change made little difference. "The provincial", said Boxadors, "now postulates priests who have been preaching for up to thirty years, whereas the last

<sup>16</sup> 20 Oct. 1753. Bremond to Shanly. AGOP IV. 217, p. 135.

chapter postulated others who had scarcely preached for five"<sup>17</sup>! The master general deplored the injustice patently done to some senior preachers of the province, and to this extent at least corroborated the anonymous complaints of 1753.

One of the great crosses of Father Shanly's provincialate was provided by some false brethren in Galway. Their leader was John Bodkin, apparently the student priest of that name who ran away from Corpo Santo in 1732 in consequence of a visitation. By 1749 he was prior of Galway, in which capacity he obtained (1751) an absolution from censures for his closest associate, Thomas Robert Browne, just back in Galway after sixteen years of formal disobedience at Louvain<sup>18</sup>. Two others, John Browne and Gregory Joyce, played a minor role. Both were novices at Galway in the 1730s and studied on the continent, Joyce at Louvain from 1732 and Browne at San Sisto from 1738. The trouble was essentially domestic: these four priests disliked certain other members of the Galway community. And while this hostility came to the surface only in 1754, it certainly existed before Father Shanly's election.

Going back to 1751, one finds that John Bodkin, still prior at the time, asked the master general to assign Thomas Burke from Galway to his native Athenry, since Galway was already burdened with eleven religious and Athenry would be more easily able to support him. The incident serves to show, not simply that Bodkin had little love for Thomas Burke, but that he was on such poor terms with Bernard MacHenry as to ask the general to do something which was fully within MacHenry's competence as provincial<sup>19</sup>. In the fullness of time, probably in 1752, John Bodkin ceased to be prior and Stephen Kirwan took up office. Unfortunately, Kirwan had been prior of Galway twice before, and when Father MacHenry "instituted" him for the third time he did so illegally, neglecting to observe the interstices, that six-year interval between triennial prioral terms then required by the laws of the order<sup>20</sup>. The point was a fine one, but it left Bernard MacHenry open to the charge

<sup>17</sup> 4 Sept. 1756. Boxadors to Shanly. AGOP IV. 217, p. 165. Writing again, on 4 December, Boxadors refused to promote any of those the provincial postulated *extra capitulo*, preferring that they be postulated again by the following chapter. Ibidem, p. 166.

<sup>18</sup> 17 Apr. 1751. Bremond to Bodkin. AGOP IV. 217, p. 123.

<sup>19</sup> 25 Dec. 1751. Same to same. Ibidem, p. 125.

<sup>20</sup> This detail emerged much later. 5 Apr. 1755. Bremond to Shanly. Ibidem, p. 150.

of manipulating priorships (not only in Galway, but in Dublin too) while leaving Stephen Kirwan, prior of Galway, with a group of subjects (led by his predecessor) who could say that his election was illegal.

For John Bodkin and his friends the provincial chapter of 1753 constituted the last straw, for it postulated three members of the Galway community whom they did not like: Thomas Burke, Dominic Walter Burke and Stephen Kirwan. All of which points to the probability that the anonymous complaints mentioned above were the work of Bodkin's party. At all events, the Galway malcontents came out into the open in summer 1754 with a letter to Father Bremond, stating that Thomas and Dominic Walter Burke were often to be seen staggering drunkenly home through the streets of Galway, that they were notoriously guilty of solicitation, that the prior (Stephen Kirwan) refused to correct them, and that the provincial (Michael Shanly) did nothing about it during visitation because the two Burkes belonged to Kirwan's and Shanly's "faction" <sup>21</sup>.

Whatever happened during Father Shanly's first visitation in Galway, he never went back. Rather than grasp the nettle by going there again in person, the provincial commissioned Thomas Brennan, S.T.M. of Roscommon (recently a definitor) to visit the convent on his behalf. Brennan, in April 1755, found John Bodkin and his associates unable to substantiate the charges they had made, and Father Bremond insisted accordingly that the four calumniators be expelled from the convent <sup>22</sup>. They stayed just where they were and continued to write to Rome until the vicar general, Vincenzo Ferretti, told the provincial that if he could not end these quarrels and the public scandal they caused, a visitorator would be sent from another province to do so <sup>23</sup>. The Roman curia insisted from first to last that Father Shanly should have settled the whole matter the moment he became aware of it.

Michael Shanly then looked to Munster for another commissary and Michael Hoare of Limerick went to Galway in October or November 1755. Like Brennan before him, Father Hoare found that John Bodkin and his three friends had been guilty of calumny, and not

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<sup>21</sup> 21 Sept. 1754. Bremond to Bodkin (with three others unnamed) and also to Shanly. AGOP IV. 217, p. 141.

<sup>22</sup> 24 May 1755. Bremond to Brennan. AGOP IV. 217, p. 152.

<sup>23</sup> 6 Sept. 1755. Ferretti to Shanly. Ibidem, p. 155.

only with respect to Thomas and Walter Burke. They had also calumniated their prior, their provincial, "and even all the older fathers of the province, whom they accused of neglecting to punish the crimes of the brethren, of acting unjustly, and of postulating unworthy candidates in the provincial chapter"<sup>24</sup>. On the basis of this information, the vicar general stripped John Bodkin of his preacher generalate and deprived all four of active and passive voice for three years. Furthermore, they were to be assigned at once to different, distant and remote convents. The decision was dated 24 January 1756, but since two of those concerned (John Bodkin and Thomas R. Browne) refused to leave Galway, they were (on 22 May) suspended *a divinis* by Father Ferretti until such time as they went to their new convents of assignment<sup>25</sup>.

#### THE NUNS OF GALWAY AND DUBLIN, 1754-1755

The disputes of the friars of Galway echoed even within the monastery there, some nuns taking one side, some the other<sup>26</sup>. About October 1754, a middle-aged if not an aged nun of Galway, Sister Catherine Nolan, forty years professed, complained to the general about her sufferings at the hands of Stephen Kirwan, vicar of the monastery; he was, she claimed, indiscreet and refused to allow her an "extraordinary" confessor. The master general immediately told Father Shanly to find a new vicar for the nuns. Anastasia Lynch, prioress of Galway, then wrote with other members of her council to ask that Father Kirwan be left as vicar, even though in office for twenty years; they could not imagine why he was now being removed. Antoninus Bremond told them at once: no office in the order could be perpetual, and twenty years was far too long for any vicar, no matter how well behaved.

Instead of appointing a new vicar as he had been told to do, instead even of going to Galway in person, the provincial commissioned Thomas Brennan to examine the nuns *as to the morals and conduct* of Stephen Kirwan. From Brennan's report to Rome it transpired that some of the sisters wanted Father Shanly as vicar, while some complained that Kirwan had been in office too long. On 15 March 1755, Father Bremond

<sup>24</sup> 24 Jan. 1756. Ferretti to Ml. Hoare. Ibidem, p. 159.

<sup>25</sup> AGOP IV, 217, p. 164.

<sup>26</sup> The following account is based on many references in AGOP IV, 217, pp. 142-153.



wrote both to the provincial and his commissary stressing what for him was the one and only point at issue: not Father Kirwan's behaviour, but the extreme length of his vicarship. Three years should be the maximum term for such an office. This Father Shanly ought to explain to the nuns, and explain also that no provincial might legally be vicar of a monastery. Having done so, he was to appoint a new vicar on his own authority.

A new vicar, Hubert Murphy, duly appeared but four sisters objected to him on the grounds that he was unfit for the post, even though he had long been their confessor. The same four, led by the subprioress Mary Lynch, equally objected to Thomas Brennan whom the provincial sent to hold visitation. They would much have preferred Thomas Burke of Galway. Father Vincenzo Ferretti told the provincial in July 1755 to find a vicar acceptable to most of the nuns, and in the same letter revoked some formal precepts imposed by the prioress for trivial reasons: one, quoted by way of example, concerned three or four sods of turf! The vicar general also gave his full support to Thomas Brennan, arguing that if a visitator had to be acceptable to every member of the community, one would need as many visitators as there were nuns.

All this was nothing by comparison with what happened in Dublin. In fact, when one considers the result of Michael Shanly's personal dealings with the nuns of Channel Row, any suggestion that matters in Galway would have mended sooner had he gone there more often is to be rejected out of hand. At Dublin, the provincial carried out a visitation which set the monastery by the ears, framing ordinations which he imposed under formal precept and appointing new members of the council junior to five others who had been standing patiently in line for promotion. The prioress thereupon appealed to the master general, with the result that Father Bremond appointed John Fottrell as vicar (i.e. vicar provincial) and ordinary confessor of the nuns of Dublin, with power to revoke all formal precepts and correct the injustice done to the senior sisters. Another letter left Rome on the same day, 20 November 1754, reminding the provincial of the need for "paternal prudence and discretion".

The previous vicar, thus abruptly replaced, happened to be none other than Michael Shanly himself. His removal, however, was not intended as a rebuke, since Rome insisted on a three-year term and the two offices (of provincial and vicar) were incompatible. Unaware of these legal niceties, five of the nuns (led by Sister Barbara Esmonde) protested about the "injury" done to the provincial and asked that the



new council-members be left in office. Antoninus Bremond calmed the waters by allowing two younger sisters to stay on the council, and by permitting two older ones to join it. Father Shanly had ignored the senior pair (Sarah O'Kelly and Mary O'Reilly) on the legally irrelevant score that one already had a sister on the council, and the other an aunt.

This turn of events was not at all to the provincial's liking. Writing to Rome on 11 February 1755, after visitation of the entire province, he said he had found all his subjects obedient: "except for five or six, and the nuns of Dublin". And he had some reason to be peeved, for the general had not only replaced him as vicar of the nuns, but appointed another without even asking Michael Shanly to suggest a candidate. Thus the master general's *de facto* control over the Irish nuns increased, and it can only have been as salt on Father Shanly's wounds to reflect that he himself had been the cause of it.

The death of two councillors in Channel Row later allowed Father Bremond to promote two of the younger nuns. Even Sister Barbara Esmonde and her four friends were pleased. Peace gradually returned. In these circumstances, one would have expected Father Shanly to retire with injured dignity from a battle already lost. Far from it. He proceeded to write and circulate an "encyclical" asserting his continued jurisdiction over the nuns, with the result that they refused to have anything more to do with him. They would neither ask his confirmation of any prioral election, nor profess a novice during his term. They went so far as to ask to be put under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Dublin. The whole painful incident, with Father Ferretti's scathing rebuke to the provincial and his threat to take the nuns of Dublin (like those of Drogheda) under his immediate authority, is known only from a summary of his letter of 19 July 1755 in the curial registers<sup>27</sup>.

Hae sunt causae ob quas illae moniales absolute nolunt stare sub gubernio V. Paternitatis et petunt ut P. M. [Iohannes] Fottrell a nobis instituatur Vicarius Generalis sub cuius cura privative existant. Ad haec inconvenientia addidit enim alia, et quidem ut nuntiant, per encyclicam publicam per regnum tam apud religiosos quam saeculares publicaverit, quod per institutionem vicarii, nihil fuerit ablatum de sua iurisdictione: potuisset addere illi encyclicae hunc paradoxum: quod fuerit simul provincialis et vicarius monialium. Haec encyclica addidit ligna incendio antea a se excitato. Suo inconsiderate modo agendi adhuc efficit, quod illae moniales petent se subiicere ordinario loci, et t. [sic] relinquet sibi magnum nomen ex suo provincialatu. Quamdiu suum

<sup>27</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 153.

officium durat, nolunt moniales in electione priorissae pro confirmatione recurrere ad V. Paternitatem, sed ad altiore instantiam. Et illae nolunt admittere ad professionem unam novitiam quamdiu durabit suum gubernium provinciae. Si non egerit magis prudenter et circumspecte facile dictas moniales assumemus sub nostram immediatam protectionem et gubernationem, sicut Pontanenses. Excitavit haec incendia; nunc videat quomodo illa extinguat cum sua reputatione, neque ei honori est cum mulieribus tam acriter concertare.

#### THE COLLEGE IN LISBON, 1749-1755

Thomas Burke, historian of the province, twice expressed his conviction that the system of rotation of offices between the four nations was the sole, worst and deepest root of daily disputes and quarrels. It was also, he claimed, the conviction of the master general Thomas Rípoll († 1747) and his assistants. On one occasion Burke made this comment in favourable reference to the college of Corpo Santo where the famous *alternativa* was no longer strictly observed, citing (by way of example) the appointment and reappointment of the rector, Peter MacKeon, without respect to the system. Had Thomas Burke known Lisbon better he would have looked for an example somewhere else<sup>28</sup>.

If one goes back to 1737, and considers only the rectorship, it is clear that Peter MacKeon was the exception, not the rule. Dominic Ferral of Munster was rector from 1737 to 1740, Dominic Kennedy of Leinster from 1740 to 1742, Charles O'Kelly of Connacht from 1742 to 1745, and Bernard Brullaughan of Ulster from 1745 to 1748. A perfect cycle. Brullaughan was then left in charge for another year so that Michael Hoare might take up the rectorship on ceasing to be provincial. Father Hoare belonged to Munster, and it was Munster's turn to supply a rector. When it became clear that Hoare would not accept, the master general broke the whole sequence on 8 August 1749 by appointing a native of Connacht, Peter MacKeon, the out-going prior of San Sisto<sup>29</sup>.

From the moment of his arrival in Lisbon, the new rector had to face the sustained hostility of three or four of his subjects. The strongest opposition came from Thomas Myles Burke, author of the *Catechism* already mentioned, regent of studies from 1750 to 1754, and a son of

<sup>28</sup> Hib. Dom., 135, 597 and (for Lisbon) 424.

<sup>29</sup> These and the following details concerning Lisbon are taken from AGOP IV, 217, pp. 113-157.

the very convent (Athenry) to which Father MacKeon belonged. There was also Dominic Kennedy of Leinster, formerly rector and definitor general, twice disappointed (in 1749 and 1752) as a candidate for the rectorship, whose residence in the college depended solely on the fact that he was obliged to say certain founded Masses. Eugene MacCrohan of Munster, *lector primarius* from 1750 and regent from 1754, joined Burke and Kennedy in their frequent protests to the master general against their unwanted rector<sup>30</sup>.

After an initial complaint that the rector interfered with his duties as regent, Thomas M. Burke called for a visitation. Then, during the inconclusive election (October 1752) of a candidate whom the community might postulate for the rectorship — an election which led to MacKeon's reappointment — Father Burke challenged almost every scrutiny, so anxious was he that his friend Dominic Kennedy should win. When the visitation took place in summer 1753, the visitor (Nicholas of the Assumption Becquer) identified Dominic Kennedy as the principal disturber of the peace. In view of the founded Masses, which he alone might say, Father Kennedy was allowed to remain in the college *as a guest*. All others, in keeping with an ancient rule of the house, ceased to be assigned there at the end of their studies or respective terms of office. One of the first to suffer from the visitation was the man who asked for it: Thomas Myles Burke. On finishing his regency in the summer of 1754, he was assigned to Ireland but ignored the general's command, finding refuge and protection under the scarlet wing of the cardinal patriarch of Lisbon.

The most detailed and serious complaints about Father MacKeon were made at this very time, in August 1754, for it was only then that the general's ordinations, based on Becquer's report, began to have effect. Kennedy, MacCrohan and Burke accused him of favouring the Connachtmen of the community, of leaving the wine-cellar open for his friends, of accepting students who were old, ignorant or sick. They even accused him of employing a bursar, Patrick MacHenry, who did not know arithmetic! Here again, as at Galway, calumny was the order of the day. Hence it is better to rely on the rector's defence,

<sup>30</sup> Peter MacKeon had also to reckon with two other Irishmen at Lisbon: Jos. Archer and Th. Masterson who (summer 1753) were under the Portuguese provincial, having spent the previous five years roaming about France and Spain. Another older priest, Chr. Fottrell, was strolling about Lisbon in 1755 under the nuncio's protection. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 131-132, 149-150.

especially since other lectors supported him, and to dwell less on these quarrels than on some interesting details thrown up in the heat of struggle. Perhaps the most interesting of all refer to the students.

During the autumn of 1753, Peter MacKeon wrote to Michael Shanly, asking him to send out one student from each province. The provincial had only five students, all from Connacht, so he sent the lot to Lisbon. One left at once, apparently for a Spanish convent. The other four remained, after due examination and approval both by the visitor and the house-council. By autumn 1754 there were only eleven students in the college: five from Connacht, three from Leinster, two from Munster and one from Ulster.

The preponderance of Connacht students, and their alleged unsuitability, aroused Father Bremond almost to fury. At San Sisto, he said (September 1754), there were eight students: four from Leinster, three from Munster and one from Ulster. If there were five from Connacht at Lisbon, and none at all in Rome, it could only be the fault of the provincial who took no care to arrange these matters properly. Some of the Lisbon students were said to be old or sick, or to have poor Latin. At Rome there was a student from Leinster, an ignorant, disobedient good-for-nothing, several times imprisoned<sup>31</sup>. Was that the fault of the prior? Let the Lisbon malcontents put the blame where it rightly belonged: not on the rector, but on the Irish convents which received such people against law and conscience, and on the provincial who sent these useless subjects abroad. Michael Hoare, who complained in 1755 that the rector of Lisbon would not admit a Munster student, was treated to a similar barrage which closed with the advice that he leave the government of the province to those entrusted with it.

This whole question of the age and suitability of the Lisbon students, and even the question of how they were "received" in Ireland, are problems raised rather than answered by the curial registers. The full list of the community (as it stood in summer 1755), supplied by Thomas Burke in his *Hibernia Dominicana* (428-429), throws only a little light on the subject, since it fails to distinguish the students from the rest. One can, however, deduce that all the students were priests, that their

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<sup>31</sup> Probably Fr. Leynagh, already a "rebel" on 19 Aug. 1751 when sent from Rome to Naples. Since the Dominicans of Naples found him "insupportable" he was called back to San Sisto on 10 Apr. 1753. Finally, on 11 Dec. 1754, he was allowed return to Ireland via Bordeaux for reasons of health. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 124, 130, 143.



ages ranged from twenty-six to at least thirty-five, and that all were at least five years professed. No less than four, admitted to the habit about 1749, belonged to the small Connacht convent of Urlar, a sign perhaps that the then prior of that house foresaw the impending embargo on novitiates. One can scarcely avoid the conclusion that many of these students, received in Ireland before 1750, were ordained priests and spent some years on the mission before ever going abroad to begin their studies.

Father MacKeon's second term as rector was immediately followed by a disaster which his worst enemy could never have foreseen. A disaster, indeed, in which two of his worst enemies died. On 1 November 1755 a violent earthquake destroyed Lisbon, a splendid city of more than half-a-million people, and killed a quarter of its population. The college of Corpo Santo fell in ruins and then took fire, leaving a heap of smouldering rubble from which the community saved only the Blessed Sacrament. At Bom Successo, while the church withstood the shock, the monastery was severely damaged and the Irish nuns put up tents for themselves in the garden. It was from Bom Successo that Peter MacKeon, on 17 November, wrote the following letter to the vicar general<sup>32</sup>.

Die prima huius mensis in terrae motu et incendio civitatis Ulyssiponensis collegium nostrum SS. Rosarii funditus eversum et postea flammis in cineres redactum fuit; taliter quod nihil omnino salvare potuimus nisi arculam in qua asservabatur SS. Sacramentum. In conflictu obierunt P. Praes. F. Thomas [Milerus] Burke, P. Praes. Patritius MacCabe, P. F. Antonius MacDonnell, et P. F. Dominicus Morelli, studentes in philosophia. Hucusque distuli scribere quia singulis diebus usque ad 16am huius varias habuimus repetitiones huius terrae motus. Discesserunt in Hispaniam aliqui studentes ad studia ibidem proseguenda. Pater lector philosophiae cum tribus theologis Hiberniam perexerunt. Alicubi prope ruinas civitatis quinque vel sex ex antiquioribus remanebunt, ne amitteremus possessionem, licet modo non habeamus 20 scuta pro nostra sustentatione.

Ecclesia monialium Boni Successus remansit integra, caeterum conventus non est habitabilis. Moniales remanent in horto clausurae in tentorio aliquo. Omnes moniales ordinis exierunt ad agros, praeter ipsas et moniales SS. Sacramenti. Modo Rme. P. oportet nominare vicarium pro monialibus et pro patribus qui remansuri sunt in hoc regno. P. M. Provincialis et socius novit [sic] qui sunt magis idonei pro hoc munere. Ego usque ad mensem Aprilis

<sup>32</sup> What appears to be the full text was copied into AGOP IV. 217, p. 157.



non possum petere missiones, quia omnia concessa ad usum consumpta fuerunt per ignem. Scitur quod quarta pars habitantium perierunt per terrae motum et ignem. Moniales petunt benedictionem, et similiter ego.

Strangely enough, the four Irish Dominicans who lost their lives in this catastrophe were all, according to Thomas Burke, *outside* the college at the moment of the first shock. The same author differs from Father MacKeon in describing MacDonnell and Morilly as students of theology, not philosophy, and in calling Morilly Brian rather than Dominic. He also mentions that Charles O'Kelly, then living in the Portuguese convent of St. Dominic, was injured in the earthquake, and that Dominic Kennedy was thrown so heavily to the ground that he died soon after. Thomas Myles Burke, for so long (like Father Kennedy) an opponent of Peter MacKeon, was saying Mass in a private oratory and was just raising the Host when the first tremor came. The congregation rushed out, calling on him to follow; but he, feeling obliged to complete the Sacrifice, was buried in the ruins of the oratory before he could even consecrate the Chalice<sup>33</sup>. Had he obeyed his superiors and gone to Ireland in 1754 he would not then have been in Lisbon at all. Whatever his faults, his death did honour to the priesthood and to himself.

#### GENERAL CHAPTER AT ROME, 1756

Father Antoninus Bremond died of a heart-attack at San Pastore outside Rome on 11 June 1755, at the age of sixty-two and after a short generalate of only seven years. In his dealings with the Irish Dominicans he was often critical, even scornful, of the friars, but always kindness itself to the nuns. There is no need to explain the difference of attitude on psychological grounds; he believed the nuns were more religious. Bremond's place at the head of the order was taken by his Italian procurator, Vincenzo Maria Ferretti, whom the Vatican appointed vicar general *ad interim*. Father Ferretti intended to hold an elective general chapter at Bologna on the eve of Pentecost, but after much chopping and changing, due entirely to the pope, the chapter finally opened at the Minerva in Rome on 3 July 1756 under the presidency of Benedict XIV.

Three Irishmen should have been there: the provincial Michael Shanly, the definitor general Charles O'Kelly, and the *socius* or elector

<sup>33</sup> Hib. Dom., 424-429, 551.

Michael Hoare. In fact only O'Kelly travelled to Rome (from Lisbon), the other two excusing themselves to the regret of Father Ferretti who would have liked to discuss with the provincial "many matters concerning Ireland" which it was "not expedient to commit to paper"<sup>34</sup>. What excuses were offered we do not know. Perhaps the expense, perhaps ill-health, perhaps the storm-clouds of approaching war between France and England. Certainly not lack of interest. Father Shanly, in fact, went to great trouble in preparing a list of petitions for the chapter, petitions which he probably hawked up and down the country for signatures and which, considering their content, show him as anything but a weakling.

This list of petitions survives. So too does a much longer, explanatory document giving the legal texts and background of each request. Both are in the hand and distinctive Latin style of Thomas Burke of Dublin. There is also a note recording the chilling judgement of the definitors general on the various petitions, and finally the official text of the chapter acts in which only one of the Irish requests was (conditionally) granted<sup>35</sup>. Despite his earnest efforts, and the legal expertise of Thomas Burke, Father Shanly was left, to use the Italian expression, with a handful of flies. What he tried but failed to do best appears in the original list of petitions, presented in the form of ready-made decrees which the general chapter was politely asked to accept *verbatim*.

### Pro Provincia Hiberniae

1. Confirmamus omnia et singula privilegia huic provinciae concessa ab anno 1600.

2. Innovamus ordinationem in capitulis generalibus Romae 1721 et Bononiae 1725 factam, qua sancitum est, ut collegia extranationalia Romanum, Lovaniense & Ulyssiponense, una cum monasterio monialium Ulyssiponensium, subiecta sint iurisdictione provincialis Hiberniae.

3. Inhaerentes ordinationibus praelibatorum capitulorum generalium, atque decori huius provinciae consulere cupientes, volumus ut monasteria

<sup>34</sup> 22 May 1756. Ferretti to Shanly. AGOP IV. 217, p. 164.

<sup>35</sup> The original signed petitions and the definitors' decisions are in AGOP III. 57. For the longer explanatory document, "Momenta pro Concessionibus", see AGOP XIII, 68095. The capitular decisions may be read in MOPH XIV (1904) 261, or Hib. Dom., 183-184. From the way Th. Burke refers to the chapter (*ibidem*) it is clear that he was disappointed with the meagre concessions made and/or with those who failed to attend it.

omnia monialium intra Hiberniae regnum constituta, Galviense nimirum, Dubliniense, Pontanense & Waterfordiense, sub provincialis Hiberniae iurisdictione, iuxta primaevam eorundem foundationem, sint et permaneant.

4. Inhaerentes pariter litteris patentibus Rmi. Magistri Ordinis P. Iohannis B. de Marinis, die 6 Iulii 1667 datis, atque diplomatibus pontificiis Clementis IX, *Credita nobis caelitus*, die 16 Septembris eiusdem anni 1667, et *Nuper emanarunt*, die 16 Octobris eiusdem item anni 1667, ac Clementis X, *Apostolicae servitutis*, die 6 Augusti 1674 emanatis, (\*Istas litteras patentes atque diplomata legere est in Bullario nostro, tom. VI, pag. 227, 230 et 315), memoratas litteras patentes apostolicae potestatis robore munientibus, declaramus, facultatem instituendi procuratorem huius provinciae in villa Matriensi esse penes provincialem Hiberniae.

Infrascripti enixe humiliterque supplicamus Rmo. P. Magistro Generali, atque ter venerabili definitorio capituli generalis anni 1756, ut supra scriptas concessionem, iisdemmet disertis verbis conceptas, eiusdem capituli generalis actis inserere benigne dignentur pro solamine huius provinciae heu nimium afflictas. In cuius rei testimonium, praesentibus litteris, sigilla provinciae munitis, subscripsimus.

This document was signed by thirty-one members of the province, three of them by proxy: the provincial, thirteen masters of theology (including the prior at Louvain), and seventeen priors of whom nine were also preachers general. The first four signatories were priests associated with Dublin. Practically all the priors of Leinster and Ulster put their names to the petition. Connacht was thinly represented by the priors of Galway and Strade; Munster by those of Cashel and Glanworth. One might print the full list here, but that all the priors who signed are those given in *Hibernia Dominicana* under their respective convents.

In themselves the requests were modest, even traditional, except for the fourth point concerning a procurator at Madrid. The province was simply asking for confirmation of what had already been sanctioned by the general chapters of 1721 and 1725. It asked that the provincial be granted full control and jurisdiction over the three foreign colleges, as over all the nuns whether in Ireland or at Lisbon. Earlier laws guaranteed these rights, but one circumstance or another gave the masters general *de facto* control over the nuns of Drogheda, the nuns and friars of Lisbon and the community of San Sisto, with the result that they soon came to regard these houses as being under their immediate jurisdiction. The process was simply part of the general Roman tendency towards centralization of the Church. Take, for example, part of a

letter (8 February 1755) from Father Bremond to the prioress of Dublin: "the master of the order is the proximate and immediate prelate of all friars and convents of the entire order, with power to appoint and dismiss all its prelates and officials, and to limit either their authority or their terms of office"<sup>36</sup>. The whole question lay in the understanding and application of the law: whether applied in daily practice, or (as intended) when all else failed. It was precisely against this creeping autocracy, this Roman octopus, that Michael Shanly reacted in 1755 when the general, without even asking his opinion, appointed a vicar of the monastery in Dublin. And here again, in the petitions of 1756, we find him holding out for the lawful authority of the Irish provincial. Michael Hoare had done as much, in a lower key, at the general chapter of 1748, but to absolutely no effect.

The Roman definitors of 1756 took exception to the second of the four requests. They thus rejected the most important point of all, declining to confirm the provincial's authority over the foreign colleges and the nuns of Lisbon because it would injure the rights of the master of the order. The other three points were left to the judgement of the newly elected general: Juan Tomas de Boxadors, long the Spanish "companion" or assistant of Father Bremond. When the printed acts appeared, they contained only two "concessions" for the Irish province. One permitted the provincial to name an Irish procurator at Madrid, on condition that provision was made for his support. The other, though styled a concession, lay half-way between a command and a rebuke: "we not only recommend, but even command each and every member of this province, that mindful of the way of life they have embraced and the eternal salvation of their people, they should give themselves to the diligent service of the mission, and not refuse to carry out the most important part of their duty because tempted by the enticements of the world". This was not a blanket-condemnation of the province, but an invitation to all Irish Dominicans on the continent to return home and serve the mission.

The earliest available reference to the Irish definitor, Charles O'Kelly of Roscommon, dates from 1730 when he was a junior lecturer at Holy Cross. He continued to teach at Louvain until transferred to Lisbon in 1734. After eight years on the staff of *Corpo Santo* he became, in 1742, both rector of the college and vicar of *Bom Successo*. On 6 Octo-

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<sup>36</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 147.

ber 1745, having finished his term of office, he was permitted to act as chaplain to the Belgians of Lisbon until the opportunity presented itself of returning to Ireland. That opportunity was long delayed. Nine years later, on 3 April 1754, he got leave to go to Ireland for six months, left Lisbon before 2 June and came back early in 1755 via Louvain where he held a visitation of Holy Cross. Father O'Kelly, who lived in the Portuguese convent of St. Dominic, was injured in the earthquake on 1 November of the same year, but nonetheless set out for Rome a few months later to take part in the chapter. Somewhere along the road he heard that he had been elected theologian of the Casanatensian library on 17 February 1756. What part he played at the chapter may be seen from the letter he wrote after the event to the provincial and definitors in Ireland<sup>37</sup>.

At my arrival in Rome ten days before the election of a new General, it was believed Master Richini would have the majority. Our Companion Master Langenwalter was engaged for him. The great probability that was then on his side of good success, and the bad consequence that might follow from his indignation, made me adhere to him, while the opposite party upon reasoning with some of them acknowledged I could not in honour recede from him. Thus as my circumstances were particular and being but one single vote, I was perhaps the only [vocal] of the chapter who remained well with both the contending parties.

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 justness of our petitions, but contrary to law and the liberty of a definitor he silenced me in publick chapter. I could upon this occasion very justly appeal to the Holy Congregation; and would, had the affair been of so great importance as should excite me to such a recourse. In my humble opinion the province should never more petition a general chapter for immediate jurisdiction over our houses abroad....

Whatever may be the effect of an address to the present General, I believe any other measure would be unseasonable and perhaps vain, for I am confident our gentlemen in St. Sixt and Lisbon would in no shape appear for

<sup>37</sup> The text survives only in an undated fair copy. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 31. It does not appear when or where O'Kelly was professed or ordained. The notes given above are taken from many references in AGOP IV. 214 and 217. Also from Hib. Dom., 420, 425, 690. Th. Burke himself had applied for the post of *theologus Casanatensis* at the beginning of 1753, imagining Pat. Brullaughan had been made a bishop. AGOP IV. 217, p. 130.



the province. Those of St. Sixt think they are too remote from Ireland and under the General's eye; those of Lisbon and particularly the nuns have the interest of the Court and would employ it.

Charles O'Kelly lived on at Rome until 1793 and became one of the most important Irish Dominicans of the century. With all due respect to such a venerable figure, one may point out that when the general chapter of 1756 rebuked Irish priests on the continent for not returning to the mission, the only Irishman present at the chapter, Charles O'Kelly, was one who should have gone to the mission eleven years before.

#### HIBERNIA DOMINICANA, 1756

The general chapter of Bologna in 1748 commanded all provinces and congregations to have their respective histories written at once by an officially appointed historian. No copy of the relevant acts reached Ireland in time for the provincial chapter of 1749, so it was only in July 1753 that an *historiographus provinciae* was appointed in the person of Thomas Burke. Despite the pressure of his priestly duties, the indifference of his brethren, and an almost total lack of archival sources, his text was ready for the provincial chapter of 1757, was approved at Rome in 1759, and finally printed in 1762 under the title: *Hibernia Dominicana*.

Who was this Thomas Burke? A Dubliner of county Galway stock who went to Rome as a child in 1723, took the habit at San Sisto in the following year when only fourteen, and continued to study and teach in the convent until October 1742. That formative period of his life, so strongly marked by close contact with popes and cardinals, with the exiled Stuarts, with various prominent members of the order and the province, was clearly a happy one. Those twenty years shine out from the pages of his book through a golden haze. They were also years of intense study. For a while he acted as secretary to Edmund Burke († 1739) whose annotated copy of O'Heyne's *Epilogus Chronologicus* he later brought to Ireland. He also acquired the original manuscript or a copy of Edmund Burke's *Brevis Notitia*, an historical account of the province from 1600. On his own initiative he compiled a "little history" of SS. Sixtus and Clement, which he left at San Sisto on his departure. In 1740 he began to work on the offices of Irish saints, a task which stimulated his interest in history while leaving his essential nature unchanged. In heart and mind Thomas Burke was, and ever remained, a canonist.

His journey to Ireland, through Florence and Avignon, took almost a year, for Dublin did not see him until the close of 1743. He then began, and continued for sixteen years, to serve the Dominican chapel in the capital. Meanwhile he occasionally visited other parts of Ireland, though whether as a tourist or an historian one cannot say, and saw some of the ruined Dominican "abbeys" scattered throughout the country. He visited Tusk, county Roscommon, in 1746. A second trip in 1748 brought him back to Tusk, to Sligo and then on to Lough Derg in county Donegal. In 1749 he ventured south, taking in the ruins of Castlelyons in county Cork. Then, in 1751, he turned to the north-east, visiting Coleraine and Newtownards. His appointment as historiographer in 1753 forced him to travel more widely and with more definite purpose, and he would later claim to have visited every county in Ireland. Some places, like Galway, he saw "time and time again", though one suspects that he never saw Tombeola, thirty miles further west, a convent lost in the bogs of Connemara. Two forays in particular emerge from occasional references in his book. One, in 1754, brought him to west Munster, where he visited Cashel, Killarney, Tralee and Sixmilebridge near Limerick. On the other, in 1755, he went west through Mullingar and Longford and on then across the Shannon to Strade, Ballindoon and Knockvivar.

Wherever he went, Thomas Burke asked the Dominicans of the neighbourhood for information about their convents, but in vain. Only at Esker, near Athenry, was any ancient document still in the hands of the brethren, though he found some others (relating to the Wardenship of Galway) in the possession of his relative Mark Skerrett, archbishop of Tuam. His letters to Lisbon and Louvain went unanswered until Charles O'Kelly (in 1755) generously sent him transcripts from both. He had not even a copy of Dominic O'Daly's book on the Geraldines (Lisbon, 1655), an indispensable source for the early martyrs of the province, until a secular priest named William Burke brought him one from Lisbon after the earthquake. In these discouraging circumstances he had no option but to borrow from Walter Harris' edition of the works of Sir James Ware, Lodge's *Peerage*, papal and Dominican *bullaria*, acts of general or provincial chapters, and so forth, with the result that nearly half his own book was simply transcribed from those of others. He copied inscriptions from tombstones, but not from chalices. He mentioned ruins, but never noted their dimensions or showed any awareness of architecture as an historical source.

This is not to decry *Hibernia Dominicana* nor to ignore the author's

advice to future critics: "let them produce better themselves before judging the work of another". It is simply to stress that the most valuable sections of the book are those in which Thomas Burke speaks from personal experience. The most valuable parts of all are the lists he gives of the members of each community for the year 1756. And that is why these few comments on the man and his masterpiece are given here rather than under the year 1762 when, after many additions and corrections, the book was finally published.

These name-lists have considerable statistical value. All belong to 1756, except those for Portumna and Sligo which are dated 1757. The only earlier record of this kind — the MacHenry list of 1734-1735 — omits at least one convent and does not give (as Burke does) the status, age and years of profession of every Dominican in the country. The only later statistics of the century — in the Netterville list of 1767 — closely follow Burke's method without improving much on it. So, one may fairly describe the "Burke list" as both unprecedented and unsurpassed. Naturally it is more useful for local than for general history, but it does provide the material for some interesting conclusions.

Firstly, there were only two laybrothers in Ireland in 1756: one in Athenry, the other at Mullingar. There would surely have been more but that the livelihood of the brethren depended so much on preaching, the hearing of confessions, the celebration of Mass, either in their own chapels or in those of others, if not actually at the side of the road as still sometimes happened. There were 179 priests, which proves that the number of Dominicans on the mission had scarcely varied since 1724 when there were 175. And even between 1724 and 1756, that level showed little change, for there were 172 in 1735, 182 (plus ten novices and five brothers) in 1739, and 176 in 1750. If then the number of friars had "greatly increased" as John Murphy alleged in 1750, the Dominicans most certainly were not to blame.

Secondly, with respect to the distribution of manpower, one may say that the strength of the four nations or internal "provinces" was unequal. Putting the data into round figures, 43% were in Connacht, 23% in Leinster, and 17% both in Ulster and Munster. Connacht was still the backbone of the Irish province, the home of almost half its men. Even the small Leinster convents of Aghaboe and Arklow, to the extent to which they were staffed at all, were exclusively in Connacht hands, and further study would surely show that many of those listed in 1756 as working outside Connacht belonged in fact to that province. Walter Morilly of Urlar, chaplain to the nuns of Drogheda, is a case in point.

If such migrants left Connacht for other areas it was largely because Connacht had workers to spare, but there were migrants from Ulster too (three of them in Leinster) for quite a different reason: the inability to support themselves at home in heavily Protestant surroundings.

Thomas Burke's precise information as to the age and years of profession of each individual would justify a detailed study. Here one can only mention a few points which come quickly to the surface. For instance, the two extremes of youth and old age. Longevity was out of the question, for there were only four (2%) aged seventy and upwards. At the other pole, only two (1%) were under thirty. Eliminating these extremes, the ages of the rest were as follows:

	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69
Number	33	50	59	33
Percentage	18%	29%	32%	18%

To put matters simply, the number of Dominicans in Ireland over fifty years of age was greater than the number under fifty, and that in a situation where hardly anyone lived to celebrate his seventieth birthday. These figures take no account of the foreign colleges, where the teachers were usually young, nor of strays on the continent who tended to come home with the onset of middle age, nor of the high average age of postulants caused by the lack of proper schools. Nonetheless, it would seem that the Irish Dominicans were ripe for numerical decline before ever Propaganda Fide framed decrees to limit their number. This likelihood is strengthened by Burke's information on the years of profession, data from which it is easy to calculate the year in which each individual entered the order. In this calculation too, the extremes of youth and old age have been excluded:

1709 to 1718	1719 to 1728	1729 to 1738	1739 to 1748
40	54	63	21

The progression here is perfectly normal up to 1738, for the number increases according as the age of those concerned grows less. After 1738 there is a 66% drop which the decrees of Propaganda could not even begin to explain. Whoever eventually studies this problem in depth will have to take into account, not only the factors just mentioned, but also the recurrent famines of the early 1740s, and perhaps a deliberate effort on the part of the Dominican superiors to cut down on the number then received.



Turning then to the question of convents, one finds that there were thirty-eight in 1756, exactly as many as Bernard MacHenry had found twenty-one years before. The only difference was that while MacHenry described three (Naas, Aghaboe and Youghal) as "almost destitute", Burke was able to say that there was a prior resident in Youghal, four priests assigned to Naas, and one to Aghaboe. The four provinces had about ten convents each, Connacht leading the way with twelve and Ulster bringing up the rear with seven. By far the largest convent was Roscommon with sixteen members, followed then by Galway and Dublin (with nine), Derry, Drogheda and Athenry (with eight), Trim and Strade (with seven), Clonshanville and Urlar (with six), and the rest with five or less. Hence, of the ten convents with six or more members, no less than six were in Connacht and none at all in Munster.

One would like to know whether these various communities had more than a paper existence, and it is precisely on this point that Thomas Burke lets us down. In thirteen cases he specifically says that such or such a community has a house; otherwise he says nothing at all, even when the existence of a house in 1756 is known from other sources (e.g. Longford or Naas), either because the fact was too well known to merit mention, or in order to avoid trouble between friars and magistrates. On this point one must be careful, because Burke continually revised his manuscript up to 1762. His general statement, often quoted, on the quality of Irish conventual life may have been written as late as 1760<sup>38</sup>. According to this text the Dominicans had both houses and chapels in Dublin, Limerick, Cork, Cashel, Drogheda, Sligo and Galway. All save a few of the country convents had a thatched house and chapel in a rented field; in each case there was a common fund to meet expenses, but only three or four priests stayed permanently at home, the others visiting them from time to time when not impeded by the ministry or the quest.

#### HOLY CROSS, LOUVAIN, 1753-1757

By this date Louvain was the only foreign college over which the Irish provincial had direct control. That is why the chapter of 1753, although it commanded Holy Cross to accept novices *gratis*, could only implore the general to see that Rome and Lisbon did likewise. San

<sup>38</sup> Hib. Dom., 716. Also H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 84-85.



Sisto did something to help, though the college did not usually accept simple novices. One was received at Rome in 1752, two in 1753, two also in 1756, but none thereafter until 1760<sup>39</sup>. This was less a contribution than a sign of goodwill so far as the province was concerned. Whatever Lisbon did is unknown, and in any case the college was destroyed in 1755. Louvain, so much closer to Ireland than either of the others, so much more healthy than Rome, had to carry the burden practically alone.

When Bernard Brullaughan, the newly elected prior of Holy Cross, reached the college in summer 1754 he found a community of thirty-eight, far more than it could support. In the "novitiate" there were nine professed and three simple novices, whom he described as better versed in quarrels and insolence than in anything else. Several of them had no pension, many others in similar circumstances were expected, and once they finished their novitiate there would be no funds to send them to Rome or Lisbon for their studies. It was, he felt, unjust that Louvain, the poorest of the three colleges, should be left to carry the full burden on behalf of all. Corpo Santo and San Sisto might at least pay the novitiate pension of those they would later admit as students. On receiving this account, Father Bremond suggested that since the common good of the province was at stake, each house in Ireland might contribute its share to the novices' support<sup>40</sup>. Although both obvious and practical, the idea was ignored.

Thomas Burke's list of the Louvain community is much better than that for Lisbon; it spells out exactly who the students were, whether they were students of theology or philosophy, or whether simply novices<sup>41</sup>. The list, compiled in 1756, shows that Father Brullaughan had reduced his community from thirty-eight to thirty-two within two years. There were nine students of theology, six of philosophy, and two simple novices. It would therefore seem that while the total number at Holy Cross dropped between 1754 and 1756, the number of students rose. This was partly due to the Lisbon earthquake, for early in 1756

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<sup>39</sup> H. Fenning, *The Book of Receptions and Professions of SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome, 1676-1792*, in *Coll. Hib.* 14 (1971) 24-26.

<sup>40</sup> 10 Aug. 1754. Bremond to Bern. Brullaughan. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 138-139.

<sup>41</sup> *Hib. Dom.*, 447-448.

a second course of theology was begun at Louvain for three "professed novices" who should have gone to Corpo Santo<sup>42</sup>.

Without finishing his term, Brullaughan resigned the priorship for reasons of health and was succeeded in June 1756 by Thomas Plunkett<sup>43</sup>. Only then did the provincial, Michael Shanly, intervene in the college's affairs, complaining a few months later to Father Boxadors that the new prior of Holy Cross went against the decisions of the provincial chapter by refusing to accept novices without pensions and by giving preference to candidates from his native Connacht. The master general simply pointed out that the provincial had full control over the *alternativa*: all he had to do was to apply it when authorizing postulants or students to go to Louvain<sup>44</sup>. Michael Shanly was highly sensitive about his rights. Yet, although his actual control extended only over Holy Cross, he practically encouraged the Roman curia to take even that away from him. Vincenzo Ferretti, the vicar general, expressed his surprise that the provincial, knowing the trouble caused at Louvain by neglect of the *alternativa* and the lack of proportion between the provinces on the teaching staff (the *aequalitas nationum*), should have done nothing at all to remedy it. In December 1755, out of five lectors there were three from Munster and none from Leinster. And yet it was left to the vicar general, without the help of Michael Shanly, to restore the balance on the basis of his own calculations<sup>45</sup>.

Ever since 1654, Holy Cross had received an annual subsidy of 120 scudi from Propaganda Fide, and that subsidy was renewed (on application) every three years. This sum, about £40 at the time, though originally intended to support four students, was not enough in 1757 to support even two. The Congregation, evidencing the coldness which marked all its relations with Irish religious after 1750, decided on 10 January 1757 to enquire whether these four students took the "required oath" in the hands of the nuncio, obliging themselves to go to the mission on the completion of their studies. Since neither the nuncio

<sup>42</sup> 31 Jan. 1756. Ferretti to Th. Plunkett, regent. AGOP IV. 217, p. 160. Another reason for the overall decrease was that five priests were sent from Louvain to Ireland in 1755, as appears from the list reproduced below.

<sup>43</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 161, 164.

<sup>44</sup> 4 Dec. 1756. Boxadors to Shanly. AGOP IV. 217, p. 166. On the same date, the general wrote to the prior, Th. Plunkett, warning him to receive novices *gratis*. Ibidem, pp. 166-167.

<sup>45</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 157, 166.

in Brussels nor anyone at Louvain had ever heard of such an oath, the matter was dropped and the subsidy renewed, but not before the following list, a happy child of war, had been presented to Propaganda Fide <sup>46</sup>.

Nomina RR. Patrum qui ad Missionem Hybernicam ex Conventu Stae.  
Crucis FF. Praedicatorum Hybernorum civitatis Lovaniensis missi fuerunt  
ab anno 1747

Anno 1748

R. P. Iohannes Maguire, S. Theologiae Praesentatus et Professor.

R. P. Dominicus Magrath. R. P. Antoninus Ryan.

Anno 1749

R. P. Iacobus Flyn.

Anno 1750

R. P. Laurentius FitzGerrald, Philosophiae Lector.

R. P. Martinus French. R. P. Iohannes O'Reilly.

Anno 1752

R. P. Thomas Dalton. R. P. Franciscus Bourke. R. P. Petrus O'Kelly.

Anno 1753

R. P. Nicolaus Quin, S. Theologiae Magister. R. P. Matthaeus Hyggins.

Anno 1754

R. P. Dominicus FitzPatrick, S. Scripturae Professor.

R. P. Dominicus Hanly. R. P. Andreas Smith.

Anno 1755

R. P. Edmundus O'Reilly, S. Theologiae Magister.

R. P. Vincentius Coffy, Philosophiae Lector.

R. P. Vincentius Eustace. R. P. Iacobus Davett. R. P. Iohannes Walsh.

Anno 1756

R. P. Dionisius O'Connor, Magister Studii. R. P. Hyacinthus Nagle.

<sup>46</sup> The subsidy and this precise difficulty of 1757 are mentioned by Th. Burke, *Supplementum Hiberniae Dominicanae*, 1772, 855-856. Concerning 1757, the references to the archives of Propaganda are APF, Acta 127, ff. 4-5, 71-73; SOCG 768, ff. 26-27, and SOCG 769, ff. 43-50. The list printed above is now SOCG 769, f. 47.

Hoc anno 1757 ad missionem missuri sunt

R. P. Ioannes MacManus, S. Scripturae Professor.      R. P. Petrus Swiny  
R. P. Iacobus Egan.      R. P. Gulielmus Hanly.      R. P. Antoninus Duan.

MICHAEL SHANLY'S LAST YEARS, 1757-1759

To round off this sketch of Father Shanly's unhappy provincialate one may mention a few incidents of local interest. James Heynes of Rosbercon, after a seven-year struggle, was told by the vicar general on 14 February 1756 to cede the quest of five parishes to Waterford <sup>47</sup>. At just the same time, the provincial arranged to have Masses said in Ireland on behalf of the French Dominicans of Bordeaux, then burdened with the care of an old, half-crazed Irish friar named Thomas Hederman who, at different stages of a long career, had been a novice in Rome, a lector at Louvain, an apostate, a Protestant minister in Limerick, and a Dominican missionary in the French West Indies <sup>48</sup>. Again in the first two months of 1756, Father Shanly wrote to the bishop of Ardagh asking that Francis Ferrall might be named parish priest of Kilcommoc in order to support the Dominicans of Longford, then settled at Molivorny. The bishop's favourable reply has already appeared in print <sup>49</sup>.

Drogheda too had its problems, though the provincial had no part in settling them. According to *Hibernia Dominicana*, the Dominicans had both a house and chapel in the town, but the brethren (after 1744) were at least occasionally dispersed and prevented by the magistrates from opening their chapel on Sundays and feastdays <sup>50</sup>. More definite proof of the existence of a real community is provided by the fact that in February or March 1756 Bernard MacHenry wrote to Rome seeking the removal from Drogheda of Walter Morilly, confessor to the nuns, who had lived "in the convent" and been a burden to it for the previous eight years. Morilly was sent back to his native Urlar, thus leaving room for the two sons of Drogheda, perhaps John MacEgan and George Jones, who were daily expected from Lisbon <sup>51</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 160.

<sup>48</sup> 20 Mar. 1756. Ferretti to Shanly, acknowledging Masses said for Bordeaux. AGOP IV. 217, p. 161.

<sup>49</sup> H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in *Coll. Hib.* 8 (1965) 80-81, from the sealed original in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 32.

<sup>50</sup> *Hib. Dom.*, 162, 203, 716.

<sup>51</sup> 10 Apr. 1756. Ferretti to Eug. Lennan, prior of Drogheda, enclosing another of same date for Bern. MacHenry, vicar of the nuns. AGOP IV. 217, p. 162.

Not even the final detail of Michael Shanly's term of office is a cheerful one. In November 1756, when he wished to hold "a second visitation" of the convent of Dublin, the prior, John Ryan, would not let him do so. There was also the question of a formal precept, which the prior equally rejected, concerning the restoration to the common fund of three gold coins which had been used to buy books<sup>52</sup>. With that sad incident, all the more painful to Father Shanly since it happened on his own doorstep, we may take our leave of him. On ceasing to be provincial in summer 1757 he stayed on in Dublin and died — not in the convent but at his lodgings in Grangegorm Lane — on 23 September 1759, "greatly lamented by all his acquaintance"<sup>53</sup>.

#### THOMAS PLUNKETT, 1757-1761

There is, in the archives of the Irish province, an intriguing list of those who took the habit at Roscommon between 1710ca and 1778. No less than twenty-six entered there before the veto of 1750, but only in some cases is the year of admission supplied. Among these names is that of the new provincial, Thomas Plunkett. The date of reception is lacking, but he probably took the habit about 1735. His surname looks out of place against this background, for while the family was well represented, famous even, in Meath or Louth, the Plunketts were rare in county Roscommon. In 1735, the convent was one of the largest in the province, so one may take it that Thomas Plunkett — although a product of the much-abused novitiates on the mission — was properly initiated into the religious life.

Father Plunkett's early career is unusually easy to trace, for he soon travelled to Holy Cross, Louvain, and stayed there until elected provincial. He received clerical tonsure and minor orders at Malines on 23 August 1738, and subdiaconate the following day. Where he received diaconate or priesthood does not appear, but on 6 May 1739 the archbishop of Malines issued dimissorial letters for his ordination as a

<sup>52</sup> 25 Dec. 1756. Boxadors to Shanly. And to Jn. Ryan, prior of Dublin, on 1 Jan. 1757. Both registered in AGOP IV: 217, p. 167. The general fully supported the provincial, who wished the common fund to be used only for necessary expenses, e.g. the care of the sick, the cleaning of the chapel, or repair of the house.

<sup>53</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century Press*, Maynooth 1965, 97. This newspaper obit is the only place where his name is spelt with an "e": Shanley.



deacon <sup>54</sup>. Having proved himself a good student, Thomas Plunkett was allowed in 1741 to take the lectorate examination and for the next fifteen years followed the well-worn path up through the ascending spheres of the academic hierarchy. Thus he was successively lecturer in philosophy (1741-1743) and sacred scripture (1743-1745), master of students (1745-1748), second regent (1749-1753) and finally first regent (1753-1756) <sup>55</sup>. Meanwhile he had become, in 1749, a *praesentatus* or bachelor of theology on the postulation of the provincial chapter <sup>56</sup>.

Nor was this all. In May or June 1756, six weeks before his regency was due to expire, Thomas Plunkett was elected prior of Holy Cross <sup>57</sup>. He held that office only for a year, but quite long enough to have a disagreement with Michael Shanly who, as was mentioned earlier, complained that Plunkett refused to accept novices without a pension and made room for Connachtmen in preference to others.

Thomas Plunkett was not even present when the chapter, on 2 July 1757, elected him provincial. John Ryan, prior of Dublin, presided in his stead. The fifty-three vocals gave him their unanimous vote, showing both a high degree of organization and surprising confidence in a priest of forty who had never worked on the mission. Father Plunkett came home at once and settled down in his native convent of Roscommon <sup>58</sup>. And that very fact of his permanent residence in the heart of Connacht set the tone for what was to prove a quiet provincialate. Further difficulties arose, especially at Dublin, during his term, and missionaries were sent for the first time to the Virgin Islands, but in neither case was the provincial greatly involved. His trouble-free record of twenty years at Louvain leads one to suspect that he was a man of peace. His whole provincialate gives the same impression. It is not then unlikely that the province, after four years under Michael Shanly, was glad to elect a new superior of calmer temperament.

<sup>54</sup> A. M. Bogaerts, *De Dominikanen in de Wijdingsregisters van het Aartsbisdom Mechelen* (= *Bouwstoffen voor de Geschiedenis der Dominikanen in de Nederland*, III), Brussels 1965, 225, 227.

<sup>55</sup> The actual appointments are noted in AGOP IV. 217, pp. 74-132 *passim*.

<sup>56</sup> On 4 Oct. 1749. AGOP IV. 217, p. 116.

<sup>57</sup> The election was confirmed on 12 June 1756 with permission to continue his regency to the end of the academic year. His successor as first regent, Th. MacIvers, was appointed on 31 July. AGOP IV. 217, p. 164.

<sup>58</sup> *Hib. Dom.*, 262. It is not in fact clear where Th. Plunkett was at the time of the election. The chapter acts mention the number of vocals, almost a third of the Dominicans in the country. Although each chapter sent the scrutiny of its election

Taking their cue from a ruling of the recent general chapter at Rome, the acts of the elective chapter declared (ord. 2) that the archives of the province were to be kept in Dublin<sup>59</sup>. Since the archives were already at Dublin in 1734, as Bernard MacHenry then affirmed, they may have been lost or scattered in the meantime; certainly Thomas Burke, writing in Dublin about 1756, hardly used and never mentioned them. Again in deference to the general chapter, the acts insisted (ord. 3) on the triple triennial examination for faculties to hear confessions. Anyone who allowed a month to pass between the three examinations, without presenting himself for the next, was to lose his faculties automatically, as well as his active and passive voice. One notices an unusual sensitivity with respect to postulations. Not only was the list of eighteen names put forward for degrees specifically "approved by the masters present at the chapter", but the new provincial was told (ord. 4) that if, during visitation, he found a preacher general who had never preached, he was to ask the master general to strip him of his degree. Another ordination (6) forbade priors, under pain of removal from office, to allow laypeople or relatives to rely on convents for their support.

The provincial chapter also framed two petitions. One was an appeal to the master general to preserve the *alternativa* in the foreign colleges. The other concerned novices. Unless novices might again be received in Ireland, the definitors said, the province would soon cease to exist, and the names of the thirty-nine who had died since 1753 — all listed at the end of the acts — certainly lent force to their claim<sup>60</sup>. In these circumstances they asked the master general to obtain leave of Propaganda Fide to admit one unexceptionable postulant in each of the four convents of Dublin, Drogheda, Cork and Athenry, "where they may be trained in the regular life in absolute conformity

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to the general, no document of this type survives. On 30 July 1756, Boxadors wrote to Plunkett, enclosing patents approving and confirming his election, and recommending him to foster justice, studies and the common good. Boxadors also remarked that the vocals should have noted Plunkett's absence, since the unanimity of the vote made it seem that he had voted for himself. AGOP IV. 217, p. 168.

<sup>59</sup> The acts of 1757 are in AGOP XIII. 68095. Note that the provincial chapter of 1720 had designated Holy Cross, Louvain, as custodian of the provincial archives. AFP 38 (1968) 344-345.

<sup>60</sup> This meant a death-rate of ten a year, at a time when very few were entering at Louvain and both Rome and Lisbon received scarcely any at all. It was stated in 1759 that the Dominicans, over the previous nine years, had lost five times as many by death as they had professed. H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 253.

to our laws". Bernard MacHenry, six years before, had pioneered the idea of one novitiate for each of the four provinces. The provincial chapter now introduced this second suggestion: the limitation of the number to be received. Both elements figured largely in the compromise formula Propaganda would later accept: a fixed quota of novices in specifically approved novitiates.

Father Boxadors confirmed the acts on 29 October 1757, making some slight additions<sup>61</sup>. So far as postulations were concerned, the master general gently applied the brakes, partly by taking his time, partly by scrupulous observance of the law. The two Nettervilles, John Francis and Thomas Luke, were made masters of theology on 5 November 1757<sup>62</sup>. Seven others were granted various degrees on 21 January 1758<sup>63</sup>. The provincial himself got his mastership as late as 7 April 1759, and then only because the death of another created a vacancy<sup>64</sup>. A total, therefore, of ten during Plunkett's term of office, whereas the chapter had postulated eighteen and the definitors proposed four others on their own initiative. Even when Michael Shanly applied, a few months before his death, for the mastership left vacant by Thomas Burke's promotion to a bishopric, he was told to bide his time, for while Shanly had been postulated *titulo missionis*, the vacant mastership was *titulo scholae*<sup>65</sup>.

#### THE TREMBLESTOWN PASTORAL, 1757

All this while, for nearly fifty years, the legal position of Catholics was anomalous. The bishops and regular clergy lost their legal standing with the exile of 1698; the priests in 1710, upon their refusal to abjure the Stuarts. Although tolerated, both clergy and laity were always at the mercy of "discoverers" and magistrates, quite apart from the fact that they were denied many basic human rights. The remnants of the Catholic landed gentry suffered most, having most to lose, but the Pro-

<sup>61</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 170. From the copy of his answer in the provincial archives it appears that he ignored the petition on novitiates and said that the other on the *alternativa* might in any case have been left to his discretion. Acta cap. prov., III, p. 68.

<sup>62</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 171.

<sup>63</sup> Ibidem, p. 172.

<sup>64</sup> i.e. the death of James Moran, long working at London. AGOP IV. 231, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> 14 July 1759. Boxadors to Shanly. AGOP IV. 231, p. 3. This detail suggests that Ml. Shanly's death was unexpected.

testant government suffered too in that it could not smoothly enforce its laws in the face of massive, if silent, opposition, nor depend on the loyalty of the Catholic majority in time of war. Each party stood to gain by a compromise.

James Hamilton, viscount Limerick, was already pondering such a compromise in 1755. He hoped to drive a wedge between the Irish Catholics and James III, "between Popery and Jacobism", by registering the parochial clergy in return for their legal recognition. Part of the bargain was that the registered priests would swear allegiance to George II and his successors. They would thus in time become good subjects "and be ready enough to give private information against the itinerant friars, those restless emissaries of France and the Pretender, who swarm in this country and devour many little emoluments that would otherwise fall to the share of the parish priests"<sup>66</sup>. In the course of 1755, the project was discussed with two Protestant bishops, with Charles O'Connor (one of the lay pioneers of Catholic emancipation) and again, towards the end of the year, with Father Richard Lincoln and the vicars general of Dublin. Lincoln was named coadjutor-bishop of Dublin on 21 November 1755. Explaining that it was not for them to say what oath Catholics might or might not take, Lincoln and the vicars asked leave to consult with others. They then informed both regulars and seculars of what was afoot and likewise wrote to all the bishops, but before they could report back to the Protestant nobles they had met, Hamilton's bill for the registration of the clergy was given its first reading in the House of Lords on 6 January 1756<sup>67</sup>.

Given bishop Lincoln's coolness towards the Stuarts, his recent meeting with the authors of the bill, and the anti-regular bias of the new proposals, it is not surprising that some friars should have claimed at once that Hamilton's project had been solicited by the secular clergy. A vile calumny, as the bishop of Kildare described it. And not even a likely one, for the intended law struck at the bishops themselves by allowing the Lord Lieutenant, in certain circumstances, to appoint parish priests and curates. It was partly for this very reason that the

<sup>66</sup> J. Brady, *Proposals to Register Irish Priests*, in *Irish Eccles. Record*, (Apr. 1962) 209-220.

<sup>67</sup> Dublin, 22 Jan. 1756, James O'Keeffe, bishop of Kildare, to card. Corsini. Latin original. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 519-520. O'Keeffe here mentions the consecration of Rich. Lincoln on 11 January. In this section the term "bill" is used for the sake of convenience, rather than "heads of a bill" which is the correct expression.



Protestant bishops, led by archbishop George Stone of Armagh, threw the weight of their influence against the bill; any proposal to subject priests so completely to the State might later be turned against themselves<sup>68</sup>. Hamilton's bill, after two readings and several amendments, was rejected in April 1756 and no more was heard of it for eighteen months.

At this point it is enough to emphasize the extent to which the bill was inspired by the wish to eliminate the friars, guilty of confirming "the deluded people in their gross superstitions". This basic Protestant prejudice, constantly liable to find expression in laws injurious even to the diocesan clergy, naturally heightened the anxiety of the bishops to keep the regulars firmly in check. Thus, while Hamilton's bill was under debate, and the Dominican historian Thomas Burke was sitting (heavily disguised) in the public gallery of the House of Lords, following every word, bishop James O'Keeffe of Kildare complained to cardinal Corsini that the excessive number of friars and their shameless questing among the poor constituted a perpetual hazard for the church<sup>69</sup>.

Quod si nos a praesenti discrimine liberare dignata fuerit divina misericordia, Eminentissimae D. V. humiliter supplicamus ut horum mendicantium illiberalibus ac saepe etiam pudendis collectis modus aliquis adhibeatur, ipsique etiam cohibeantur ne se in posterum tam publice prodant. Nam quantumque utiles huic missioni supponantur, durum tamen foret contra stimulum perpetuo calcitrare, aut universam rem Catholicam in hac S. Patricii insula, illorum causa penitus deperdere. Tantum est enim Senatus nostri odium in illorum nomen et institutum, ut certum sit illos a novis quibusdam in Catholicos moliendis nunquam destituros, quamdiu hosce mendicantes aut tanto numero huc remeantes, aut in pauperes tam palam grassantes perspexerint.

In April 1756, an incident at Dundalk brought James Hamilton, in his capacity of local magistrate, into personal contact with Michael O'Reilly, archbishop of Armagh. There was a meeting of priests for

<sup>68</sup> There are two letters on the defeat of the bill, written by the nuncio at Brussels to card. Valenti on 27 Feb. and 30 Mar. 1756. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 515, 518. I have relied on Brady's account (art. cit.) but it is strange that both the nuncio and Th. Burke (Hib. Dom., 719-725) should say that the bill was defeated by 18 votes to 16, whereas Brady says it was *carried* by 18 to 16. The nuncio "had no doubt that the policy of repressing the national party, the strength of which had begun to increase vis-à-vis that of the court, had contributed to the well-being of the poor Catholics".

<sup>69</sup> As in note 67.



the distribution of the holy oils and some business concerning the re-trenchment of feastdays which led first to a squabble, and then to a "malicious information" which forced Hamilton to arrest the primate and his companions. On the instructions of the Lord Lieutenant the clergy were soon released, but not before they had been "strictly and severally examined"<sup>70</sup>. Throughout the episode, Hamilton treated his prisoners with extreme politeness, but there is no means of knowing what exactly passed between archbishop O'Reilly and viscount Limerick.

No further development took place until 21 June 1757 when Richard Lincoln became archbishop of Dublin. Hearing, during July, that Hamilton proposed to present his bill again at the following session of parliament, the new archbishop wrote to Rome, to Madrid, to London, hoping that international diplomatic pressure might halt the project in its tracks<sup>71</sup>. Most certainly he was opposed to it.

Archbishop O'Reilly, on the other hand, reacted quite differently. On the invitation of Lord Trimleston, who fancied himself the leader of the Catholic cause, the primate, with four of his suffragans and bishop O'Keeffe of Kildare, met at Trimleston's castle in county Meath on 1 September 1757 and signed their famous Pastoral on the fifth. Michael O'Reilly's chief concern was to make a solemn statement "in the face of the whole world" to show how false an idea of Catholic teaching the average Protestant had. The Tremblestown Pastoral accordingly denied that the pope might depose kings, exercise even indirect power over the temporal jurisdiction of princes, or permit the taking of false oaths. In justice to the primate, one must allow that the Pastoral was not made public. He wished, and said so plainly in the Pastoral, to do nothing without the consent of the other absent bishops. But he did hope that they would at once accept the text as it stood. His covering letter to the other three metropolitans, written on 5 September, insisted: "no time is more seasonable for our purpose than the present, as the Lords, whose bill miraculously miscarried in the last session, have been ever

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<sup>70</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism*, 90. Dr. Anthony Malcomson of the PRO (Belfast) kindly sent me copies of some letters on this subject from the Roden Papers, Mich. 147/9, pp. 141-148.

<sup>71</sup> Lincoln's diplomatic activity has still to be researched. He mentioned it on 13 December when writing to card. Corsini, and on 31 Dec. 1757 in a letter to the nuncio at Brussels. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 588-589, 596.

since smoothing the way lest that which they are to usher in with redoubled efforts this winter, may meet with any obstruction" <sup>72</sup>.

The Pastoral was sent only to the archbishops, on the understanding that each would inform his suffragans. One of the first outsiders to hear about it was Thomas Burke of Dublin. Archbishop Lincoln being away on visitation in early September, it was only on the 22nd that Burke was able to obtain a copy for Charles O'Kelly and inform his Roman friend of what was afoot <sup>73</sup>. Immediately on his return to the city, Richard Lincoln called a council of eight, read the Pastoral aloud and asked Burke, before any other, for his opinion. Burke, with that charming candour he would never lose, said the letter was abominable. Any priest who read the text from the altar, or prayed for George II and his family as the primate wished, would take his life in his hands. When still a schoolboy, he himself would have stoned a priest for doing so, and that feeling was still strong among the people. The northern bishops, in declaring that the pope could never depose a sovereign, rejected the third canon of the Fourth Lateran Council. And what was worse, said this intransigent Jacobite, the bishops implicitly accused anyone who longed for another revolution of being in a state of mortal sin. In his opinion, the Tremblestown prelates were clearly ready to take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration in the coming winter.

Having attended the parliamentary debates, Burke felt justified in saying that the whole purpose of the bill was to exclude the regular clergy because of their undying loyalty to pope and king. Both viscount Limerick, now earl of Clanbrassil, and Edward Synge, bishop of Elphin, had said so openly in the House of Lords. So the church stood to gain nothing from the Protestants, well disposed or not. Besides, the Protestant bishops had shown during these debates a better knowledge of Catholic doctrine than the signatories of the Pastoral appeared to have at their command. Archbishop Stone, for instance, reminded the members that (whatever bishops or theologians might think) the pope and cardinals certainly believed in their power to depose and absolve,

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<sup>72</sup> Th. Burke's copy of the Pastoral and its covering letter are in SCAR, Codex II vol. 1, ff. 284-285. Brady (art. cit.) seems to indicate another copy at Maynooth, Renahan Mss, vol. 43. He promised to publish the Pastoral "with pertinent documents" in *Archivium Hibernicum*, but never did so.

<sup>73</sup> Burke's letter to O'Kelly has been found only in an Italian copy. APF, CP 133, ff. 209-211. Since the Propaganda material on this subject consists exclusively of Italian translations made in Rome, the originals (if they survive) await discovery.

and that the third canon of the Fourth Lateran, which might be regarded as an act of parliament, had never been revoked.

Thomas Burke closed his letter of 22 September by saying that Lord Trimleston was the prime mover in the whole affair, that bishop Cheevers of Meath (an Augustinian and one of the signatories) had shown himself a "Judas among the regulars", that the meeting of the Dublin clergy had unanimously rejected the Pastoral, and that in the opinion of those best qualified to judge it paved the way for the success of Hamilton's bill in the following session of parliament. The only thing Burke failed to mention was that Richard Lincoln had imposed the most absolute silence on his advisers.

Another priest of Dublin, John Fullam, followed Burke's example by writing to a friend in Rome<sup>74</sup>. From his letters of 1 and 8 October it appears that archbishop Lincoln sent a circular to all the bishops warning them of the dangers inherent in the Pastoral, and found them in thorough agreement with his own analysis. Lincoln wrote also to Lord Trimleston, only to receive a most insulting answer for his pains, and had a personal encounter with the bishops of Armagh and Derry some miles from Dublin<sup>75</sup>. Richard Lincoln must have met the two bishops, and "brought them back onto the right road", before 1 October, the date on which Fullam reported the fact to Rome. It follows, then, that the primate either deceived the archbishop of Dublin or quickly changed his mind.

Three days later, on 4 October 1757, the six signatories met again at Tremblestown and wrote an explanatory letter to cardinal Corsini<sup>76</sup>. They would never have done so, had not copies of their Pastoral been sent to Rome and circulated against their wishes through the towns and cities of Ireland. Hence a text which would have been published only

<sup>74</sup> Apparently the Jesuit of this name, and in any case at least a part-time secretary of archbishop Lincoln. His letters were probably addressed to the Jesuit rector of the Irish college in Rome. Perhaps identical with the "Johnny" who sent a copy of the Pastoral to Rome on 20 September. There are Italian copies of these letters in APF, CP 133, ff. 211-213.

<sup>75</sup> Archbishop Lincoln referred to this or another similar meeting in his letter of 13 December to Corsini, saying that Armagh then agreed that Lincoln should write to Tuam and Cashel asking them to suppress the Pastoral completely, APF, SC Irlanda 10, f. 596.

<sup>76</sup> Latin copy in APF, CP 133, ff. 204-205. One should note that the signatories, in their original covering letter to the three absent metropolitans, said not one word about secrecy.



if all the bishops agreed was now a matter of public knowledge, and were the hierarchy to draw back it would only confirm the Protestants in their false opinion of the Holy See. They therefore proposed to print the Pastoral, should the leading Catholics approve. In fact there was nothing else they could do, because of indiscreet, calumnious friars who set more store by scandal than by charity.

On the very day, 4 October, on which this letter was written, another was publicly read in the chapels of Dublin<sup>77</sup>. The archbishop, Richard Lincoln, rejected the Pastoral. So too did Patrick Fitzsimons, his eventual successor, and the clergy of Dublin generally. And yet this new "exhortation", which they certainly approved, had many points of resemblance to the Tremblestown document. First of all, it expressed gratitude to God and to those rulers and magistrates who had saved thousands from death in the recent famine. That gratitude might best be shown by a peaceful, submissive bearing, sufficient in itself to soften prejudice. Crimes such as theft, fraud or murder could never be condoned in the name of religion. Nor could any power on earth dispense from false oaths. The text, however little Thomas Burke may have approved, included even an appeal for prayers on behalf of the king and the royal family that they might continue to show clemency and moderation towards their Catholic subjects, especially since there was good reason to hope for some mitigation of the penal laws.

Thomas Burke again entered the scene on 8 November with another letter to Charles O'Kelly. This time he was able to enclose a copy of an undated letter from his relative Mark Skerret, archbishop of Tuam, to the primate, rejecting the Pastoral on doctrinal grounds. For his own part, Burke mentioned that Lord Trimleston and bishop Cheevers were in Dublin, loudly complaining of archbishop Lincoln and himself<sup>78</sup>. Augustine Cheevers had written much earlier to Charles O'Kelly, explaining and justifying the Pastoral. On 19 November, O'Kelly wrote him a stinging reply in which he described the document as "the worse concerted project imaginable for the very purpose which gave it birth" and spoke of the pain it had given to James III to whom

<sup>77</sup> Brady (*art. cit.*, 217-218) quotes parts of this exhortation from the *Dublin Journal* of 4 Oct. 1757, but omits the text from his book, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century Press*. The paragraph was reprinted in the "London Gazette" on 11 October, of which latter there is an Italian translation in APF, CP 133, ff. 206-207.

<sup>78</sup> Italian copy in SCAR, Codex II, vol. 1, f. 286.

Augustine Cheevers owed more than any other bishop in the country <sup>79</sup>.

Cardinal Corsini, protector of Ireland, passed on the relevant correspondence to Propaganda Fide which considered the whole matter at a special meeting on 29 November 1757 <sup>80</sup>. Out of charity, the cardinals refrained from informing the pope, and refrained too from any theological judgement. The whole idea, they felt, was unnecessary and ill-advised. Benedict XIV, in a recent brief to the vicars apostolic of England, had plainly stated that subjects should obey their rulers no matter what religion they professed <sup>81</sup>. It would have sufficed had the bishops expressed themselves as the Dublin clergy had done on 4 October in their public exhortation. They ought to have foreseen that the text could not be kept secret, that most bishops would find it difficult to accept, and that that refusal (publicly known) would expose them to persecution. In short, the Tremblestown signatories were to take no further step unless to repair the harm already done. What was the point of reopening old controversies? Better to observe total silence as in Holland or Germany where the Catholics showed complete obedience to Protestant princes without ever being required to make formal declarations of allegiance. Such was the mind of Propaganda, not expressed by decree but left to cardinal Corsini to communicate privately to archbishop O'Reilly of Armagh.

This decision put paid to the Pastoral, but Hamilton's bill continued to make steady progress in the House of Lords. Worse still, many regulars at Dublin were busy spreading the word that archbishop Lincoln and the secular clergy were behind it. On 13 December, the archbishop promised cardinal Corsini that as soon as the storm died down he would take care to punish those responsible <sup>82</sup>. What particularly stung Lincoln was that "a certain Dominican panting for a mitre" had written to Rome about the Pastoral, shamelessly putting

<sup>79</sup> Ibidem, ff. 290-291. Since this is a fully addressed letter, it is possible that O'Kelly decided not to post it. Cheevers had written to O'Kelly on 6 October, but that letter has not been found.

<sup>80</sup> APF, CP 133, ff. 201-220.

<sup>81</sup> Probably a reference to the brief of 30 May 1753, called *Apostolicum Ministerium*, § 18: "ipsimet Vicarii [Apostolici], omni qua possunt ratione, severe tamen, illos puniant, qui de publico regimine cum honore sermonem non haberent". Benedicti XIV... Bullarium, tom. III, pars secunda, Prati 1847, 100.

<sup>82</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 10, f. 596.



himself forward as the "only unconquered defender of the true faith"<sup>83</sup>. The reference can only have been to Thomas Burke. "There were perhaps", Lincoln wrote, "particular reasons for demonstrating at Rome a zeal of which I have seen only the most indiscreet expressions". The archbishop had a Roman agent, a certain James Purcell, whom he repeatedly recommended for the diocese of Ossory. Evidently he already feared that that honour might be snatched from Purcell's grasp, as indeed it was in 1759, by Thomas Burke O.P.

In all fairness to Father Burke, one must allow that he opposed the Pastoral partly because it tended to ease the passage of Hamilton's bill, and opposed the bill itself because it meant the end of the regular clergy. It also meant the end of the bishops and of the church. A bill, as Charles O'Connor said, "calculated to extirpate our very remains... to destroy popery by popery itself"<sup>84</sup>. In this second session of parliament, Hamilton had greater success. After three readings his bill was approved. Then it passed to the Irish Privy Council where finally, and by a narrow margin, it failed on 18 January 1758. The bishops immediately ordered the Blessed Sacrament exposed in gratitude to God<sup>85</sup>.

All that remained was for archbishop Richard Lincoln to make good his threats against the regular clergy.

#### ARCHBISHOP RICHARD LINCOLN, 1758-1761

In 1756 there was a small convent at Athy, a village on the south-west frontier of the archdiocese of Dublin, where the Dominicans had recently succeeded in building a house. The three members of the community were Dominic Dillon, Thomas (alias Francis) Cummins — both natives of the place and former students of San Sisto — and another priest named Thomas Hanly. So much one gathers from *Hibernia Dominicana*<sup>86</sup>. The author relegated a further detail to a footnote,

<sup>83</sup> Dublin, 31 Dec. 1757. Lincoln to nuncio. A copy. Ibidem, ff. 588-589.

<sup>84</sup> Brady, art. cit., 220-221.

<sup>85</sup> Brussels, 14 Feb. 1758. Nuncio to card. Spinelli. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 591-592.

<sup>86</sup> Hib. Dom., 257. The chapter of 1757, when postulating Th. Cummins as preacher general, said he had been preaching "in his convent and district of Athy" for fourteen years.

namely that Dillon moved to Meath by 1759, but discreetly refrained from saying why.

Behind this innocent footnote lay a struggle between the Dominicans of Athy and their archbishop. On 26 August 1758, Richard Lincoln accused two of them in a letter to Rome of trying to extort a parish from him with the help of the Protestant magistrates and gentry<sup>87</sup>. It was probably in consequence of this complaint that Father Boxadors, on 23 December of the same year, wrote both to the provincial and to Dominic Dillon, prior of the convent: Dillon and Cummins were to leave the archdiocese at once and await the general's further instructions<sup>88</sup>. In due course Thomas Plunkett made his way to Athy, met the parish priest, failed to discover any ground for complaint, and wrote on 7 March 1759 to tell the master general that the archbishop refused to cite witnesses for the prosecution in proper legal form. Nonetheless, the provincial was able to say that Dominic Dillon had gone to Trim and Francis Cummins been assigned out of the diocese<sup>89</sup>.

Richard Lincoln's story was that these two "dissolute" Dominicans had encouraged the local authorities to write to the parish priest, threatening legal action unless he gave Dominic Dillon half the annual revenue of the parish. They then asked "at least indirectly" that the parish priest should be summoned to appear at the assizes, thus forcing him to abandon the scene. From the very start, the archbishop protested to the provincial whom he asked several times to remove the offenders, but Father Plunkett replied that he could not do so until they had been legally convicted. Arguing that the crime was evident and notorious, Richard Lincoln then withdrew their faculties, only to find that the two Dominicans brought his own letter of revocation to the magistrates who threatened to arrest him for the exercise of episcopal authority<sup>90</sup>.

The surviving evidence on this case is partly contradictory and

<sup>87</sup> Dublin, 26 Aug. 1758. Lincoln to card. Spinelli. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 613-614. In the same letter Lincoln complained of "an ignorant young Dominican named Netterville" who had recently been asking the lower clergy of Ossory to sign a postulation in his favour.

<sup>88</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 175.

<sup>89</sup> 14 Apr. 1759. Boxadors to Plunkett, mentioning the letter of 7 March received. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 1-2.

<sup>90</sup> This paragraph is based on an undated copy of a letter written by Lincoln to the nuncio before 29 Jan. 1760. APF, CP 126, f. 155. He mentioned the incident again in a letter of 2 Sept. 1760 to Propaganda. Ibidem, ff. 375-376.

certainly incomplete. It is inserted here only for the light it throws on the affairs of a small convent and by way of introduction to what follows. The archbishop of Dublin was ready to make good his promises. The Athy incident represented only a few practice shots on the eve of battle.

Richard Lincoln would have rejected the metaphor. In his own eyes he was simply a reformer, yearning only for the good of souls and of the church. So, at least, he constantly portrayed himself when writing to Propaganda. If then his reforms affected the regular clergy it was not because he wished to fight them, but because he loved them and had a duty before God to see that they behaved. For eighteen months he laboured to save them from Hamilton's bill. With that danger past (and, though he did not say so, with Thomas Burke installed as bishop of Ossory), he set his mind to the promotion of piety, of priestly zeal and ecclesiastical discipline, and came very quickly to the conclusion that the "laziness and idleness" of confessors lay at the root of many evils. In February 1759, withdrawing all faculties granted by himself or his predecessor, he summoned all save the parish priests to a general examination. The examiners, some of them friars, were told to give the more prominent or aged regulars a merely formal test. The archbishop then issued faculties to all, to some weaker candidates for only three to six months, but to none (secular or regular) for more than a year. This proved acceptable to the diocesan clergy and the Jesuits — who far outshone all other regulars in the examination — but not to the friars, although archbishop Lincoln explained that this limitation would restore piety, promote learning, and help the regular superiors to keep their own subjects under control. The regulars asserted their intention of appealing to Rome, citing privileges which, the archbishop wrote, "if they really exist in this country, can be no less dangerous to religion than injurious to episcopal authority" <sup>91</sup>.

It is hard to judge the merits of a dispute in which each party accused the other of blatant falsehood, but even considering this early stage of the quarrel there are two things one may say about Richard Lincoln: he conceived the examination for faculties as his only practical means of control over the clergy, and he treated the regulars as though they

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<sup>91</sup> This paragraph is chiefly based on Lincoln's original letter (Dublin, 31 Aug. 1759) to card. Spinelli. APF, SC Irlanda 10, ff. 669-670. Also on his letter to the nuncio, mentioned in the preceding note. Lincoln again explained his motives to Spinelli, after February 1760, in a letter of which there is an undated copy in SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 360-361.

had no "privileges" at all. True to their word, the friars appealed, at least to the nuncio in Brussels, in 1759. The Franciscans also wrote to their minister general. But their formal protest was still awaited at Propaganda in February 1760, by which time their faculties had again expired and they had to present themselves for a second examination in Dublin <sup>92</sup>.

Like the good strategist he was, archbishop Lincoln reserved the capacity to surprise. When the clergy came for examination on 11 and 12 February, they were not questioned by synodal examiners as before, but by the archbishop in person. His vicar general, probably Patrick Fitzsimons, dropped in once or twice but asked only a few questions. Once again all were approved: some for a year, some for three or four years, others still *simpliciter* or without limit, according as the archbishop judged them suitable. No young priest was approved for more than a year, but many senior friars — provincials, guardians, priors — had the mortification of being approved for a short period while others junior to themselves were given unlimited faculties. Naturally, there was another protest from the friars. Six of their leaders, including Michael MacDermott O.P., prior of Dublin, gave Richard Lincoln written notice of their intention to pursue the case at Rome <sup>93</sup>.

One would think, looking back, that the regulars would have been better advised to submit, especially since the basic point at issue, their competence to hear confessions, was one on which they should have prided themselves. And none of them had, in fact, been refused faculties. Taken by surprise, since no Irish bishop in living memory had held such a general examination, much less approved confessors only for a limited time, the friars threw themselves into the fray and spent their energies on what was only a skirmish compared with the struggle

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<sup>92</sup> Writing from Dublin (16 Feb. 1760) to his Roman agent, James Purcell, Lincoln said: "the *frati* of your city have to be sure told them that there was an absolute decision in their favour which has puffed them up and made them very insolent". APF, CP 126, ff. 369, 372. The same letter mentions that Lincoln had received a letter from the nuncio Molinari on the subject. There is however no trace either of the friars' first appeal nor of any Roman decision before this date. A dorsal note on a letter (Brussels, 29 Jan. 1760) from Molinari to Spinelli says: "si aspetta che i regolari deducano le loro ragioni". Ibidem, ff. 156-157. By this date Molinari had advised the friars to obey and the archbishop to change his course since the first examination had already allowed him to distinguish the sheep from the goats.

<sup>93</sup> Dublin, 11 Feb. 1760. Copy sent by Lincoln to Purcell. APF, CP 126, ff. 369, 372. Another copy ibidem, f. 208.



to come. One should note, however, that their objection was to the limitation of faculties, not to the examination itself. Their appeal to Propaganda relied heavily on the Roman decision of 6 August 1686 (linked to the condemnation of the diocesan synod of Meath) whereby regulars found generally suitable for the hearing of confessions were to be approved without limitation of time, places or persons<sup>94</sup>. They also asserted that the archbishop approved their provincials and local superiors for one year only purely because of his annoyance at their first appeal.

Their second appeal was sent back from Rome to archbishop Lincoln, who duly commented on every paragraph for Propaganda's benefit<sup>95</sup>. Some details he declared utterly false, others distorted or inconsistent. The objection to his treatment of the religious superiors "regrettably forced" him "to expose their incompetence and unworthiness" to the cardinals. Even the synodal examiners of 1759, two of them regulars, had remarked on the fact, while he himself could not but notice it in 1760. Notwithstanding, all had been approved, even the vicar provincial of the Discalced Carmelites who absented himself from both examinations. A private letter from Lincoln to his Roman agent, James Purcell, speaks even more plainly on the subject<sup>96</sup>.

As the year's approbation is now expired, I have accordingly approved of some of the regulars *indefinite* and to some others *ad tres annos*, though God knows how much I leaned upon my conscience in so doing. This however did not please that gentry. Nothing will do them but an unlimited one from the blockhead to the *padre maestro*, as you may see by their protest... I called them to an examination to see who was fit and who was not, that if any was found *generaliter idoneus* the approbation should have been given accordingly. And pray, who is to be the judge, they or the bishop?

To act as judge was one thing, but Richard Lincoln also tended to be the plaintiff, the sole witness for the prosecution and, as he warmed to his task, even a legislator for the friars of Dublin. All of which stemm-

<sup>94</sup> So much appears from their undated petition which begins: "Oratores pro regularibus... exponunt quod anno superiore". SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 338-341. The text mentions that a master of theology, formerly both regent and prior of San Sisto, had been approved only for a year. This was John F. Netterville. On the Meath synod, see AFP 40 (1970) 237-238.

<sup>95</sup> Dublin, 2 Sept. 1760. Lincoln to Propaganda. APF, CP 126, ff. 375-376.

<sup>96</sup> Dublin, 16 Feb. 1760. Ibidem, ff. 369, 372.



ed from his basic conviction that the regulars did not have, or should not have, any privileges in Ireland and ought therefore to be subject *quoad omnia* to the bishops. In fact his Roman lawyer, Spedalieri, asked Propaganda to suspend all such privileges in Ireland (especially since "formal convents" existed only on paper) and to subject the friars completely to ordinary jurisdiction<sup>97</sup>. Thus the archbishop retained the element of surprise, pushing forward to new objectives even before securing positions already overrun. The very letter of 16 February 1760, quoted above, instructed Father Purcell to give a "timely hint" to cardinal Spinelli of some other matters still which had nothing to do either with jurisdiction or the hearing of confessions.

There are many other crying abuses among them that loudly call for a reformation, such as pecuniary sodalities, expositions of the Blessed Sacrament perhaps twice a week *ad nauseam populi* to swell their collections at the door, processions of three or four score lubberly fellows with scapulars about their shoulders, the same of the Belt with wax tapers in their hands, and the *Venerabile* at the rear of these monthly processions to the great scandal of the heretics who constantly attend these as spectators to turn our holy religion into ridicule. Yet if when I shall attempt to reform these abuses and scandals they will roar out their privileges which, if they have any such, should never be practised in this country.

Archbishop Lincoln's steady drive from one "abuse" to the next meant that the initial difficulty about faculties was overtaken at Rome by other issues. Father Purcell, the faithful agent, summed up all the archbishop's complaints — whether about confessors, sodalities or collections — in a single petition to Propaganda during March 1760<sup>98</sup>. Spedalieri's undated request for total jurisdiction must have come later.

<sup>97</sup> Undated defence of the archbishop, presented by Spedalieri to Mario Marefoschi, secretary of Propaganda. APF, CP 126, ff. 235-244, especially f. 242. The undated answer of the friars to this document is on ff. 245-270, especially ff. 250-251; this particular answer is exclusively concerned with faculties and jurisdiction. When sending his undated account of abuses to the nuncio, Lincoln asked that Benedict XIV's Apostolicum Ministerium of 1753 regulating the English mission be extended to Ireland. Ibidem, ff. 361-362. In fact it is highly likely that Lincoln's views on jurisdiction, faculties and indulgences owed much to this famous brief.

<sup>98</sup> Undated petition, before 29 Mar. 1760, enclosing a copy of the second protest (11 Feb. 1760) from the regulars. The petition asked for opportune remedies, notwithstanding whatever privileges the friars might invoke. A dorsal note indicates that Propaganda wrote to the nuncio in Brussels on 29 March. APF, CP 126, ff. 207-210.

On 20 September, Richard Lincoln himself wrote at some length to the cardinal prefect, Spinelli <sup>99</sup>. After a broadside against the Franciscans and their "Mass-factory", he went on to discuss various other abuses, and ended with six numbered requests. Here again one can see the same headlong rush, for he raised questions not even mentioned to Father Purcell in the previous February: the cheapening of indulgences, vows of chastity lightly taken and as lightly broken by female tertiaries, confraternity-members forbidden to confess except to friars, the preaching of particular devotions rather than the rudiments of faith, and finally the improper way friars descended on country parishes to make the quest. On 21 November 1760, Propaganda Fide passed a summary of these complaints to Charles O'Kelly O.P., not saying from whom they came, with a request for his comments. Similar letters were sent on the same day to the superiors general of the Augustinians, Franciscans and Carmelites <sup>1</sup>.

The various religious communities of Dublin replied separately to these accusations, thereby creating an interesting set of letters which throw considerable light on what went on within the backstreet chapels of the 1760s. In this context one can only quote most of the letter in which seven Dominicans appealed to their master general to save them from the "atrocious calumnies" of their enemies. The text refutes Lincoln's six points one by one <sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup> The original is in APF, CP 126, ff. 211-212. Lincoln here refers to a recent meeting of thirty Catholic nobles convened "to serve the cause of religion". Some of them had complained to him of a sodality founded by the Franciscans in 1757 and advertised by them in print: solemn Masses and office of the dead were to be said for the intentions of those who paid sixpence a month. The archbishop did not believe the Franciscans were in debt. An immense sum had been collected to build their chapel more than ten years previously, and they might pay what few debts they had by spending less on food and clothes. According to the archbishop, there were more than eighty friars in Dublin city. The regulars estimated that there were fifteen chapels (nine secular, six regular) with 98 or at most 100 confessors of both clergeries for an adult Catholic population of 100,000.

<sup>1</sup> There is a copy, in the hand of Ch. O'Kelly, in SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 370-371. See also APF, CP 126, ff. 217, 226.

<sup>2</sup> Dublin, 20 Jan. 1761. Original. SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, f. 418. The text is slightly damaged. One of the most interesting details in this letter is the reference (par. 4) to a confraternity of laymen concerned with the religious education and support of poor boys. Some twenty years later, this would lead to the Dominican orphanage, which still exists.

1<sup>o</sup> Respondemus quod a multis iam annis, scientibus et non contradien-  
tibus archiepiscopis, imo bene visis et revisis circumstantiis loci et temporis,  
et nullius inde periculi conscii, processiones fiunt Dominica prima et secunda  
cuiuslibet mensis (non sedente parlamento) intra parietes tantum sacelli, et  
nunquam foras egressae. In his venerabile Sacramentum defertur iuxta or-  
nam nostri ritualis praecedente cruciferario, acolythis, patribus qui inser-  
viunt sacello, sex aut octo puerulis qui ultra cereos accensos nec scapulare nec  
rosarium in manibus gestant, caeteris omnibus flexis genibus et summa devo-  
tione adorantibus. Numquid ad conspectum tantae pietatis possint haeretici  
rite moveri ad contemptum vel catholici qui inde magnopere aedificantur in-  
dignari ut fabulatus est delator? Absit.

2<sup>o</sup> Ultro fatemur quod a 47 et ultra annis inoleverit [...] pia consuetudo  
exponendi adorationi fidelium sacrosanctum altaris Sacramentum diebus  
dominicus aliisque festivis per annum maioribus, iis tantum exceptis quibus  
id fieri prohibet archiepiscopus sedente parlamento, ex qua magis magisque  
promovetur cultus ac veneratio, atque fidelium maior devotio erga sanctissi-  
mum Sacramentum, non autem (ut falso asserit delator) minuitur debitus  
cultus Sacramento. Aequè falsum est quod publicando hisce diebus indul-  
gentias de benignitate apostolica certis diebus affixas, quas solas publicariis,  
pro nihilo reputantur indulgentiae. Imo vero mirum in modum augentur pii  
animorum affectus ut luculentur patet ex maxima populi frequentia quae ex-  
citavit invidiam delatoris, et hinc illae lachrymae.

3<sup>o</sup> Quod attinet ad tertiarias sunt inter illas plures ex primariis familiis  
et provectoris aetatis, plures itidem tenuioris fortunae sed quae sibi de victu  
et vestitu honeste possunt providere. Quoad quascunque circueuntes huius  
civitatis et domus curam negligentes saepius fuerunt a nobis a suggestu acriter  
reprehensae. Insuper nullae ipsarum a nobis inductae ad emittendum votum  
castitatis, et si ipsarum aliquae votis adstrictae nupserint, ut quandoque con-  
tingit inter illas quae tertiariae non sunt, numquid ex hoc culpandi veniunt  
regulares aut alii qui animarum curam habent? A priori pro tempore ex praes-  
cripto regulae et constitutionum nostrarum tertiariis praeficiuntur confessores  
discreti, et actualis noster prior sollicitus fuit dare tertiariis confessores certos,  
discretos et maturos, et determinavit tempus non nimis rarum nec nimis  
frequens vacandi earum confessionibus, iuxta acta capituli generalis Metis  
anno 1251.

4<sup>o</sup> Sunt apud nos duae tantum confraternitates, Rosarii B. V. et SS.mi  
Nominis Jesu, sed ab inscribendis sodalibus nec minimum quidpiam etiam  
sponte oblatum accipimus, nec ab inscriptis minimum quid per anni circulum  
vel mensem nobis solvitur, aut a nobis exigitur. Est et alia virorum laicorum  
iuvenibus pauperibus pie instituendis et sublevandis intenta, sub vero tamen  
non apparenti (ut vocat *splendide mendax* ille delator) motivo pietatis, tota  
pecunia a nobis et illis in hunc finem erogata penes ipsos est, eorumque ad-

ministratiōni nos nullatenus immiscentes, inter ipsos et nos nunquam vel minimum iurgium contigit.

5<sup>o</sup> Ex evangelio diebus dominicis et festivis proprio semper praedicamus, tractantes ea tantum quae ad fidem catholicam et bonos mores spectant, et tota civitas testari potest nullos nostrorum ita muneris et instituti sui oblitos ut nihil minus agant, quam quod ex praescripto sibi munere tenentur, cum enim hoc sit concionatori propositum, ut quaecumque dicit ad animarum salutem, ad castigandos hominum mores, ad virtutis praecepta tradenda, ad mundi contemptum, ad Divini Nominis timorem pariter et amorem, caeteraque his similia dirigere debeat. Hinc obiter tantum Dominica prima et secunda mensis et pro re nata in sermonis epilogo hortatur populum ad persolvenda rosaria B. V. et SS.mi Nominis Jesu.

Denique quoad ea quae mordaci et effraeni lingua effutit delator, respondemus quod a pluribus annis variis, et multiplicibus missionis officiis intenti, et ob ea in civitate detenti nullum omnino quaestum fecimus in parochiis ruralibus, sed cum olim fecerimus nonnisi semel in anno et finito sermone, et celebrata Missa, a circumstante populo humiliter et modeste postulavimus charitativum subsidium pro conventu, non autem extorquendo (ut inverecunde blaterat delator) et peracta missione rurali quamprimum reversi sumus [? ad conventu]m ne parcho aut parochianis oneri essemus, et in hoc vere non erubescimus [? mission]ariorum nomen, sicut nec erubescimus evangelium. Reliqua putida huius [...] articuli, quippe responsione indigna missa fecimus...

Dublinii, die 26 Ianuarii 1761

fr. Michael MacDermott, prior et praed. gen.  
fr. Terentius Reilly, s.t. magister.  
fr. Iohannes Fottrell, s.t.m. et ex-provincialis.  
fr. Iohannes Franciscus Netterville, s.t.m.  
fr. Iohannes Ryan, praed. gen. et supprior.  
fr. Iohannes Connor,  
fr. Thomas Dominicus Fottrell.

Using this letter as a basis, and adding a few touches of his own, Charles O'Kelly sent Propaganda a reply to the "anonymous" complaints it had received<sup>3</sup>. He thought the danger of further persecution imaginary, and if church services were in fact to provoke persecution, the secular clergy or the archbishop himself, who officiated in public, would be just as much to blame as the regulars. The heart of the matter, then, was the question of rosaries and scapulars which the plaintiff

<sup>3</sup> O'Kelly's draft is in SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 374-378, and a more polished version in APF, CP 126, ff. 218-225.



appeared to think unsuitable or frivolous. One thing was certain: he would never succeed in taking devotion to the Rosary from the people of Ireland. Rosaries were on public sale in all the main streets of Dublin. Even some Protestants carried them secretly in their pockets. The only indulgences to be obtained in the Dominican chapel were those granted to the order by various popes; for the members of the Rosary confraternity on the first Sunday of the month, and for those of the Holy Name confraternity on the second. O'Kelly's comments are more valuable still with respect to the Sunday time-table of the chapel and the distinction, not explicit in the letter cited above, between exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Of all sermons, the "most useful and necessary" was that preached in Irish at seven on Sunday mornings for the benefit of those who knew no English<sup>4</sup>. There was a sermon in English at ten. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament began at eleven "in order to have Benediction at twelve, as is done in all the Dominican churches of Flanders after sung Mass and compline". How, O'Kelly asked, could this diminish devotion, when even in the cathedral church of Rome there was Benediction every day just before the *Ave Maria*? There seems also to have been a Sunday evening service in the Dublin chapel, because the chief sermon on the gospel of the day was delivered "after sung vespers and recitation of the Rosary".

Charles O'Kelly's response to Propaganda Fide was probably presented in March 1761. By that date the whole affair, whether at Dublin or Rome, had taken on fresh momentum and would end with Rome's final decision in September of the same year. Considering the complexity of the alleged abuses, the endless legal subtleties brought forward by the parties in dispute, and the mass of surviving papers on the subject, one can only trace the principal developments. The most important was on 11 April 1761 when Richard Lincoln laid down seven ordinations for the regular clergy of Dublin, protesting that while he loved them, he loved the gospel of Christ crucified even more<sup>5</sup>. The full text,

<sup>4</sup> The hour of the sermon, not given by O'Kelly, is mentioned in Hib. Dom., 197-198. In 1760 it had long been the custom for the students of Holy Cross, Louvain, to preach in Irish in the refectory. John Daly, prior in that year, unsuccessfully tried to get the lectors to do likewise. AGOP IV. 231, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 342-347. Another copy, which Lincoln addressed without comment to Purcell, is in APF, CP 126, ff. 373-374. And there is a third, attested at Dublin on 23 Apr. 1761 by Terence Reilly O.P., prot., not., ibidem, ff. 147-152.



available only in Latin copies, is too long to reproduce *in extenso*, but the following summary gives some idea of its tone.

1<sup>o</sup> Processions of the Blessed Sacrament are to be held only on the feast or within the octave of Corpus Christi and on Holy Thursday. During these processions, which must always be held within the chapel walls, confraternity members may carry only candles and are not to wear cinctures, scapulars, or the insignia of any order.

2<sup>o</sup> Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is to be held only once a month, on the Sunday proper to each order, and on the following feasts: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Ascension, Corpus Christi (and the Sunday within its octave), the five principal feasts of Our Lady, the feasts of SS. Peter and Paul, St. Patrick, and the founder of each order.

3<sup>o</sup> No indulgences may be gained save those expressly recognized by ourselves or our predecessors. The people are to be thoroughly instructed as to the conditions necessary to benefit from them. And women are to be warned that they offend rather than please God by running about from chapel to chapel while neglecting their primary duties.

4<sup>o</sup> We condemn the custom whereby you forbid female tertiaries and members of confraternities to confess their sins to priests not of your orders. They should be taught that they may confess to whomsoever they please. No tertiary may in future be received, or take a vow of chastity, unless she is forty years of age and has previously been examined and approved by us.

5<sup>o</sup> No sodality is to be erected without our express permission. With regard to those already in existence you are to have no part whatsoever in their finances. That is the prerogative of the lay prefect who will submit to us an annual report showing how the funds of the sodality have been used. On no account is any money to be taken from those asking admittance to a confraternity.

6<sup>o</sup> We utterly forbid the confraternity recently erected in the Franciscan chapel against our will, until such time as it may be approved by higher authority.

7<sup>o</sup> The quest in rural parishes is to be carried out only once a year, and in such a way as may stimulate the faith and devotion of the people. Before taking up a collection, the friar should remove his vestments. He is not to read out a list of the poor parishoners, nor keep domestics away from their duties until two or three in the afternoon. The collection itself would benefit if two laymen were posted at the door of the chapel, as is customary in the cities.

Seven days later, on 18 April 1761, the regular clergy of Dublin handed a formal protest to archbishop Lincoln, declaring that they would appeal to the Holy See in defence of their privileges. If, they

asserted, the new ordinations were put into effect, they would destroy piety and devotion, contravene the rules of the confraternities, create scandal among the laity and sow the seeds of schism between the two clergies<sup>6</sup>. On 25 April, the archbishop wrote to cardinal Spinelli, enclosing both his ordinations and the protest<sup>7</sup>. It is in this letter, if nowhere else, that Richard Lincoln showed himself *splendide mendax*, for he assured the cardinal that the friars had seemed to agree to his proposals until such time as he ordered their execution. The very contrary shines as clear as day from a long letter written by the regulars to their Roman agents a month before the ordinations appeared<sup>8</sup>. In Lincoln's eyes, his seven regulations were lenient and moderate, well suited to the circumstances and the good of souls. Spinelli, he felt sure, would be moved to indignation by this utterly shameless and irreverent appeal in which the friars trampled the episcopal dignity underfoot. For five years he had worked only for the greater glory of God, hoping to find fellowship and support among the regular clergy, but in vain. He pleaded with the cardinal to approve his ordinations — *tu es protector noster, aspice nos* — and called Christ as a witness to his impartiality.

Propaganda dealt with the case at a particular congregation on 31 August 1761 and prepared nine decrees to meet the situation<sup>9</sup>. The decrees were directed to the bishops and regulars of Ireland, not simply to the clergy of Dublin. With respect to faculties for confessions, the bishops might examine the regular clergy and approve them for whatever length of time they pleased. But no regular, once approved *simpliciter et indefinite*, might be examined again (save in special circumstances) by the same bishop. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was limited to precisely those occasions set forth by archbishop Lincoln. On the question of processions, Propaganda distinguished between those in which the Blessed Sacrament was carried and those in which

<sup>6</sup> APF, CP 126, f. 371. The only Dominican among the six signatories was Ml. MacDermott, p.g., prior of Dublin.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, ff. 370-374.

<sup>8</sup> Dublin, 14 Mar. 1761. Probably addressed to a Franciscan named O'Brien at Rome whom the superiors of Dublin had recommended to card. Corsini on the previous day, as appears from Biblioteca Corsiniana, vol. 1500 (40.A.12), f. 145. One of the six signatories was Ml. MacDermott, prior of Dublin. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 154.

<sup>9</sup> The full text is in Hib. Dom., 753-754. There are ms. copies in APF, CP 126, ff. 56-61; SC Irlanda 11, ff. 17-20, and SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 152.

it was not. The Congregation also showed itself more generous than the archbishop of Dublin, for it allowed a procession of the Blessed Sacrament once a month, while placing no limit on any other kind of procession the regular clergy might wish to have, provided these ceremonies took place within the church walls. Even greater generosity was shown in the decree on indulgences which granted that the friars might freely announce them without the bishops' permission, though each religious superior would have to submit a list of all such indulgences within a year under pain of their withdrawal<sup>10</sup>.

The fifth decree, rebuking confessors who forbade their penitents to confess to other priests, was fully in accord with archbishop Lincoln's ideas, but thereby consecrated an accusation which the regulars rejected as utter calumny. Propaganda offered no new ruling on tertiaries, but simply recalled the relevant constitution of Leo X in the Fifth Lateran Council. No new sodality might be erected without the consent of the ordinary, and those already in existence were subject to his control. As already provided for in the constitution *Quaecunque* of Clement VIII and many decrees of the Congregation of the Council, the bishop was fully entitled to visitate and correct confraternities, while their funds were to be administered solely by the members themselves who were obliged to make an annual statement to the local ordinary. Although no embargo was placed on the annual quest in rural parishes, the regulars were warned not to give the impression of "avarice or sordid fund-raising, lest the Word of God should be blasphemed by adversaries". The ninth and final paragraph rebuked the friars "for the lack of Christian charity, religious modesty, and due reverence for the episcopal dignity" shown in the papers they had presented to Propaganda Fide.

Cardinal Corsini, protector of Ireland, was quite opposed to the final form of these decrees. He claimed, in fact, that they ran counter to the views of the cardinals present at the meeting: seemingly it had been decided that the problem of the quest should be treated in a letter apart, not as one of the decrees, and that the regulars would be rebuked *viva voce* only. Not mincing words, he called it "a dirty trick" engineered by Father Spedalieri, archbishop Lincoln's lawyer<sup>11</sup>. Trick or not, the decrees were approved at a papal audience on 20 September and

<sup>10</sup> There is such a list, submitted by the Dominican prior, though in Ch. O'Kelly's hand, in APF, CP 126, ff. 397-398.

<sup>11</sup> "Un raggio e una porcheria". There are two dated notes (14 and 17 September) by Corsini to this effect, APF, CP 126, ff. 140, 145; SC Irlanda 11, ff. 22, 35.

published by Propaganda on the following day. Richard Lincoln was overjoyed, though he would have liked the decree on processions to have been more strict. His letters of 19 December to the prefect and secretary of Propaganda express at once his contentment and his pastoral concern for those "false brethren who daily strive to overthrow the hierarchy, undermine episcopal jurisdiction and destroy the discipline of the church" <sup>12</sup>.

#### THE MISSION TO ST. CROIX, 1758-1761

To use the term "provincial policy" when speaking of the years from 1698 to 1760 would be somewhat anachronistic. To the extent to which the province *had* a policy, in the modern sense of the word, it was exclusively intent on the recovery of what it had lost and the maintenance of what it had saved from the wreck of centuries. In short, provincial policy was essentially retrospective, in that the leaders of the province sought only to recreate that supposedly ideal situation obtaining before 1536. It was an attitude dictated by circumstances, and one the other religious orders fully shared. Something of the same static quality marked the dealings of the friars with bishops such as Richard Lincoln and even with Propaganda Fide, as though they failed to realize that the politico-religious situation was changing both in Ireland and at Rome. Only in 1758, with the launching of the first "foreign mission" of the province, was there any significant break from traditional patterns, and even then it was something that happened rather than something that was planned.

The story of the mission to St. Croix, one of the Virgin Islands in the Danish West Indies, begins with Nicholas Tuite, a planter of Irish parentage who received permission from Propaganda in 1752 to appoint missionaries to serve the island <sup>13</sup>. His first priests, English Jesuits,

<sup>12</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 27-28.

<sup>13</sup> The account of the mission's early years given above is only the briefest sketch by comparison with the published material. See H. Fenning, *The Mission to St. Croix in the West Indies (1750-1769): Documents from the Archives of San Clemente*, in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 75-122. The first letter of this collection was edited from an undated Italian copy. The English original (London, 30 May 1752 o.s.) is in APF, SOCG 753, ff. 204-207, and the letter has no bearing on the *Dominican* mission which began only six years later. See also H. Fenning, *The Irish Dominican Mission to the Danish West Indies, 1758-1771*, in Irish Eccles. Record (Oct.-Nov. 1965) 233-248; and J. G. Daly, *Archbishop John Carroll and the Virgin Islands*, in Catholic Historical Review (Oct. 1967) 305-327.



were forced to leave St. Croix on 7 June 1757 because a decree of the Danish government forbade members of the Society of Jesus to work in its territories. Since Tuite, like other wealthy planters of the time, spent several months of the year at London, he then applied during the course of 1758 to the English religious superiors and the vicar apostolic for the replacements he needed. None of these authorities had any priests to spare, and Tuite's search proved unsuccessful until bishop Patrick Brullaughan of the Sardinian chapel produced two Irish Dominican volunteers. The first was Dominic Allen, formerly of Bilbao, then passing through London on his way from Spain to Ireland, and the second Hyacinth Kennedy who had been serving the Neapolitan chapel at London for a year.

According to Nicholas Tuite, both prospective missionaries were recommended by their provincial, but the recommendation may only have been a generic one such as priests of the time would normally have carried on their travels. Generic or not, this is virtually the only sign that the provincial, Thomas Plunkett, played any part in the project. When writing to Propaganda for faculties in October 1758, Tuite described the church he had built and claimed to have "already taken steps to build a house on the island very soon for the aforesaid religious, with an estate and revenues, in order to establish a solid mission there for Dominicans of the province of Ireland, since they alone have offered to serve it"<sup>14</sup>. The permission of the master general was also sought and obtained, but Kennedy and Allen disembarked at St. Croix on 3 January 1759 some months before receiving their various licences and patents from Rome<sup>15</sup>.

The church "in the town", the present Christiansted, was only "a bare shell, without ornament", but there also was, as Tuite had promised, a two-story house beside it in which Dominic Allen took up residence. Hyacinth Kennedy lived and said Mass at Mr. Tuite's estate three miles away. There were about 250 Catholics on the island, mostly Irish, entirely absorbed in making their fortunes, bitterly divided

<sup>14</sup> London, 4 Oct. 1758. Tuite to card. Spinelli. Italian original. APF, SOCG 779, ff. 108-109.

<sup>15</sup> Due to a misreading of mine, the articles cited in note 13 wrongly say that Kennedy and Allen received faculties from Propaganda on 14 Oct. 1758. The correct date is 14 December. The general's patents were issued on 10 December. AGOP IV. 217, p. 175. From the same register (p. 173) it appears that bishop Brullaughan wrote to the general about the project in March 1758, and (p. 175) that Th. Norton, a student of the English province, was keen on going to St. Croix.



by factions, and definitely not interested in religion. The missionaries consoled themselves with the black slaves, among whom they had greater success, though a long tradition of polygamy created problems. Father Kennedy visited the other Danish islands of St. Thomas and St. John, on which there was only a handful of Catholics, and went also to the English island of Montserrat — four days' sail from St. Croix — to meet Dominic Lynch and Nicholas Crump, two older members of the province who had served in those parts for more than twenty years. Returning on 8 July 1760 from a similar visit to St. Christophers, Kennedy was horrified to discover that Dominic Allen, his dear friend and sole companion, had died of fever and been buried the previous day.

From the letters Hyacinth Kennedy wrote immediately after this sad event, appealing for another helper, it is clear that he regarded the mission as the responsibility of the Irish province. He urged Charles O'Kelly, his Roman agent, to prevail on the provincial to send out a really suitable man, preferably Dominic Dillon whom archbishop Lincoln had driven as a "criminal" from Athy. Yet there is no reason to believe that Thomas Plunkett saw matters in the same light. The St. Croix mission was begun by the "scandalous" bishop Brullaughan, and exclusively staffed in its infancy by ex-students of Corpo Santo. Not only had Kennedy and Allen studied at Lisbon in their day, but their agent Charles O'Kelly had spent long years in the college. After Allen's death, two more Dominicans from Lisbon — Thomas Devenish and Terence MacDonnell — volunteered in October 1760 for St. Croix.

Father Devenish, a talented but impetuous priest, reached St. Christophers on 23 March 1761, found employment among the Dutch on St. Eustatius nearby, and went no further. His companion, Terence MacDonnell, sailed on to St. Croix, took over Father Allen's duties in the town, and worked quietly away until November when there was a violent outbreak of fever. Hyacinth Kennedy died on 24 November, "innocent and pious as he lived", Terence MacDonnell took sick, and Thomas Devenish arrived post-haste from St. Eustatius. Several months later, Devenish described this crisis in a letter to Charles O'Kelly<sup>16</sup>,

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<sup>16</sup> St. Croix, 25 May 1762. Devenish to O'Kelly. Full text in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 100-102. The later story of the mission, after 1761, must be postponed to some future occasion.

As I had promised Mr. Tuite that I would come down on the first failure of either my associates, I repaired to this island... When I arrived here I found a great pillar of the church giving way by it being undermined by Mr. Kennedy's grave, and Mr. MacDonnell despaired of by the doctors. So that I found the place *sine templo sine sacerdote* and almost the whole community received the oils from me in less than a month, and I buried in that time about forty whites.

After a month's hard labour by day and night, I caught the infection and went down like Mr. MacDonnell to knock at death's door, who seemed to have had too much to do to open for us, for by this time he was thought recoverable. After I had shook off this terrible disorder I laid my shoulders to the church, repaired the breach, laboured indefatigably in the pulpit every Sunday... My efforts, glory be to God who hath given them increase, answered my design. I have had two hundred white communicants last Easter [1762] when twenty before now was not known above once.

#### THOMAS PLUNKETT'S LAST YEARS, 1760-1773 (?)

At this point in the story there is quite some risk of finishing our account of Thomas Plunkett's provincialate without mentioning him at all. The registers of the master general show him to have been a conscientious administrator during his first two years in office. He took an interest in the long search for a new rector of Corpo Santo and even infringed on the rights of the general by appointing some teachers at Louvain. On 7 March 1759 he wrote to Boxadors at some length, describing his visit to Athy, mentioning Hyacinth Kennedy (then in St. Croix), and asking for the promotion of those postulated by the last chapter. In the same letter, to which only the answer survives, he applied for a dispensation from the middle chapter and seems also to have shown some perplexity as to how, during visitation, he ought to behave towards those who had not done the triennial examination for faculties. The master general insisted he suspend them<sup>17</sup>. Some months later, the provincial was told to name two censors for Thomas Burke's *Hibernia Dominicana* and to inform Albert O'Brien that he might act as vicar general of the bishop of Cork<sup>18</sup>.

If, during his second two years of office (summer 1759 to summer 1761), no correspondence whatever passed between Thomas Plunkett and the Dominican curia, one may look for an explanation to the Seven

<sup>17</sup> 14 Apr. 1759. Boxadors to Plunkett. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 1-2.

<sup>18</sup> 21 July 1759. Same to same. Ibidem, p. 3.

Years' War which disrupted postal services in 1760, and also to the surprising fact that he accepted charge of a parish in the same year. There is quite some irony in the coincidence that the only surviving document to come from his hand during his term of office is a petition of 12 September 1760 in which he asked the pope to confirm him in the possession of this parish recently granted to him by the bishop of Elphin<sup>19</sup>. And while the petition took care to state that he was a member of the order of preachers and a master of theology, it said nothing about his being also provincial!

Beatissime Pater,

Frater Thomas Plunkett ordinis praedicatorum, s. theologiae magister, ad Sanctitatis Vestrae pedes provolutus, quam devote exponit, sibi nuper collatam fuisse parochiam de Kilbegnet cum appendice de Dunamon in diacesi Elphinensi regni Hiberniae ab Ill.mo ac R.mo D. Iacobo Fallon, praelibatae diacesis episcopo, per obitum R. P. Ambrosii MacDermott vacantem. Ut autem stabilis et firma permaneat memorata collatio, idcirco de laudati Ill.mi Antistitis consensu atque consilio, quam humillime supplicat S. V. quatenus eidem collationi apostolicae confirmationis robur adiungere speciali diplomate benigne dignetur.

Praemissa omnia esse vera attestor Elphinae die 12 Septembris an. 1760.

Iacobus [Fallon] episcopus Elphinensis.

The Ambrose MacDermott mentioned here was a Dominican of Roscommon who died in August 1760<sup>20</sup>. So Thomas Plunkett, of the same community, immediately succeeded him as parish priest of Kilbegnet and Dunamon. Since the convent, then at Mount Mary near Creggs, lay within or near the southern border of the parish, there was probably no question of a change of residence, but it is still somewhat strange that the provincial should have accepted such an office. Father Plunkett may have reasoned that if the province had once been ruled by a bishop, it could well survive nine months under the care of a parish priest<sup>21</sup>.

All later references to Thomas Plunkett show that he continued to live in Roscommon until his death. In 1765 he was postulated

<sup>19</sup> SCAR, Codex I, vol. 4, f. 1007.

<sup>20</sup> Hib. Dom. 261.

<sup>21</sup> By Stephen MacEgan, bishop of Clonmacnois, from September 1725 to April 1726.

prior by the community after Charles O'Kelly refused election to that office. The master general confirmed the postulation on 13 July 1765, and if a mere priorship had to go so high for endorsement it was probably because Plunkett wished to retain his parish<sup>22</sup>. The Netterville list of 1767 describes him, in fact, as both prior and pastor, being then in his fiftieth year and the thirty-first of his religious profession<sup>23</sup>. And finally, he died shortly before 17 December 1772 when his mastership, vacant *per obitum*, was granted to another<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> AGOP IV. 231, pp. 36-38. The address at "Mount Mary, near Creggs" is given here.

<sup>23</sup> This list was compiled in September 1767 by Th. L. Netterville, provincial, at the request of the general. Ed. by H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in *Coll. Hib.* 8 (1965) 92-104, Plunkett being listed on p. 95 with the eight other priests of the community.

<sup>24</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 6.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# A Promise and a Mission 1761 - 1773

The "promise" of the title came from cardinal Castelli of Propaganda Fide in 1765. He offered to consider the possibility of new home novitiates if the Dominicans would send some missionaries to Scotland at once. Since that promise, however vague, was accepted with relief, four Irish Dominicans went to work in the Highlands between 1765 and 1773. The story of that modest enterprise is told here, after some account of the more ordinary affairs of the mission under provincial Michael Hoare (1761-1765) and a polite introduction to his successor Thomas Netterville.

The three foreign colleges hold the centre of the stage: Lisbon rising from the ashes after the earthquake only to be demolished in 1764 by the Marquis de Pombal; Louvain, supporting more students than ever thanks to their annual two-month quest on the roads of Flanders, only to be told by Propaganda that they could balance their books by cutting back on the number in formation; and Rome, a much smaller establishment, breaking with custom to take in even a few unprofessed novices despite the shaky finances of the house. Without home novitiates, the future of the province depended on these colleges which rose, as best they could, to the occasion.

This chapter also includes the further adventures of Thomas Devenish and his friends at St. Croix (1762-1765) and an account of the first step towards the "mitigation" of the decree forbidding novitiates. If only some Irish bishops were to support the friars, novitiates might open again "with safeguards against all abuses".

### MICHAEL HOARE, 1761-1765

Since the chapter held at Dublin on 13 June 1761 was obliged to elect a provincial from Munster, the vocals chose Michael Hoare of Limerick, twelve years after the end of his first provincialate<sup>1</sup>. Their

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of Hoare's first term of office see above, pp. 200-215. The chapter acts of 1761 are in AGOP XIII, 68095



choice complimented the man himself while underlining the weakness of the order in the south of Ireland. Among the names of the four definitors one finds that of Patrick Bray of Waterford, later provincial. Two other future provincials, John and Thomas Netterville, were elected definitor-general and *socius*, respectively, for the next general chapter, though no such chapter was in fact to meet for sixteen years. The same John Francis Netterville was named historian of the province in succession to Thomas Burke, now bishop of Ossory, though whatever he may have written on the subject has been lost.

The four capitular ordinations were fairly humdrum, for they simply clarified a point bearing on the effects of deceased friars and made some arrangements for students at Louvain. As far back as the provincial chapter held at Sligo in 1627, it had been customary to divide the *spolia* of the dead into three equal parts: one for the convent of affiliation, one for that of assignation, and one to be applied in Mass stipends for the soul of the individual concerned. Clearly this legislation did not refer so much to clothes or books as to hard cash, and was chiefly intended for those who died abroad. The chapter of 1761 turned its attention to a situation more usual in Ireland, namely to those dying in convents to which they were either affiliated or assigned, but not both. In such a case, their property was to be divided in two, one part going to the "other" convent and the remainder applied in suffrage Masses for their souls. So far as Louvain was concerned, the chapter insisted that the students should take turns to preach on Sundays (presumably to the community) throughout the year, and that in future, as had been the practice up to 1749, they should receive no travelling expenses whatever on setting out for Rome or Lisbon. At the very least, considering how low the finances of Holy Cross actually were, the convent to which such students were sent for further studies ought to pay half the cost of their journey.

Louvain appeared again in the petitions of the chapter, but on the deeper level of jurisdiction. Strictly speaking, it was the only one of the three foreign colleges under the authority of the provincial, but the masters general had grown accustomed to appoint those who taught there, usually on the recommendation of the regent of studies. This was more a matter of custom than of law, since a former provincial, Michael Shanly, had been rebuked as recently as 1755 for not maintaining the *aequalitas nationum* on the teaching staff at Louvain<sup>2</sup>. The

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 261.

provincial might make visitation there, but his power of assignation to or from the college did not extend to the lecturers. Hence the chapter now asked that the provincial be again permitted to appoint those teaching the humanities or sacred scripture, besides the master of students at Holy Cross, as had been his right from the first foundation of the college.

Their second petition concerned novices, whom the province had been forbidden to clothe in Ireland since 1751. On this vital point, the chapter again ignored the obvious and practical suggestion made by the master general Bremond in 1754: that since the common good was at stake, each of the Irish houses should contribute towards the heavy expense involved in sending young postulants abroad<sup>3</sup>. It equally ignored the more recent insistence (April 1759) of Bremond's successor, Juan Tomas de Boxadors, conveyed in a letter to the prior of Louvain, that the next provincial chapter would have to make some arrangement for the support of novices, since they must necessarily prove a financial burden on whatever continental convents were to receive them<sup>4</sup>. Instead, the chapter simply renewed the capitular petition of 1757, asking the master general to prevail on Propaganda Fide to permit the reception of a single novice in each of four designated Irish convents. Failing such permission, the Irish province *iam nimis afflicta* would soon be desolate, as was patent from the list (appended to the acts) of the forty-nine friars who had died over the preceding four years.

Two further petitions asked the general to protect the rights of the order in the case then pending between the archbishop of Dublin and the Dominicans of that city<sup>5</sup>, and to grant a passive voice (i.e. the right of eligibility) to friars prevented by other duties from visiting their convents more than a few times every week. This final petition may be quoted in full, since it reveals a province increasingly composed of private chaplains, parish priests and curates, with its country convents, as one may well imagine, in full decline:

Cum in hac nostra provincia desolata in quibusdam conventibus prae-sertim ruralibus pauci sint fratres, iique communiter deputentur sacellani pro particularibus familiis vel curam animarum habent aut illius parochiae ubi existit conventus aut, ut saepius evenit, parochiarum

<sup>3</sup> On 10 Aug. 1754. Ibidem, 459.

<sup>4</sup> 14 and 28 Apr. 1759. AGOP IV. 231, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> The whole case is discussed above on pp. 277-288.

adiacentium. Insuper, ut supponitur, assumuntur ad curam animarum principales; hinc est ut ad negotia etiam ordinis tractanda aptiores censeantur, eaque de causa ad petitionem provinciae, a capitulo generali Bononiae celebrato anno 1748 ad vocem activam admissi sunt <sup>6</sup>. Experientia modo constat religionis emolumento esse si ad passivam etiam vocem restituerentur. Qua de re humillime supplicamus Reverendissimae suae Paternitati, quatenus pro zelo suo ordinis, vere paterno, utriusque vocis gratiam curam animarum habentibus benigne concedere non gravetur, saltem iis qui curam praefatam subeunt in parochia ubi existit conventus, aut in locis vicinis, qui de facili bis terve per hebdomadam ad conventum accedere possunt, ibidemque per diem alterumve permanere, dummodo religionis negotia id exigant, idque absque parochianorum praeiudicio, cum id muneris, interea temporis, alteri religioso committi possit.

As was customary, the chapter of 1761 submitted a long list of postulations for the honorary degrees of the order, this time no less than thirty-three names, of which only eight were put forward for titles vacant *per obitum*. In fact, the total came to thirty-five, for Michael Hoare with two of the definitors signed a separate petition asking the master general to promote the *other* two who could not (being definitors) legally postulate themselves <sup>7</sup>. The extravagant number of these postulations, not to speak of the inexperience or unsuitability of many of those proposed, give the Irish chapters of the 18th century the air of a "mutual admiration society", but the matter was taken most seriously by those concerned. For example, two priests of Dublin, John Ryan and Edmund Fitzgerald, complained separately to Rome about these postulations less than two weeks after the chapter closed <sup>8</sup>. And all John Ryan had to complain about was that he, already a preacher general, had been put second rather than first on the list of twelve postulated for the province of Leinster!

Seldom can the acts of an Irish provincial chapter have been so coolly received by the Roman curia. In all probability, this was largely

<sup>6</sup> These friar-pastors, provided they lived within the "limits" of their convents, had been granted an active voice by the master general Ripoll as early as Aug. 1745. This was confirmed by the general chapter of Bologna in 1748. The point made in the text quoted above of the non-residence of the *principales* or more capable brethren of a convent, had already been made by the chapter of 1753. See above, pp. 203, 211-212, 236.

<sup>7</sup> Their undated petition is in AGOP XIII. 68095. The definitors who signed it were Th. Hope S.T.M. and Dom. Egan P.G.

<sup>8</sup> These two letters, of 19 and 27 June 1761, occur *ibidem*.

due to the absence of the master general, for Boxadors had left Rome for Spain in September 1760 and did not return from that prolonged visitation until 21 May 1764, just a year before Michael Hoare went out of office<sup>9</sup>. For the duration of his absence, the general appointed Giovanni Domenico Villavecchia vicar general of the order. So it was with Villavecchia, and not with Father Boxadors, that the Irish provincial had to deal during his first three years in office. And Villavecchia was to show himself less helpful than his master, if indeed he may be said to have shown himself helpful at all.

To start with, Villavecchia found what he called a "substantial error" in the election itself, insofar as the scrutators when signing the document had failed to indicate the names of the convents of which they were priors<sup>10</sup>. The vicar general therefore cassated the election and declared himself perfectly free to appoint anyone as provincial; but seeing that the greater part of the electoral body had voted for Michael Hoare, he thought it best to *appoint* him provincial "as a special favour". The incoming provincial was also rapped over the knuckles for signing himself "provincial" rather than "provincial elect", a point of protocol with which Father Hoare should have been familiar "in view of the fact that he had once been provincial before"<sup>11</sup>. Villavecchia ignored the petitions of the chapter, apart from the two (on the Dublin dispute and the novitiate question) which did not concern the Dominicans alone. In this respect, he promised to give what help he could: "if the procurators general of the other orders should show themselves willing to cooperate". Throughout Hoare's provinciate there was not one word, whether from Villavecchia or later from Boxadors about permitting the election of parish priests as priors of country convents. And Rome continued placidly to appoint the teachers of Holy Cross, Louvain. Indeed, Michael Hoare was called to task by Boxadors himself in September 1764, and asked peremptorily to show cause why he had infringed on the general's authority by recalling Michael Flemming to Ireland although that priest had been named lector of sacred scripture at Louvain<sup>12</sup>.

There still remained the question of those postulated for degrees.

<sup>9</sup> Mortier, *Histoire des maîtres généraux*, vol. 7 (Paris 1914) 394. The exact date of Boxador's return is noted in AGOP IV. 231, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> 11 July 1761. Villavecchia to Hoare. AGOP IV. 231, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> 18 July 1761. Same to same. *Ibidem*.

<sup>12</sup> 22 Sept. 1764. Boxadors to Hoare. *Ibidem*, p. 33.

At first, Rome had nothing to say on the subject. When Father Hoare broached the subject after his first visitation, in the autumn of 1762, he was told it would be settled "some other time"<sup>13</sup>. He tried again in a letter of 17 February 1764, nearly three years after the provincial chapter, making the point that the brethren were complaining of him (the provincial) as the cause of this delay. Villavecchia replied that this would require an examination of the acts of the last chapter, and that he was in no position to weigh the merits of so many candidates. In any case, he went on, it would be better for the provincial to petition the master general, who was expected at Rome in May, with regard to the granting of degrees and the confirmation of the chapter acts themselves<sup>14</sup>. Following this advice, Father Hoare wrote to the general himself in the following autumn, only to receive a *vehementer miramur*, first of all that the brethren should have dared to complain and secondly that the provincial had not curbed their insolence<sup>15</sup>. Boxadors melted a little by March 1765, but even then (with only a few months to go before the election of a new provincial) he simply promised to take up the question of degrees at some future date<sup>16</sup>. In short, only one degree was granted during this entire provincialate: a mastership granted to Michael Peter MacMahon on 5 June 1765, the very day on which he was named bishop of Killaloe<sup>17</sup>. With quite unconscious irony, this solitary promotion was granted to a friar who had not been postulated at all!

#### THE COLLEGE OF LISBON, 1756-1764

The college of Corpo Santo at Lisbon, destroyed by earthquake in 1755, played no great part in Father Hoare's provincialate and would not thrive again as a house of studies until 1770. But if it played no great part, its very survival was an achievement and the story of those uncertain years may very well be told in outline here.

<sup>13</sup> 30 Oct. 1762. Villavecchia to Hoare. *Ibidem*, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> 7 Apr. 1764. Same to same, answering his letter of 17 February. *Ibidem*, pp. 28-29. I find no evidence in this register that the acts of 1761 were ever confirmed.

<sup>15</sup> 27 Oct. 1764. Boxadors to Hoare. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 33-34.

<sup>16</sup> 9 Mar. 1765. Same to same. *Ibidem*, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 37. There is an excellent article on this bishop by J. Clancy, Michael Peter MacMahon, bishop of Killaloe, 1765-1807, in *Molua* (Dublin 1940) 1-19.



Father Peter MacKeon had been rector since 1749 for two successive terms when the college fell in ruins on 1 November 1755, but (since no one else wanted the job) was continued in office until autumn 1758<sup>18</sup>. After the disaster, only three other members of the earlier community remained: Eugene MacCrohan, Dominic Delamar and a student named George Jones. Because of recurring tremors, even these brave spirits stayed with friends "or wandered about the fields" and did not return to live again at Corpo Santo until about April 1756<sup>19</sup>. They had lost their archives (and therefore all proper account of the founded Masses to which they were obliged), but on the other hand they were not entirely destitute and Charles O'Kelly set off just then for Rome, fully determined to plead for the college at a higher level.

Even before quitting Lisbon, O'Kelly succeeded in obtaining a glowing testimonial letter from the local Inquisition in favour of Corpo Santo<sup>20</sup>. The document dwelt on the earlier achievements of the community, particularly on their success in converting heretics; insisted it was not only useful but necessary to the good of the Church; spoke of its present need, and recommended its reestablishment to the generosity of the faithful. Almost simultaneously, the vicar general of the order promised to say Masses for the dead of the community, while encouraging Peter MacKeon to send his subjects questing in Spain. Ferretti even asked for their names and the dioceses in which they intended to beg, so that he might give them letters of recommendation<sup>21</sup>. After taking part in the general chapter at Rome (July 1756) and becoming theologian of the Casanatensian library, Charles O'Kelly pursued his fund-raising campaign, and with apparent success. Working

<sup>18</sup> On the earlier history of Corpo Santo from 1749 to 1755 see above on pp. 246-250. On 30 Sept. 1755 the community postulated Edm. O'Reilly of Leinster as rector of the college, and the general commanded him under obedience to accept, but that priest died before 16 Oct. 1755 when the general appointed Th. Hope. Hope, however, would not leave his parish in Meath, and the general (after two years) abandoned his repeated attempts to install him at Lisbon. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 158, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174.

<sup>19</sup> The names are given in the *status collegii* of 21 Feb. 1764 of which there is a later version in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 28. Fr. Geo. Jones was dispensed from his fourth year of theology to take his lectorate examination at Lisbon on 3 Jan. 1756. AGOP IV. 217, p. 159.

<sup>20</sup> The sealed original, dated 4 Mar. 1756, is in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 2. The full text may be found in print in Hib. Dom. 425.

<sup>21</sup> 10 Mar. 1756. Vincenzo Ferretti to MacKeon. AGOP IV. 217, p. 161. At this stage the nuns of Bom Successo were still living in tents in their garden.

through cardinal Neri Corsini, protector of Ireland, who personally donated 2,000 scudi, O'Kelly obtained two papal briefs dated 5 November 1756: one to each of the ninety bishops of Spain, and the other to Boxadors, the new master general, who was to arrange the dispatch of copies of the first through his various Spanish provincials<sup>22</sup>. Benedict XIV insisted that the college be completely rebuilt, that the Dominicans of Portugal should maintain *gratis* such Irish friars as they had already received or sheltered, and that the Corpo Santo community should stay where it was, leaving the Spanish collection with all its attendant hazards to the bishops and provincials of Spain<sup>23</sup>.

Meanwhile, that community was beginning to grow. Dominic MacDonnell appeared as procurator of the nuns of Bom Successo by August 1756, while the same priest was named their confessor and Martin Horan their bursar, both for a two-year term, on 8 June 1757<sup>24</sup>. A more important newcomer was Bernard Brullaughan who resigned his priorship at Louvain in March 1756 and made his way before the end of the year to Lisbon where he had in fact been rector (1745-1749) until Peter MacKeon took office. There is no reason to doubt that Brullaughan's interest in Lisbon played a large part in the resignation of his priorship: not only did he procure a large sum of money for Lisbon while still prior at Louvain, but in changing house he took care to be assigned to Corpo Santo as "chaplain and missionary of the foundation of the noble Don John Francis Bandanucci", donor of a vineyard from which Corpo Santo drew an annual income<sup>25</sup>.

Bernard Brullaughan joined the community in autumn 1756, but not in spirit and rather less in policy. Bishop Thomas Burke, a visitor there in 1770, described him as being full of "our wretched provincial

<sup>22</sup> Both briefs, from Benedict XIV, have been printed in Hib. Dom. 425-27. There is some related material, largely drafts and manuscript copies, in SCAR. No. 22, doc. 6, 9, 10 and in Codex IV, doc. 43. In one note to cardinal Corsini, O'Kelly referred to the 28 future martyrs Corpo Santo had sent to Ireland. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 6.

<sup>23</sup> A month earlier still (on 16 October) Boxadors had told the rector not to allow his religious to quest and that he himself (the general) was soliciting alms on their behalf. AGOP IV. 217, p. 166.

<sup>24</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 165-66, 168. Both MacDonnell and Horan had held these offices before the earthquake. Hib. Dom. 429. Hence they were not really "newcomers", but simply returned to Lisbon after a short absence.

<sup>25</sup> His resignation was accepted and his new assignation issued on the same day: 27 Mar. 1756. AGOP IV. 217, pp. 161-62.

partiality ... he tells a confounded deal of lies, tho' inoffensive but to himself. In Blarney they are fools to him. In that respect he is a proverb in Lisbon and the environs"<sup>26</sup>. A fortunate warning, because our best and practically only account of events in Lisbon is an extremely long letter of 16 August 1764 from Brullaughan to Charles O'Kelly<sup>27</sup>. His preceding letter of 1760, with whatever earlier ones he may have written, has been lost. For lack of better witnesses, one can quote only his version of events:

I have struggled almost in vain from the day I arrived in Lisbon from Flanders till this hour against all manner of enemies for the reestablishment of the ruined college. I found our Chiefs then extremely busy in rebuilding part of it, but in such a manner as evidently exposed the lives of all who would venture to dwell therein to the last danger, even without an earthquake. I immediately opposed their proceeding in a work they undertook five months before my arrival without the direction of any architect or even an able master, and contrary to Coronell Mardell's advise who assured them it could not subsist, being contrary to the King's decree as well as all the rules of art to build upon burned walls and arches reduced to limestone... yet having often insisted... all I could gain was that the works should be formed on a better foundation, and that we should rather sacrifice some hundreds of milreis spent before, than expose our lives to a certain danger.

As this expensive and ultimately useless work went ahead, Charles O'Kelly maintained his efforts at Rome. He wrote, for example, in April 1757 to a colonel French and his regiment in the Spanish service, referring to the earlier papal brief in favour of *Corpo Santo*: "the refuge of the retired merchant, the support of the reduced family, the recourse of the injured and the consolation of the afflicted, the security for the fidelity and honesty of numbers of young men and women of the country it has placed in respective good services ... a counterpoint to the irregularities and scandals of some abandoned creatures of the nation"<sup>28</sup>.

Peter MacKeon's responsibilities as rector came to an end after nine years when Dominic Delamar accepted the rectorship on 26 September

<sup>26</sup> Kilkenny, 18 Dec. 1770. Burke to Chas. O'Kelly. Dublin Diocesan Archives, 29/4.

<sup>27</sup> The rest of this account of Lisbon is largely based on his letter, now SCAR, No. 22, doc. 29.

<sup>28</sup> 26 Apr. 1757. A copy. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 12.

1758<sup>29</sup>. Delamar belonged to the Leinster convent of Longford, so the vital *alternativa* had been respected, but Father MacKeon stayed on for some time and there was little if any change of policy. There was, however, a new Pope, Clement XIII, elected in July 1758, and to him Charles O'Kelly turned again since the earlier brief of Benedict XIV had brought no money to Corpo Santo, perhaps for want of approval by the Council of Castile. Cardinal Corsini's help was again invoked and on 22 January 1759 Clement issued two briefs: one to the archbishop of Toledo (who was to forward copies to all the bishops of Spain and the Indies) and another to the papal nuncio at Madrid<sup>30</sup>. Having collected the money, the bishops were to send it to the nuncio who, in collaboration with the Irish Dominican procurator at Madrid, would see that it reached the college safely and then send an exact account of the whole business back to Rome. These papal documents complimented Charles O'Kelly by giving no small prominence to his name and status. Boxadors, the master general, offered no help at this stage, being prevented from holding a general chapter in Spain at which he had intended appealing to the order on behalf of Corpo Santo. That at least was the explanation offered to cardinal Corsini by the ever-charitable Charles O'Kelly<sup>31</sup>.

Returning again to Lisbon, one may take up the thread of the story from the letter of Bernard Brullaughan already quoted above:

Thus the building went on until the year 1759 without opposition, when about the latter end of July of that year, we were notified in the King's name to desist from all manner of work. This was complied with and the works suspended. From thenceforward nothing was attempted, but in the latter of said year, we were obliged to tyle part of the vaults, and make a new door and window to the cellars under the western part of our old dormitory to keep off the rain and theeves from the merchants' goods therein, who paid 24 moyders a year for their hire... Having then finished ten good rooms and the shell for four more, I insisted on getting lectors and at least four students and open our studys, as all other convents did though living

<sup>29</sup> AGOP IV. 217, p. 174. The appointment was made by the general, on whose earlier efforts to find a rector see note 18 above. It was a year later (8 Sept. 1759) before Delamar was named v. g. of Bom Successo. Ibidem, 231, pp. 3-4.

<sup>30</sup> Both briefs have been printed in Hib. Dom. 427-28. There are some manuscript copies and related material in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 21-25.

<sup>31</sup> When first asking Corsini (c. 3 Jan. 1759) to approach the new pope. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 21.

in *baracas*. I had insisted on the same the year before with Father Peeter [MacKeon] and his counsell, assuring them that it was the opinion of the best of our friends... who largely gave their charity for our help and support principally for that end. Nay, that neglect was dayly objected against us by our enemys.

All this went for naught. The general was informed of our poverty and incapacity of maintaining such a number of lectors and students; our debts must first be paid, etc. But with what truth or sencerity could this be adleged? ... The truth is that we spent more in extravagant treats, useless expenses and bad economy during that time than would maintain that number. Yet it was treason to censure or even notice any such.

Boxadors later came to see things from Brullaughan's point of view, probably through Charles O'Kelly's influence. At any rate, the general wrote on 7 June 1760 to the new rector, Dominic Delamar, to say that since the college was once more habitable, studies should gradually be introduced. Delamar was to write to Louvain for one student of philosophy and one of theology, while the general himself would decide which lectors to appoint<sup>32</sup>. And there the matter ended, for Boxadors went off to Spain a few months later for no less than four years. His Roman vicar Villavecchia, even when another rector should have been appointed in 1761, referred all requests from Lisbon to his absent master. The college ran into ever greater difficulties, while no care was taken to maintain the number in community at Corpo Santo. On this final point too, Brullaughan had something of interest to say:

Devenish and MacDonnell must be permitted to goe to the mission. Burke and MacHenry must change climate to save their lives, and Peeter himself must goe to see his mother in Irland. It cost Peeter his life, and Burke there finished his career, and to supply our want of them, none was sent for but Fr. Barry from Almerim, where he had been for a year before for his health... sociable enough over a bottle with those who love it soe well as Delamar and Crohon... Such then are the pillars and governors of our grand community<sup>33</sup>!

<sup>32</sup> AGOP IV, 231, p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> SCAR, No. 22, doc. 29. Those referred to here are Th. Devenish and Ter. MacDonnell, both of whom went to St. Croix early in 1761; Burke may have been Ulysses of Roscommon whose obit occurs in the acts of 1761 or Antoninus of Strade whose obit is in those of 1765; Pat. MacHenry and Peter MacKeon. I cannot identify Barry. The last two mentioned are Dom. Delamar and Eug. MacCrohan.



This reduction of the community made it more difficult than ever for Corpo Santo to meet its obligations with regard to perpetual founded Masses, not to speak of those other Masses for which stipends had been accepted (though never actually said) before and even after the earthquake. There was some confusion as to their total number, while the loss of account-books made confusion worse confounded. Father Delamar petitioned the Pope on the subject about March 1760, asking for the total suspension, commutation or condonation of about 10,000 Masses of various categories, but nothing seems to have come of this request<sup>34</sup>. Many of the perpetual Masses were based on property lost in the earthquake, but there were still 577 from which they derived some benefit. Since, however, they discharged only 326 of these *per annum*, they were in default by at least 1,500 founded Masses, to say nothing of manual stipends, by 1761<sup>35</sup>. On this point too, Bernard Brullaughan opposed his brethren, not simply because of their bad book-keeping or spirit of *laissez-faire*, but also because it was he who had procured one of these foundations in 1756 while still prior of Louvain. Lady Catherine Stourton gave him £ 200 to invest so that the interest might support one student at Lisbon. In return, the college agreed to celebrate two perpetual weekly Masses, while the baroness gave a further £ 100 for which the college was to say 1,333 Masses<sup>36</sup>. Neither Brullaughan, nor the general at a later date, was satisfied that this particular obligation had been properly respected.

Brullaughan also took part in a stormy, frightening incident which began on 19 January 1761 when: "we were notified in the King's name by the inspector to quitt the colledge that very day without any further delay, though we had no previous advise or notice of such a change"<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> An undated copy in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 13. Delamar mentioned here that they already had a chapel and twelve cells, suitable for the common life and studies, but with an annual income of only 770 scudi so that they depended utterly on manual stipends. In the same volume, doc. 27 and 28, reference is made to the fact that Corpo Santo had earlier obtained the reduction of Masses in 1699 and 1745.

<sup>35</sup> Lisbon, 16 June 1761. Delamar to O'Kelly. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 27. This letter lists and gives details of nine separate foundations. Delamar ended by saying: "see if you can help us or ease our burden by the help of your friends in Ireland".

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem. Also Valverde, 12 Mar. 1764. Boxadors to Corpo Santo. AGOP IV. 231, loose fascicule tipped in at p. 20.

<sup>37</sup> Lisbon, 16 Aug. 1764. Brullaughan to O'Kelly. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 29.

They went at once to colonel Mardell, just recently appointed architect general, who told them not to worry and said that he would look into it. But:

The following morning at seven o'clock, as the first Mass was a saying, arrived the same officers with fifty or sixty workmen, fell directly to demolish the house. But as their ladders proved too short for the chapell, they in a few hours uncovered the refectory and part of the next house. We advised Mardell a second time. He immediately came and ordered the officers to suspend the work until the King was consulted. I recurred immediately to His Majesty. He sent me directly to the Count de Oures with the petition. The Count remitted me to his brother, the Secretary of State. As he was at Oures, I desired the rector [Dominic Delamar] should go along with me. We arrived at eleven the next day.

Such was the reception he gave us that we might expect a more favourable one from the Grand Seignior. We deserved no favour. We acted against the King's decree by building without his leave. We deserved to be hanged, and would be hanged in England for a less crime. We were useless to the country; served only strangers; let them provide a convent for us... The poor rector could spake but little intelligibly at best, but then was struck entirely dumb. His flushed countenance turned as pale as if death was before him, and would probably have fainted if I had not got leave to answer.

This angry exchange went on until well after two in the afternoon, in the presence of many high dignitaries of church and state; it included even a meal with the furious Secretary, though Brullaughan already felt fuller than if he had "eaten three dinners". But the "public works", which meant the new plan for the city, were not to be held up "for an hour or a day" for the sake of Corpo Santo, and the two Irishmen left Oures in sorrow. Some of those who had been present then suggested that they send another petition by different channels to the King, which they did at once: "and in twenty-four hours, by Mardell's information, orders were sent to suspend the work, to make up again what had been demolished, the street to be opened another way, and not to touch our colledge until ground was assigned for us to build a new colledge and until we had made up sufficient accomodations to live therein in a religious manner".

Dreading what might yet happen to them, Brullaughan wrote to Boxadors in Spain in the course of 1762 about "the necessity of sending us more subjects", but when the general replied "after more than a year's delay" he asked for a full account of the temporal *status* of

the college, and said that for his *final* decision on their concerns: "we should wait for his arrival at Rome. A wise resolution indeed, knowing that all correspondence was still prohibited with that court, and that tho' he sent it, perhaps we dare not make use of it. However, he sent none as yet, all which to me is a demonstration he has no love for us, our province, or perhaps the order".

The community of Corpo Santo did, however, send Boxadors a full account of their finances on 21 February 1764, and there still exists a draft of his reply (Valverde, 12 March 1764) which they certainly received, for Brullaughan mentions it himself<sup>38</sup>. Boxadors tore their *relatio* to shreds, pointing out its inconsistencies and telling them of the censures they had incurred. With only four priests in the college, they necessarily fell short of their obligations by 292 Masses each year, but yet continued to accept manual stipends — sometimes as many as 3,000 *per annum* — keeping part of the stipends for themselves and bringing in outsiders to say the same Masses for two-thirds of the original offering. In short, they were trafficking in Masses; it would take them five years to clear their existing obligations; proper Mass-accounts were to be kept at once; and the general demanded to know what precisely the community had done with Lady Stourton's money<sup>39</sup>.

Bernard Brullaughan, though not in the best of health, undertook to reexamine all the accounts and answer the general's questions. Despite his best efforts, Boxadors "could not but see many deficiencies therein which made him threaten us with chastisements from heaven and foretell no good success in our undertaking of rebuilding the college, or avoiding its immediate ruin. His prediction proved to our great grief too true, for the best part of our house is razed to the foundation". That was written in August 1764, so one must retrace one's steps, at least to the preceding March, to follow the events leading to the destruction of the old college. Once again, Brullaughan is our only informant.

On 19 March, "being assured by a friend at court that the collodge was soon to be demolished without any provision made for us", Brull-

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<sup>38</sup> The chief elements of the *status collegii* of 21 Feb. 1764 survive in a later annotated version in O'Kelly's hand in SCAR, No. 22, doc. 28. The draft reply of 12 March is noted above in note 36.

<sup>39</sup> The Stourton money was invested in repairing the cellars of the old college, which were then rented out to merchants as warehouses. But this investment was lost when the college was demolished on 6 July 1764. SCAR, No. 22, doc. 28.





An tAth.

**Seanán Mac Conchradha O.P.**

**– Fr Dónal Crowe O.P. –**

9.10.1918 – 11.10.1994

REQUIESCAT IN PACE



aughan (after three weeks' labour) was ordered by the Count de Oures to "choose a house about S. Paul's or Boa Vista for our community to live in untill the colledge was demolished and had built new accommodations on a spot of ground allotted for that purpose joining to our ancient habitation". After much searching about, a suitable house was found in that area, but the occupant refused to grant vacant possession on the grounds that the house was far too big for four friars and that, in any case, they were well-known smugglers who just wanted a more convenient spot on the Tagus. This calumny "was swallowed with pleasure. The King was informed thereof, and orders past that a house should be taken for us in the extremity of the city. Accordingly, with all secrecy, a house was taken and prepared at the expense of the publick at the Anjos, without chapell, oratory or a place to make one in but a stable".

So great was the secrecy surrounding this move, that Brullaughan himself knew nothing of it until Corpus Christi [21 June] when he heard at second hand "before the procession went out" of the whole Anjos project and "that we were to be translated there the 1st of July". So there were more petitions, pointing out the unsuitability of a site "so far distant, where we could be of no service to our countrymen", and "that it was very hard the King should deprive us of our houses and 600 milreis standing rents, yett refused us a convenient house to practise our functions in according to our institution". Finally the Count de Oures ordered him "to take any house in the whole city that had a chapell and had papers upon".

This we live in now [16 August 1764] was the only one I took them of directly; gave him an account thereof. Yet it was the 28 of June att the Ave Maria's that Mr. Rademaker who lived in said houses, and who would not leave them tho he putt papers upp to gett an abatement of the rent, was notified to quit them the next day, and we notified to be in them the 1st of July without fail. Otherwise we should not complain if the houses were thrown down about our ears... Here then we are since the said day at 12 o'clock, and I never more slept in Corpo Santo, tho' our incredulous chiefs did not come here to sleep till the 4th at night and the 5th at three in the afternoon. That whole part of the colledge by us inhabited was uncovered, and in a few days after entirely razed to the foundation. *Non reliquerunt lapidem super lapidem*. But if we changed our habitation, doe not think we altered our customs. No, my dear friend, we lead the same merry life as before, and never can goe to sleep without a hearty doze of the juice of the greap, tho' some of our heads had been reeling before.

Brullaughan ended this immensely long letter to Charles O'Kelly with an appeal for a new superior. Preferably O'Kelly himself, and if not him then someone well acquainted with Spanish. The new rector would have to bring along two or three students to form the nucleus of a better community. For any student coming alone would soon be corrupted by the bad example of those actually in charge, as had just happened in the case of Thomas Hopkins after his studies at Evora. Hopkins "would hardly take a drop of wine when he came here: is only six weeks in this house and now begins to tope it as well as the best of them". Hard words, but even harder ones have been omitted in this account, and Brullaughan himself was by no means a teetotaller.

VISCOUNT TAAFFE AND EDMUND FITZGERALD, O.P.

Michael Hoare had little if anything to do with Lisbon. It lay outside his jurisdiction and there was no point in his sending students to a ruined college. Corpo Santo, however, left him a little legacy in the person of Edmund Fitzgerald, a young priest who left Lisbon for Dublin in 1754. After three years' work in the metropolis he was elected prior of Sligo (c. 1757-1760) and subsequently appointed prior of Tombeola, a desolate spot far west of Galway, the *ultima Thule* of the province, to which three priests were assigned in 1756 but which the new prior found little to his liking. So Edmund Fitzgerald lingered on in Dublin, paying the occasional visit to his remote convent on the western coast. No doubt he was a popular preacher, well accepted by the Dominicans of Dublin, but he made the mistake of voting against Father Hoare in the provincial election of 1761<sup>40</sup>.

As it so happened, the Discalced Carmelites of Dublin were settling into a new chapel and house in Stephen Street and, wanting priests of their own, invited Fitzgerald to become one of the community. His sermons in English and Irish drew a large congregation to a part of the city hitherto neglected, "at the very extremity of the vast parish" belonging to archbishop Lincoln. On 26 January 1762, the vicar-provincial of the Discalced Carmelites wrote to the Dominican vicar-general in Rome, obtaining permission for him to continue working

<sup>40</sup> Fitzgerald's history is given by Chas. O'Kelly in an undated note (about Christmas 1762) to cardinal Neri Corsini. Also by viscount Nicholas Taaffe in a letter (Dublin, 20 Apr. 1763) to the same. Both documents are in ASV, Fondo Missioni 49. See also Hib. Dom. 249.

with the Carmelites until Villavecchia should decide otherwise<sup>41</sup>. Thus Father Fitzgerald out-flanked his provincial by indirect, but nonetheless effective recourse to higher authority.

Before summer 1762, viscount Nicholas Taaffe, for thirty-three years a general in the service of Austria and a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, came from Silesia to Dublin. Casting about for a suitable chaplain, he asked for and obtained the services of Edmund Fitzgerald. Taaffe, then seventy-six years of age, was born in his mother's home, Crean's Castle in county Sligo, the very county to which his new chaplain seems to have belonged. Taaffe, for all his years, helped to establish the Discalced Carmelites of Dublin in their new home, became very friendly with Thomas Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, and defended his own chaplain to the last. Though any one of these three causes would have sufficed, the three together raised a nest of clerical hornets which he, simple soldier that he was, could scarcely believe. He would have written to the nuncio in Brussels or Vienna, rather than directly to Rome (which he did), but that he was afraid it might hurt "our poor convents, colleges and maybe officers too, if people there knew our disunion at home. We are an unfortunate nation"<sup>42</sup>.

Lord Taaffe's friendship with bishop Burke irritated the archbishop of Dublin, for Thomas Burke was currently engaged in a lawsuit about a parish with one of his own priests (Patrick Mulloy) in Kilkenny, and Mulloy had appealed to archbishop Lincoln his metropolitan. Relations between Ossory and Dublin were very poor indeed. But if Dr. Lincoln was in bad humour with Dr. Burke, and with Taaffe for "intermeddling" in the Kilkenny affair, he was so much annoyed by the success of the chapel in Stephen Street that it was commonly, if untruly, said "he would be glad the chapele in Stephen Street would drop, as it lessens the income of his one grand parish". The Protestant archbishop was more irritated still, since the offending chapel stood on the very same street as his own town-house, and did all he could to pull it down. The influence of viscount Taaffe and the popularity of Father Fitzgerald (in whose favour thirty-five eminent Protestants signed a

<sup>41</sup> 13 Mar. 1762. Villavecchia to Rob. Fitzgerald O.D.C., enclosing the necessary patents for Edm. Fitzgerald. AGOP IV. 231, p. 12.

<sup>42</sup> Dublin, 12 Dec. 1762. Taaffe to Chas. O'Kelly. Original in SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, f. 427. With regard to Taaffe's age, he said himself in a letter (Dublin, 21 Apr. 1763) to bishop Th. Burke that he was then seventy-seven. APF, SOCG 803, f. 193.

petition) kept the chapel open. The case was highly peculiar, for Taaffe was able to show in open court that the convent was not a convent at all <sup>43</sup>!

At the time the chapel in Stephen Street was establishing, I found that Mr. Fitzgerald had more friends than all the Theresians among the Catholics and Protestants, and more activity than they all had; one of them being lame, otherwise a clever man, one deaf and another very sickly. Further, the Grand Jury would make it to be a convent. I gave my word and honour to the Grand Jury, the Lords Justices and several others, that it was not a convent, but composed of three different Orders.

Michael Hoare assured Taaffe and others in July 1762 that he would leave Edmund Fitzgerald where he was: "having nothing against him". But in the very same month the provincial wrote to Rome that Fitzgerald would have to leave Dublin because of his bad moral character <sup>44</sup>. Rome asked for more precise details before reaching a decision, but Father Hoare seems not to have waited even for an answer to his first letter. Wishing to please archbishop Lincoln, he asked him to withdraw Fitzgerald's faculties, which Lincoln immediately did, leaving the Carmelites without their preacher and viscount Taaffe without a chaplain for his family. For all Lincoln's animosity towards friars, he was friendly with John Fottrell of Dublin, a former provincial, and Fottrell in turn (or so Taaffe said) had "a vast deal" of influence over Father Hoare.

The archbishop himself was not to blame. He never accused Fitzgerald of any crime, but simply took away his faculties at the request of his immediate superior. Dr. Lincoln did, however, treat viscount Taaffe very roughly, telling him to mind his own business and to stop meddling in church affairs. "I find there is no calming him", said Taaffe, even when he had offered to ask the archbishop's pardon on his knees if that were necessary to restore peace.

Father Hoare's position is less clear, if not actually discreditable. He knew, before bringing any accusation forward, that Fitzgerald held his assignation to Stephen Street from the vicar-general of the order. When he did accuse Fitzgerald in a letter to Villavecchia, he deprived the priest of faculties by going to the archbishop before the vicar-general

<sup>43</sup> See the letter of 12 Dec. 1762 noted in note 42.

<sup>44</sup> 21 Aug. 1762. Villavecchia to Hoare. AGOP IV, 231, p. 14.

could possibly have answered. And even when the accusations were shown to be false, he kept up his campaign by complaining of Fitzgerald in letters to Rome until the very end of his provincialate.

There were three accusations in fact: accusations disproved and shown to be calumnies before summer 1762. Firstly, that Fitzgerald had assisted at a clandestine marriage. Hoare was duly introduced to the Protestant minister who had performed the ceremony. Secondly, that while prior of Sligo, Fitzgerald had sold a silver vase without the consent of the community. Fitzgerald promptly produced a document signed by the Sligo community declaring their agreement that the vase (probably a chalice) should be sold to pay a debt. Finally, that he had sought employment with lay people simply to stay in Dublin, whereas in fact it was viscount Taafe who had approached Fitzgerald and not *vice versa*. If Fitzgerald had looked anywhere for support, it was to his superior in Rome and to the Dominican bishop of Ossory.

Availing of the services of Charles O'Kelly, Taafe asked cardinal Corsini to intervene with the archbishop so that his personal chaplain might again be permitted to preach and hear confessions. The matter dragged on until June 1763. Corsini then approached Propaganda Fide only to be told that Dr. Lincoln "had reached the end of his days" and that there was no point in writing to him at all. That was on 8 June, just two weeks before archbishop Lincoln died on the 21st of the month<sup>45</sup>. He was succeeded by Patrick Fitzsimons, dean of the archdiocese, on the postulation of the chapter<sup>46</sup>.

Edmund Fitzgerald had not been idle in the meanwhile, for he tackled the root of the problem by obtaining two documents from Villa-vecchia on 2 April 1763: acceptance of his free resignation of the priorship of Tombeola and an assignation to the Dominican convent of Dublin. Once Boxadors returned to Rome, three more complaints were sent to him from Dublin in September 1764. There was a characteristically generic one from Michael Hoare, another equally vague from Thomas Nugent O.D.C., prior of Dublin, who claimed that Fitzgerald was annoying his community, and a third from Bernard Feely O. Carm., also of Dublin, who alleged that Fitzgerald refused to repay

<sup>45</sup> There are two notes of this date, one by Corsini and the other an answer from a Propaganda official, in ASV, Fondo Missioni 49.

<sup>46</sup> There is a copy of this postulation (Dublin, 2 July 1763) at Windsor, Stuart Papers, vol. 417, no. 166. The original postulation went to cardinal York. Fitzsimon's brief of appointment (30 Sept. 1763) is in APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 172-74.



him a small debt of some years standing. Writing yet again, on 9 January 1765, the provincial enclosed some statements by outsiders to back up his earlier complaints about Fitzgerald. Boxadors dismissed both them and him with a lecture on how religious superiors ought to behave towards their subjects<sup>47</sup>.

Testimonia exterorum, quae nuper attulisti contra P. Edmundum Fitzgerald omnia omnino robore destituta invenimus. Nos vero, etsi laturi non sumus, subditos impune violare legitimam reverentiam superioribus debitam, attamen superiores ipsos iuste et paterne agere, non ex arbitrio et ex passione, leviter atque imprudenter laqueos fratribus nectere, et incertis suspicionibus duci.

#### THE NOVITIATE QUESTION, 1760-1764

The prohibition of novitiates in Ireland continued to tell against the regular clergy throughout Father Hoare's provincialate. The number of priests in the province constantly fell, while communities grew smaller if they did not totally disappear. There was little either he or the provincial chapter could do about the problem, save to create a fund for the transport and maintenance of novices abroad. Such an idea seems never to have crossed their minds, or if it did was judged economically impossible. In any case, the provincial's hands were tied by higher authority. Two successive archbishops of Dublin, Lincoln and Fitzsimons, were opposed to novitiates in Ireland. So too was Propaganda Fide which had issued the prohibition in the first place. Villavecchia, vicar-general of the order, even when Michael Hoare brought the problem to his notice, remarked how pleased he was at the prospect of having a few good Irish subjects rather than many useless ones, insisted that the suspension of Propaganda's decree was "scarcely to be thought of", and said that the whole question might confidently be left to the providence of God<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> AGOP IV. 231, pp. 15, 33, 34, 36. The two documents for Edm. Fitzgerald were sent to Ter. O'Reilly, prior of Dublin. Viscount Taaffe was still at Dublin in summer 1764 but soon returned to Silesia. His book, *Observations on Affairs in Ireland*, was published at Dublin and London in 1766. Fitzgerald remained in Dublin, the trusted agent of bishop Burke of Ossory, until the early 1770s. The original parchment (Rome, 14 Mar. 1772) of his appointment as notary apostolic by Clement XIV is now in TA, Letters, under date.

<sup>48</sup> 30 Oct. 1762. Villavecchia to Hoare, acknowledging report of his first visitation. AGOP IV. 231, p. 14. The v. g. did, however, praise Hoare for strictly applying the law with respect to novices.

Others, however, did not think of providence as something to be waited for in calm passivity. Thomas Burke, bishop of Ossory, for instance, made a formal request for the reopening of novitiates on the very last day of 1760. His petition to the cardinals bore also the signature of his good friend Richard Walsh, bishop of Cork, whom the chapter of 1761 was to name *conservator privilegiorum* for Munster in preference to the archbishop of Cashel. The document was later signed (16 February 1761) by another friend, bishop Philip Phillipps of Killala, and then sent to Rome where Charles O'Kelly was to provide whatever other details the cardinals required. Propaganda managed the business quite suavely by saying that the Congregation could not change the decree without a special directive from the new pope, Clement XIII. So the secretary, after a private audience on 9 August 1761, came happily back with the papal command: "the decrees of Benedict XIV of happy memory are to be faithfully observed and the regular clergy to rest content with them".

So matters stood until both archbishop Lincoln of Dublin and cardinal Spinelli, prefect of Propaganda, died in 1763. Both were unsympathetic towards the friars of Ireland. Neither would have yielded an inch on the novitiate question. With their departure from the scene, Charles O'Kelly set out to find whether he might not have better fortune with their successors: archbishop Patrick Fitzsimons and cardinal Giuseppe Castelli. His strategy was to win the support of the Irish hierarchy first, and he began at the top with a letter of 3 March 1764 to Dr. Fitzsimons. By reputation Fitzsimons was one of the *antimonicisti*, but apart from being primate of Ireland he was also on good terms with Thomas Burke of Ossory, though the prolongation of the Kilkenny dispute was to cool that friendship fairly soon. O'Kelly devoted most of his letter to the "alarming decline" of the church in Ireland<sup>49</sup>.

I am greatly mistaken or the decrees of Propaganda of the year 1751 forbidding bishops to ordain but a certain number, and regular superiors to receive novices within the kingdom, brings on in a great measure this visible decrement of religion, especially in country places in many of which, by what is wrote to me even by bishops, there is so great a scarcity of both priests and friars that many poor people die without the help of a clergyman and even without the sacraments,

<sup>49</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland: a study of the novitiate question in the 18th century*, Louvain 1972, 262-63, 271-74.

while on the other hand the parish priests in sickness or in old age can hardly get a coadjutor, or the bishop a proper subject to replace them after death.

In reality such is the remonstrance of some bishops that recur to this court for a dispensation for regulars to administer as parish priests absolutely. Again the regular superiors, having but few subjects whose help they often want to support their little convents, are destroyed when the bishops (whom they cannot deny) call these subjects to the care of souls. This want of ministers is not visible in cities and large towns wherein there will never be a scarcity of priests or friars while they can be had in the kingdom. But it must be otherwise in the poorer parts of the country while the very natives thereof, the only I may say fit for serving therein, have it not in their power to answer their call to the priesthood either as seculars or regulars, and that from a double obstacle. First the aforesaid decrees of the Propaganda, and again a moral impossibility of coming abroad as to those who depend on their daily Mass, or from the uncertainty of being admitted to profession as to those who would be received in foreign convents, national or not.

This as I apprehend, being the dismal state of the mission in many parts of the kingdom... is it not congruent, nay and necessary, that these respectable presidents conspire, and animated with zeal worthy of prelates, exert themselves to eradicate as much as possible a weed so very destructive of the vineyard of the Lord? This cannot be otherwise effected than by a mitigation of the already mentioned decrees which, if they will have sued for, will not, no nor cannot, be reasonably refused, while such measures may be taken, and such conditions enjoined as will secure the grace from all abuses.

In the event, archbishop Fitzsimons stood by the policy of his predecessor Lincoln, at least with respect to novitiates, but cardinal Castelli (who was to rule Propaganda until 1780) eventually forged a compromise with the Irish regular clergy, though Father Hoare had long ceased to be provincial before the final agreement was hammered out in 1774. In the meanwhile, all the provincial could do was to send such few postulants as offered themselves either to Rome or Louvain. Holy Cross, Louvain, being the closer to Ireland, was correspondingly less costly to reach, while its climate was also more healthy, more conducive to study than that of Rome. The three factors (cost, climate, health) combined to make Holy Cross the larger of the two, while the loss of Lisbon directed still more students to Flanders than to Italy.

## HOLY CROSS, LOUVAIN, 1761-1765

Whether because cardinal Spinelli had little love for friars, or because Propaganda Fide was genuinely short of funds, the congregation made some difficulty about renewing its annual subsidy to Holy Cross in 1761. Having heard, besides, that the college had acquired considerable property since the first granting of the subsidy in 1654, the cardinal prefect wrote for more definite information to the nuncio in Brussels. The nuncio put himself to some trouble, not only by enquiring of outsiders but even by examining the college accounts. He found that the annual income of the college, allowing for maintenance and the payment of various taxes, came to about 250 scudi. Many of their regular sources of income were rather a burden than a help, since they demanded the celebration of founded Masses. Certainly, he wrote, the college would never have had enough money to survive but for the generosity of several bishops who allowed the community to quest in their dioceses from time to time. This was all the more necessary in that there were thirty-six at Holy Cross, of whom twenty-six (teachers and students) were destined for the mission, whereas there had normally been only eight or nine during the previous century. The nuncio, Molinari, was convinced that they deserved the subsidy and only with difficulty could survive without it <sup>50</sup>.

Despite this favourable reply, Propaganda decided to discontinue its annual subsidy of 120 scudi on the grounds that Ireland was already costing the congregation too much and that the money (sufficient, be it noted, to support only two students) was more urgently needed in Albania, Macedonia and Aleppo. Granted, Propaganda was spending 1,000 scudi a year for schools in Ireland; it maintained four Irish seminarists at the Collegio Urbano; there were also annual subsidies of 100 scudi (since 1759) to the Irish college of Douai and 240 scudi (since 1628) for the Irish Pastoral College at Louvain itself. But the prefect, cardinal Spinelli, might surely have refrained from instructing the nuncio in Brussels to suggest to the prior of Holy Cross: "that if his income does not suffice to maintain all the religious actually in the house, he is still in a position to reduce their number so that income will match expenditure" <sup>51</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Brussels, 26 May 1761, Molinari to Spinelli. APF, SOCG 789, ff. 526-27. Also APF, Lettere 198, ff. 105, 173.

<sup>51</sup> Rome, 8 Aug. 1761, Spinelli to Molinari. APF, Lettere 198, ff. 274-75.

Having lived from hand to mouth at Louvain for much more than a century, the community was not unduly dismayed by Propaganda's decision. John O'Daly, who was both prior and first regent of Holy Cross, went carefully through all their accounts from 1627 to show just what had happened down the years to their various pensions, benefactions and founded Masses. He was thus able to prove that their income had increased by very little, and that they would be hopelessly in debt had they not been advised to quest by a former internuncio at Brussels: none other than "Giuseppe Spinelli, archbishop of Corinth, now a cardinal of the Holy Roman Church"<sup>52</sup>. This quest, an annual affair, involved practically the whole community during November and December of each year and effectively replaced their summer holidays. For while the University broke up in summer, classes at Holy Cross continued until the end of the harvest when both students and teachers might take to the roads at the end of October with higher hopes of success. The Austrian Netherlands were divided in two for the purpose, so that the quest went on in the dioceses of Malines, Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges and Namur every second year, leaving Liège, Cambrai, Tournai and Ypres to be visited in the years which intervened. Father O'Daly paid special tribute to one of their laybrothers from Holland, Albert Lynheer, who from 1734 had occasionally quested with great success in his own country but who by now (1762) was beginning to decline in health. This fine report was then presented to the rector of the university who came on visitation to Holy Cross and personally checked the report against the accounts, leaving the community with a glowing testimonial both to their high qualities and financial need<sup>53</sup>.

Yielding to the prevailing wind, Holy Cross did not apply again to Propaganda for a renewal of the famous subsidy until shortly after the death of cardinal Spinelli in April 1763. Their case came up at a general congregation or meeting of the cardinals on 29 August following. A ten-page memorial presented for the occasion rehearsed the entire history of the subsidy since the Dominicans first asked for it in 1648, before explaining the various reasons which made it inadvisable to

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The subsidy was discontinued at the general congregation of 3 Aug. 1761, no. 30. APF, Acta 131 (1761), ff. 232-34; SOCG 789, 524-31.

<sup>52</sup> This most interesting report by O'Daly, dated 16 Apr. 1762, was prepared for the rector of the university and has been printed in Hib. Dom. Suppl. 856-58. The rector was probably acting on behalf of the nuncio at Brussels.

<sup>53</sup> On 16 Apr. 1762. Ibidem. The sealed original is in ASV, Fondo Missioni 60.



reduce the number of students<sup>54</sup>. They could not send sufficient missionaries to Ireland, much less to England, Scotland and America, as they had done in the past. Of the six Irish Dominicans then in America (one presumes they meant the West Indies) no less than three were products of Holy Cross. A more telling point was that Propaganda's own decree made it essential that the Irish should have a novitiate on the continent, not to speak of a house for laybrothers, students and other religious to teach them. Louvain's primacy in this field was now more obvious than ever, since Lisbon had been destroyed and would not be repaired for many years to come. In support of their petition they produced the testimonial mentioned above from the rector of the university. But there was also a set of "reflections" on the memorial which Charles O'Kelly submitted on their behalf.

The nine points contained in these reflections add little to what we know of the situation. With respect to the size of the community, there were seven lectors and students from each of the four Irish nations (twenty-eight all told) while the laybrothers were either Flemish or Dutch. Holy Cross was far from being the least important of the many seminaries which alone kept Ireland Catholic, while "on the mission" there were a million and a half Catholics served by 1,100 diocesan priests and 450 regulars, "if in fact there are so many". Of the other points — most of which dwelt on the achievements of the college — only one is particularly interesting: namely that some alumni of Holy Cross had written books. What books these were, or who the authors, it would be hard to say, unless one were to find the letter (probably of 1757) in which cardinal d'Alsace, archbishop of Malines, mentioned the "unwearying and fruitful literary work" of the Louvain community when recommending them to cardinal Spinelli<sup>55</sup>.

This time their appeal was heard and the subsidy renewed, but only under a condition they were not anxious to accept: the four prospective missionaries in receipt of the subsidy would first have to swear their willingness to serve the mission in England, Scotland and Ireland in complete obedience to the directions of Propaganda Fide. The de-

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<sup>54</sup> APF, Acta 133, ff. 687-94; SOCG 801, ff. 277-84. The now misplaced memorial is in ASV, Fondo Missioni 60.

<sup>55</sup> Hib. Dom. Suppl. 856. Even in 1763, this letter could not be found in the archives of Propaganda. APF, Acta 133, f. 687 ff. The "reflections" are in ASV, Fondo Missioni 60, as are also three pages by cardinal Corsini making various points in favour of Holy Cross and answering possible objections.

cision might have been worse, for cardinal Galli and the secretary of Propaganda wished to include America within the formula of the oath, arguing that since the community of Holy Cross made so much of their role in the evangelization of the New World, they could hardly complain should they be sent there <sup>56</sup>. That was in August 1763, and no more is heard of this subsidy, nor even of the oath, until 23 February 1765 when the master general, Boxadors, absolutely forbade his subjects at Holy Cross to take it <sup>57</sup>.

To judge from the curial registers, Michael Hoare had little effective control over the affairs of Holy Cross and does not seem to have gone there on visitation as he was entitled to do. The appointment of teachers was firmly in the general's hands, to such an extent that the provincial was hauled over the coals for assigning one of them (Michael Flemming) to the convent of Trim <sup>58</sup>. Father Hoare's jurisdiction was invoked only in one unusual case concerning a prioral election. Holy Cross elected Eugene MacCrohan of Lisbon on 10 March 1763, and when MacCrohan declined to accept on 17 May, the Louvain vocals *pro hac vice tantum* renounced their active voice and asked the provincial to provide them with a prior. Treading warily, Hoare obtained the permission of the vicar-general before naming John Antoninus O'Dwyer, already regent and subprior, to the vacant priorship <sup>59</sup>.

O'Dwyer cannot have been a popular choice, for the community denounced him to the general almost within a year of his appointment. The fact that he was both prior and regent probably encouraged him to commit that prioral sin for which there is no forgiveness: he ignored the house-council. Strictly speaking, this referred to some building and repairs he had carried out, as also to heavy expenses incurred "with outsiders", perhaps while entertaining them. But he had also been indiscreet in speaking outside the house of conventual affairs (even of the faults of individuals), besides granting dispensations which did nothing to improve the quality of studies at Holy Cross. For all this he was duly reprimanded by Boxadors, but the master general was

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<sup>56</sup> Dalla Propaganda, 30 Aug. 1763. Unsigned note from secretary to prefect. ASV, Fondo Missioni 57. Galli was ponens, or "exponent" of the case at the meeting. The secretary (from Sept. 1759 to Oct. 1770) was Mario Marefoschi, no great friend of friars.

<sup>57</sup> AGOP IV. 231, pp. 35-36.

<sup>58</sup> 22 Sept. 1764. Boxadors to Hoare. Ibidem, p. 33.

<sup>59</sup> AGOP IV. 231, pp. 15, 19 and loose fascicule tipped in at p. 20.

no less firm with O'Dwyer's accusers whom he told to treat their prior with respect. Shortly afterwards, the community had occasion to petition the general on another subject, but unwisely neglected to ask their prior-regent to add his signature to theirs. What they wanted was that George Plunkett should teach philosophy at Louvain rather than go to Rome as the master general had commanded. Did they really think, asked Boxadors, that their own religious superiors were in fact their subjects<sup>60</sup>?

#### THE MISSION TO ST. CROIX, 1762-1765

Dominic Allen and Hyacinth Kennedy, the pioneers of this infant mission in the Danish West Indies, were already dead of fever before Father Hoare had been five months in office<sup>61</sup>. Their places were taken by two other missionaries from Lisbon: Terence MacDonnell, already on the spot, and Thomas Devenish who came over from St. Eustatius as soon as he heard of Kennedy's death (24 November 1761).

The whole mission had been the brainchild of an Irish planter, Nicholas Tuite, who undertook "to build a house, with an estate and revenues, for Dominicans of the province of Ireland, but it was also understood that two missionaries would suffice and events were to show that not even two would find adequate support. So the arrival of Father Devenish on St. Croix was not solely an act of charity but part of the contract with Mr. Tuite. MacDonnell, although "despaired of by the doctors", survived the epidemic which brought Kennedy to the grave, but in so weak a condition that he had to convalesce for a year on St. Eustatius. Fortunately, another member of the province, James Flynn, arrived quite by accident to collect the effects of a deceased brother and Devenish (knowing his "good qualities", since they had once studied together at Louvain) held on to him for service on St. Croix. One should also mention Patrick Dalton (from SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome) who first got faculties for Nevis and St. Kitt's in February 1761, but went from there to St. Eustatius and from St. Eustatius to join two senior confrères, Dominic Lynch and Nicholas Crump, on Montserrat<sup>62</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 35-37.

<sup>61</sup> For the foundation of the mission and a general bibliography, see above, pp. 288-291.

<sup>62</sup> See below, p. 617. Dalton was on Nevis on 19 Dec. 1762 when he asked Propaganda for faculties for St. Eustatius, a Dutch island. APF, Udienze 9, ff. 423-424. Devenish frequently criticized him for not associating with his brethren. Arch. Hib., 25 (1962) 105, 114, 118, he was still on Montserrat in June 1769. *Ibidem*, p. 122.

Thus, although one cannot be absolutely sure, Devenish and Flynn were the only priests on the island for most of 1762. Thomas Devenish, as was his nature, led the way, throwing himself heart and soul into the enterprise. His first step was to "keep regular parochial books and a vestiary book where the acts of our monthly meetings are recorded" and also to arrange for the priests to pool and equally share their income. Writing to his friend and Roman agent, Charles O'Kelly, on 25 May 1762, he acknowledged that they were working "on a sandy foundation", meaning that the mission was threatened by factions within the Catholic community, and unveiled his plan for surmounting the difficulty<sup>63</sup>.

The Creols are whimsical and our community in general is much involved, so that we are surrounded with party discontents and jealousies. I pushed to get a settlement independent for us and as they are very pleased with me they granted it and each gave his instrument or obligation, which amounts to £ 3,000 currency to get us our living provided we would live in community and be governed by a common superior to avoid future dissensions, and to that purpose have made a petition unanimously, *mirabile dictu*, to your court for that purpose, to which end I beg your cooperation.

Devenish also wanted to be able to administer the sacrament of confirmation, "for there were never any in these islands confirmed" and some Catholics were determined to go if necessary to the Danish parson to get it. Then there was the problem of vagabond priests, mostly Spanish, one of whom lodged and even said Mass in a public tavern in what is now called Christiansted, the only town then on the island. The same letter referred to Mr. Tuite's private chaplain, who was to have "limited privileges" lest the Catholics should be drawn to Mr. Tuite's estate to the detriment of the church in town. One presumes that either Devenish or Flynn was the chaplain referred to, and that when Tuite applied four months earlier for the services of Luke O'Reilly of the diocese of Meath, he did so from London without Devenish knowing anything about it<sup>64</sup>.

<sup>63</sup> This undated petition is printed in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 110-11. It asked for the appointment of a Dominican as "triennial vicar" and definitely implied that the only priests on St. Croix were of the Order.

<sup>64</sup> London, 24 Jan. 1762. Tuite to Propaganda. Signed also by Richard Chal-

The missionaries never did get permission to confirm, nor did the Holy See entrust the island to the Dominican order, but at least Villavecchia, the vicar-general in Rome, appointed Devenish superior over his confrères on St. Croix "with all the authority usually enjoyed by conventual priors and vicars of nations". This authority was to last for four years, after which Devenish would act as pro-vicar until further arrangements were made. The same document authorized him to appoint a pro-vicar of his own should he have to leave the island or feel his death approaching, as also power to chase away any other Dominicans coming to the Danish islands without proper licence<sup>65</sup>.

By December 1762 the "pretty estate" of eighty acres was prospering daily with the help of slave labour and Devenish hoped that within two years it would be worth a thousand *per annum*. He wanted another Irish Dominican to join them, provided he was of good moral character, disinterested, well endowed with the social graces on which the new superior so prided himself. "Above all, his tongue must taste as little as possible of Irish brine". However, perhaps in the same month, several of the planters refused to honour their bonds, claiming "they had not been consulted at the time of purchase". Devenish, impetuous as always, quitted St. Croix, dropped in to see Terence MacDonnell on St. Eustatius, prevailed on him to look after the estate, and then went off in disgust to Grenada which the British fleet had recently prized from the French.

Down at Grenada, Devenish found yet another Irish Dominican, James MacNamara, who had long been working there with the French Dominicans of Toulouse. Taking advantage of the fact that the French clergy had been forced to leave, the vicar of St. Croix installed himself as parish priest of Sauterre and even envisaged the appropriation of several parishes on Grenada: "to make a little bread here for some honest young men of our province". Hardly had he set this plan in motion when he heard of the death of James Flynn (24 February 1763)

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lenor, vicar-apostolic. APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 46. Tuite said that two Dominicans were not sufficient and, invoking his right of patronage, presented O'Reilly "now bursar at the Irish College, Lille" for faculties as a missionary apostolic, promising to pay him fifty pounds a year. The affair moved slowly, for it was only on 13 July 1762 that the nuncio in Brussels sent information on O'Reilly to Propaganda. APF, SC America Antille 2, f. 12.

<sup>65</sup> 20 Apr. 1763. Villavecchia to Devenish. Full copies of the texts in AGOP IV, 231, pp. 16-17. He was also sent faculties for James Flynn on 27 April. *Ibidem*, p. 17.



on St. Croix and returned to the island at once. Only then did he learn that Nicholas Tuite had brought out an Irish secular priest. For Devenish it was the last straw: "a poor reward for three lives out of five".

My fatigues and labours are frustrated, my tender settlement blasted, my views foiled. Was it for this after managing the community into a desire for so happy a foundation I got their unanimous petition, *mirabile dictu*, to have that mission appropriated to the order. I laboured, I succeeded, I gained the affection and confidence of the people... I sowed seed that one day would afford a plentiful crop to our tottering province. But I fear the hand of God is not for us since he permits our enemy to attack us from behind to be sacrificed as the Irish troops at Aughrim on their rear. What has destroyed Montserrat, was it not this mixture? Had they not leave to buy and build, but a mothly clergy thought not of establishing Montserrat but rather of enriching themselves... I'll say with the Scot, the devil set his foot after them.

These final lines were an attack on old Dominic Lynch, Nicholas Crump and Patrick Dalton. Lynch, a Galwayman, was said to be worth a few thousand pounds. Devenish often criticized Dalton, the youngest of the three, as one who remained "alone upon the old establishment of doing for himself" and who never associated "with his brotherhood". All three represented the "private life", natural enough for missionaries who would have to fend for themselves in sickness or old age, but that principle was to develop ever more strongly in the "poor establishments" of the "tottering province" in Ireland itself, and Thomas Devenish is perhaps our first critic of the process. Certainly he was highly conscious of the province as a unit within which all worked for the common good, and in this respect thought the formation given at Louvain far preferable to the training of students at Lisbon. That is why he praised Father MacNamara of Grenada who "still thinks of the common interest to be promoted by just and honourable means".

So, with the arrival of a secular priest on St. Croix, Devenish resolved to let Tuite "take his own way and destroy the bauble he began". As for himself, he went straight back to Grenada to plunge anew into his negotiations with the English administration there. The estates formerly the property of French religious were to be applied to parishes, of which Devenish and MacNamara would be superiors. All this was intended to benefit Corpo Santo "and the other poor establishments at home". There is no evidence that these high-flown projects ever

came to anything. Rather the contrary, for Devenish (in March 1765), having set off for Philadelphia, took sick at Puerto Rico and then decided to "pass the small rest" of his days on St. Croix! Terence MacDonnell, of course, had "hurt the progress of our settlement very much" in his absence. And it was now more obvious than ever that "the mixing us with seculars must necessarily divide our councils" unless Devenish were named prefect apostolic! For this latter favour, which he imagined a mere formality, he sent Charles O'Kelly forty pounds. One cannot help feeling that Father Devenish had a mind like a wind-mill, but at least he attempted to build small chapels about the island so as to end the custom of baptizing and saying Mass in parlours or bedrooms.

I was for some time resolved to force our community to build, in proper distances, small chapels for the convenience of the poor inhabitants who can't afford carriages to come to town, and are either hindered or ashamed to intrude on private houses. Likewise... I thought it time... to transport the administration of the holy sacrament of baptism from a lady's bedchamber to a humble place of divine worship, and the holy sacrifice of the Mass from the tables of drunkenness and chambers hung with naked Venus's and sea-nymphs bathing in crystal springs, to altars whose poverty emblemed sobriety and chapels hung with saints' pictures whose severe countenances dumbly preached against all vice.

It is only right to let Terence MacDonnell have the last word, since he had been working away on St. Croix before Devenish ever saw the island, and had stayed on there for two years after Flynn died, while his vicar wandered about the Caribbean. "I can't help", wrote MacDonald, "being so candid as to say that if my superior was a little more steadfast it is probable that matters would answer somewhat better".

#### SS. SIXTUS AND CLEMENT, 1761-1765

A little study of the registers of the college in Rome shows that while there were eighteen in community at the beginning of this provincialate, there were only fourteen at the end of it: a drop explained by the death or departure of three foreign laybrothers, and by the fact that the number of novices dropped from one to none. The number of priests practically equalled that of the five or six students whom they taught. The novitiate year, to which they applied the correct and charming phrase *ad approbationem reciprocam*, was followed by

three years of philosophy and three of theology. Only four novices received the habit in these twin-convents between 1728 and 1750, but the rate of admission greatly increased once the novitiates in Ireland were closed <sup>66</sup>. Rome could not rival Louvain, but whereas it had only one novice in 1761, there were two in 1762, three in 1763, two again in 1764 and one in January 1765. The last three, largely for economic reasons, were sent either to the Minerva in Rome itself or to La Quercia in Viterbo, both convents of the Roman province. Certainly two, if not all the students and novices, came to Rome with patents from Father Hoare and there is no indication in the accounts that any of them paid a pension to the convent. On the other hand, at least one student loaned the house a small sum of money! Here, as in Ireland too, each member of the community was entitled to his own *depositum* for private use, though such money was normally lodged with the bursar.

Prioral elections were even more difficult in Rome than elsewhere within the province. The prior of SS. Sixtus and Clement had to be a "schoolman", one who had already taught, within easy reach (to avoid travelling expenses), and above all had to belong to the *natio* or province whose turn it was to occupy the post. When John O'Neill went out of office he was succeeded quite smoothly on 14 November 1760 by Patrick Kirwan, a Connachtman already on the teaching staff of the convent. Although Kirwan was made "first regent" in September 1761, he was allowed by special dispensation to keep his priorship, just as had been done at Louvain in the case of John O'Dwyer. Combination of the two offices was a way of saving money and men. All went well at Rome until November 1763 when Father Kirwan reached the end of his three-year term. On 28 November the seven vocals unanimously elected Thomas Luke Netterville, under the false impression that the *alternativa* belonged, as Netterville did, to the province of Ulster. Netterville turned down the offer in a letter from Dublin and Villavecchia accepted his refusal on 11 February 1764.

In the meantime, three of the vocals (Patrick Kirwan, Michael Brennan, and John T. Troy) had come to the conclusion that the *alternativa* belonged in fact to Leinster and set their sights on John O'Daly, a former prior and regent at Louvain. Although they were certain

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<sup>66</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, Louvain 1972, 247. H. Fenning, *The Book of Receptions and Professions of SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome, 1676-1792*, in *Coll. Hib.* 14 (1971) 13-15; and also *The Vestibule-Book of the Irish Dominicans in Rome, 1727-1796*, in *Coll. Hib.* 10 (1967) 60-71.

that O'Daly was a Leinsterman, the other vocals were not, so the three just named obtained a dispensation *ad cautelam* from the *alternativa* on 13 February, just one day before the second election was to take place. Due to the death of Barnaby Mangan on 15 December, there were now only six vocals, and what was to have been an election on 14 February proved a total fiasco. No sooner had the meeting started than a row broke out between the three who held for Leinster and the others (John Murphy, Dominic Colgan and Denis MacGrath) who insisted it was Ulster's turn. When, after a while, all agreed to leave the whole question to the vicar-general, Michael Brennan produced Villavecchia's dispensation of the day before. Without letting the document be read aloud, or even reading it themselves, both Murphy and Colgan denounced the paper as obreptitious and subreptitious. MacGrath simply stated, in all truth, that the dispensation had been requested behind the backs of half the voters. And so, as Troy wrote in the council-book: *re infecta, omnes e capitulo discessere* <sup>67</sup>.

Villavecchia revoked his dispensation, seeing how badly some of the vocals had misinterpreted it. All he wanted was to maintain the peace of the convent and the complete liberty of the voters. They should now proceed to another election, but on condition that their election would be void unless they came up with a prior for whom no dispensation would be required. One day later, on 17 February 1764, this second election was held. Three voted for O'Daly of Leinster, three for Bernard Brullaughan of Ulster, while all six (realizing just what a mess they had made of the election) appealed to the vicar-general to tell them what the actual state of the *alternativa* really was. Villavecchia refused. He would settle all doubts once they had elected a prior, and if they failed to do so within a month, he might find himself obliged to employ measures little to their liking.

A further election on 23 February, though peculiar in form, was nonetheless successful. Three, as before, voted for O'Daly of Naas, whom they believed to be at Paris. The other three of the "Ulster block" renounced their votes. The scrutiny was sent to Villavecchia who confirmed the election on 5 March and at long last (in a letter of the following day) clarified the whole basic question of the *alterna-*

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<sup>67</sup> SCAR, No. 57. House-council book (1769-97), pp. 45-50. There are other details in AGOP IV, 231, pp. 24-25. Those who favoured O'Daly thought he was at Paris. They had also studied the archives of the house and of the order to establish to what *natio* the priorship belonged.

*tiva*. The proper order to be followed was Munster, Connacht, Leinster, Ulster. If this had been forgotten it was because the masters general, from 1740 to 1757, had always dispensed from the *alternativa* in prioral elections at SS. Sixtus and Clement, but such dispensations did not destroy the basic right of the four provinces to follow each other in proper sequence. Thus John O'Neill of Munster, elected in 1757, regained for Munster what it had been entitled to from 1740; and O'Neill was followed by Kirwan of Connacht without dispensation. Therefore it was now Leinster's turn and John O'Daly was the man. Or rather he would have been the man, for he wrote from Dublin on 27 March 1764 courteously refusing the priorship as Netterville had done before him.

Faced by two refusals and the looming prospect of a third, the brethren in Rome finally came to terms among themselves, deciding to vote for Patrick Kirwan, the out-going prior, again. The two necessary dispensations — from the *alternativa* and the interstices — were first obtained, and Father Kirwan was duly reelected prior on 11 May 1764. Only Dominic Colgan, the old Ulster missionary, held out to the end by renouncing his vote<sup>68</sup>. From first to last, the whole election had taken five months.

The account-books of the convent reveal signs of financial distress towards the end of this period. Like the house in Lisbon, they depended much on the sale of wine from their vineyard "del Torione" outside the Porta Maggiore of the old city. In September 1764 they added to this property by buying an adjoining vineyard for 1,000 scudi, an enormous sum just received from the priests of S. Francesca Romana in repayment of an earlier loan<sup>69</sup>. And yet in the following April the prior spoke to the house council about the "calamitous" situation of the community and even asked their permission to sell four chalices<sup>70</sup>. Like Lisbon again, they were caught in the toils of perpetual Masses which in certain circumstances it was a financial loss to celebrate. Both problems, of Masses and vineyards, became acute shortly before the

<sup>68</sup> House-council book, pp. 50-59. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 25-30. At one stage in this long election, Colgan was encouraged to believe that he might be elected himself. St. Sixtus, 27 Feb. 1764. Ml. Brennan, Pat. Kirwan and J. T. Troy to Villavecchia. A copy. SCAR, Codex V, doc. 64.

<sup>69</sup> House-council book, p. 62.

<sup>70</sup> Ibidem, p. 66. These were chalices of which the community received one every four years from the corporation of the city.



provincial chapter of 1765, so that the community drew up two documents: the first an appeal to the chapter, and the second a letter to the man they already knew would succeed Father Hoare. Both were dated 25 May 1765<sup>71</sup>.

In essence, their appeal to the chapter was a request that the houses in Ireland should take on the annual burden of Masses which the convent could no longer bear: 264 a year for which the stipends were absolutely minimal. They enclosed their request in the following letter to Thomas Luke Netterville.

Reverend Dear Sir,

As we flatter ourselves with the pleasing prospect of your succeeding Mr. Hoare, we think it incumbent on us to trouble you herewith, praying your and your good brother's [John Francis] assistance in obtaining for us what we so reasonably demand in the annexed remonstrance. We think it needless to enumerate the many hardships which have determined us to become your petitioners, as your brother and others have been partly informed by some of us. Wherefore we shall only mention the really tormenting appearance there is, of our remaining in our distressed situation longer than we imagined, and that on account of our vineyards which have been blasted to such a degree on the 12 and 13th *ultimo* as to deprive us of any hopes of making near as much wine as is necessary for our home consumption. A circumstance truly interesting, when we consider that no inconsiderable part of our income arose from the sale of wine.

Upon the whole, as there are none better acquainted with our situation, or more firmly attached to St. Clements than you and your brother, we have reason to think your united efforts to promote its interest will be conformable to our desire, and of consequence hope they will be attended with a favourable issue. If this latter should not be the case, assure yourself of our unalterable resolution to persevere in the just opinion we have formed of your sincere affection for this poor house. We pray you to present our most tender compliments to your brother and beg leave to conclude assuring you that we will eagerly embrace every occasion of shewing you the unfeigned esteem and

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<sup>71</sup> SCAR, Codex V, doc. 101. The petition is in Latin and the copy of the letter to Netterville in English. On the question of Masses there is an interesting document, a papal decree of 15 June 1761 granting them permission to celebrate a daily perpetual Mass in return for 17 "luoghi di Monte di S. Pietro" which would bring in 51 scudi a year. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 9-10.

regard wherewith we subscribe ourselves, Reverend Dear Sir, your most obliged, most obedient and very humble servants,

St. Clements,

May 25th 1765.

This is a true copy:

Witness etc. J. Th. Troy.

Patrick Kirwan

John Thomas Troy

John Murphy

Michael Brennan

#### MICHAEL HOARE: A SUMMING-UP

Father Hoare's second provincialate was not a spectacular success. The Roman authorities of the order treated him as though he were a child, while the one great issue of the time — the novitiate question — was firmly in the hands of Propaganda Fide. Evidence for any contact or influence he may have had with the three foreign colleges is practically nil, nor do we know very much about his role in Ireland itself. Twice during his term of office, in the summers of 1762 and 1764, he went on visitation to various houses. Villavecchia acknowledged his report of the first, now lost, on 30 October 1762<sup>72</sup>. The vicar-general was pleased by what he had to say of the zeal shown by the brethren in preaching and hearing confessions, as also of their efforts to maintain regular life so far as that was possible. He was especially pleased to learn that the Irish Dominicans still kept up regular conferences on moral theology. In this first report, Father Hoare also mentioned his attempts to bring two black sheep, Dominic Quinn and Denis Houlihan, back to the order after an absence of several years. Whether he ever reported to Rome after his second visitation does not appear, but the visitation was certainly held. He signed the accounts at Athenry on 25 May 1764, as he had previously done on 29 May 1762, and also the books of the nuns of Dublin on 16 July 1764<sup>73</sup>.

Some fragmentary evidence shows his interest in two other convents. In 1764 and again in 1765, he complained to Rome about the (unspecified) defects of Patrick Sheridan and Thomas Fitzsimons, both of Cavan<sup>74</sup>. And he did his best to get Michael Flemming back from Louvain and Denis MacGrath from Rome to help the convent of

<sup>72</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 14.

<sup>73</sup> TA, Athenry a/c book (1755-85), Recepta, under respective dates. For the detail about Channel Row (Dublin) I am indebted to Sr. Bertranda O.P. of Cabra.

<sup>74</sup> AGOP IV. 231, pp. 33-34, 36.

Trim which he had found *in pessimo statu* <sup>75</sup>. To strengthen the community in Dublin he obtained the translocation of Patrick Crawley from Aghaboe and John Egan from Naas <sup>76</sup>. Since Aghaboe and Naas were among the worst-off houses of Leinster, it is an open question whether the provincial had given them up for lost or considered them incapable of supporting more than the one or two priests already on the spot.

One can only add that he lived throughout his provincialate "at his lodgings" in Limerick, serving the chapel in Jail Lane, and stayed there afterwards until his death. The date of his death, like that of his predecessor Thomas Plunkett, is unknown. On this point the only thin line of evidence one may follow is that he was a master of theology and no one was postulated for, or obtained, this precious degree until Patrick Bray was given it on 8 March 1777: *in locum defuncti ex-provincialis P. Michaelis Hoare* <sup>77</sup>.

#### THOMAS LUKE NETTERVILLE, 1765-1769

Since Thomas Netterville and his brother John, who was to succeed him as provincial of Ireland, belonged to the remnant of the Catholic aristocracy, their entry into the order in the late 1730s was, on the one hand, greeted by the Dominicans with undisguised delight, and on the other assured them of a patronage and eventually of high office which the ordinary postulant hardly expected and seldom received. They were the sons of William Netterville of Cruiserath, county Meath, and had an elder brother Robert who inherited the paternal estates <sup>78</sup>. Neither William nor Robert after him enjoyed the title of Viscount Netterville of Dowth, though they must have been closely related to the principal branch of the family. Bishop Michael MacDonogh O.P. of Kilmore recommended young Thomas Netterville to the master

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem, pp. 33-34. Both were lectors, appointed either by the general or his vicar.

<sup>76</sup> 18 July 1761. Villavecchia to Hoare. AGOP IV. 231, pp. 10-11. Hoare asked for other similar changes on 18 Sept. 1764 only to be told by Boxadors that "you ought to know that we rarely grant them". Ibidem, pp. 33-34.

<sup>77</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the 18th-century Press* (Maynooth 1965) 18, 185, 297. J. Brady, *The Penal Laws relating to Property and the Meath family of Strong*, in the *Irish Eccles. Record* (Jan. 1944) 19-20. The family background was also mentioned by Th. Burke, bishop of Ossory, in a letter (Kilkenny, 1 Oct. 1775) to Chas. O'Kelly, Dublin Diocesan Archives, 29/4.

general, Thomas Ripoll, who personally gave the habit to this distinguished novice in the church of San Clemente on 2 July 1737. Netterville kept his baptismal name (Thomas) while taking that of Luke in memory of archbishop Luke Netterville of Armagh, founder of the Dominican convent at Drogheda in 1224, the convent for which Thomas entered the order at Rome<sup>79</sup>.

The secretary on this occasion was Thomas Burke, then first regent of studies, a man who "dearly loved a lord" and who was to keep up his friendship with Thomas Netterville until his own death, as bishop of Ossory, in 1776. After his novitiate at SS. Sixtus and Clement — the only novice in the house and the only Irish novice received there in eleven years — Thomas Netterville made profession on 2 July 1738 in the hands of the prior, John Brett, later successively bishop of Killala and Elphin. The future provincial then began to study philosophy in the convent and on 6 April 1739 successfully passed the examination at the close of his first semester<sup>80</sup>. He would have taken a second examination in September to complete the year, but for the fact that one of the general's assistants held a visitation in the convent after which three were assigned out of it in August 1739: Dominic Hugh Kelly went to teach scripture at Louvain and Dominic Dillon to study theology at Ancona, while Netterville was sent to continue his philosophy at S. Maria Novella in Florence<sup>81</sup>. Two years later he was recalled to San Sisto to study theology "at the request of cardinal Corsini", protector of Ireland<sup>82</sup>. And so he remained at Rome from 8 October 1741 until 27 May 1745<sup>83</sup>. He was thus a student at SS. Sixtus and Clement contemporaneously with his younger brother, John Francis, and was described (at least in the records of the house) as Netterville major to distinguish him from the other.

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<sup>79</sup> AGOP IV, 217, p. 9. Coll. Hib. 14 (1971) 22-23. The Dominican bishop M. MacDonogh, under the pseudonym "William Guzman", wrote to the court of James III at Rome on 18 May 1734 recommending "two young gentlemen of the Nettervilles to serve in the imperial army. Their father will purchase companies for them... and spoke to me to have our master's letter in their favour... I protest I would not mention the affair to you only as a friend, for I know you never intermeddle in affairs of our church". The letter is partly in code and does not necessarily refer to our two Dominicans. Windsor, Stuart Papers, vol. 170, no. 86.

<sup>80</sup> *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* (1701-43). AGOP XI, 3600, f. 26<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> The visitation was held by Emerich Langenwatter. AGOP IV, 217, p. 50. Netterville's assignation on 29 Aug. 1739 is noted *ibidem*, 213, f. 73<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>82</sup> On 29 July 1741. AGOP IV, 217, p. 74.

<sup>83</sup> Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 66.

Presumably he received clerical tonsure and all minor orders while at Florence, for his name does not appear in the records of the Roman vicariate until 22 December 1742 when he received subdiaconate at the Lateran with a host of others. He became a deacon on 21 September 1743 and finally received priestly orders on 21 December following. The ordaining prelate on all three occasions was archbishop Ferdinand Maria Rossi, vice-regent of Rome<sup>84</sup>. Patrick Kirwan and Dominic Delamar, the future rector in Lisbon, were ordained priests at the Lateran on the same day as Thomas Netterville.

The San Sisto community gave young Netterville his viatick to Ireland in May 1745, and he may have gone there for a few months, but in actual fact he spent the next four years in Paris where he became master of arts at the Sorbonne and did not begin work "on the mission" until 1749<sup>85</sup>. When he finally reached Ireland, well prepared after twelve years of study, he settled down in Dublin rather than in Drogheda, his convent of affiliation. Thomas Burke, formerly his teacher and still his friend, duly listed him among the community of Drogheda in 1756, but yet the chapter held at Dublin in the following year, when postulating him for the first vacant mastership in Ulster, said that he had preached "in this metropolis" for eight years<sup>86</sup>. In all likelihood he moved to Drogheda about 1760, before the Dominicans of Dublin (in January 1761) answered the accusations of archbishop Lincoln, and before Burke's list was actually printed in *Hibernia Dominicana* in 1762<sup>87</sup>. On 1 May 1762 he wrote from Drogheda with three other "sons" of the convent to the vicar-general in Rome, informing him that they had accepted John O'Neill of Cavan as a son of Drogheda<sup>88</sup>. They were quickly told not to despoil one altar so as to adorn another, and that it was the responsibility of each convent to look to the clothing of its own novices. If John O'Neill were so urgently needed in Drogheda, the provincial might assign him there without translocation.

<sup>84</sup> Archivio storico del Vicariato di Roma, Liber Ordinationum (1737-42), p. 332 and Liber Ordinationum (1743-48), pp. 42, 60.

<sup>85</sup> A detail mentioned only by the chapter of 1753 when postulating him as bachelor or *praesentatus* of theology. AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>86</sup> Hib. Dom. 204. The acts of 1757 are in AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>87</sup> His name does not occur among those of six Dominican signatories of Dublin whose protest may be read above, pp. 282-283.

<sup>88</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 13. The general again refused this translocation in Oct. 1764, at which time John Byrne was prior of Drogheda. Ibidem, p. 33.



In the meanwhile Thomas Netterville had become a *praesentatus* or bachelor of theology on 19 July 1755 on the death of James Watson, and a master on 5 November 1757 after the death of the former provincial Bernard MacHenry<sup>89</sup>. He was never definitor at any provincial chapter, nor prior of any house (unless perhaps of Drogheda), until elected provincial on 29 June 1765 by thirty-five votes to two<sup>90</sup>. How was it that the Irish in Rome had been able to foretell the result more than a month before the election took place in Dublin?

There is no need to delay over the acts of the chapter which made him provincial at the age of about forty-four. Since those of the preceding chapter (1761) seem not to have been confirmed, the chapter of 1765 had almost necessarily to repeat the ordinations and petitions of its predecessor. This time only one archbishop, Mark Skerrett of Tuam, appeared among the *conservatores privilegiorum* — a sign of deteriorating relations with the hierarchy — the other three archbishops being replaced by Daniel Kearney of Limerick, Augustine Cheevers O.S.A. of Meath and Daniel O'Reilly of Clogher. The new provincial's brother, John Francis, was for the second time named historian of the province. The chapter even showed some backbone by telling the master general what a poor view they took of the fact that not a single postulation made in 1761 had been confirmed. Driving the point home, they went on to postulate no less than thirty-eight for various degrees of which only twenty were vacant *per obitum*. More surprising still, most of these postulations were confirmed over the following two years. The obituary list ran to thirty names, very much less than in 1761, but it still represented an unstaunched haemorrhage, particularly grave for the smaller country convents like Rathfrán which alone contributed three names to the list. These priests had to die, but at what meagre rate were they being replaced?

So far as the ordinations and petitions were concerned, Father Boxadors would not for a moment consider their request in favour of non-resident priors. Nor had he anything to say about novitiates apart from insisting that they obey Propaganda Fide and pointing out that the expense involved in going abroad to take the habit was hardly an effective argument, since the candidates (even were they to make their novitiate at home) would have to incur the same expense when going

<sup>89</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 154, 171.

<sup>90</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 38. Netterville had, of course, refused the Roman priorship in Jan. 1764 as described above.

to the continent for their studies. Here the master general rather missed the point, which was the reluctance of parents to see their sons depart at such expense while still unprofessed and consequently uncertain of their vocation. Leaving such *minutiae* aside, one is left with the most interesting point the chapter raised. Cardinal Castelli, prefect of Propaganda, had recently written to the prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, to the effect that the Dominicans would be granted the home novitiates they had been asking for since 1751 on condition that they send some missionaries to Scotland. The provincial chapter was more than willing to comply, while somewhat doubtful as to whether the province had the men to send. All things considered, they would probably have been as willing to send a few missionaries to Bulgaria<sup>91</sup>.

#### MISSIONARIES FOR SCOTLAND, 1765-1773

Not even the date, much less the text, of Castelli's letter to the prior of Holy Cross can now be traced. But it is certain that Propaganda Fide and even Father Boxadors, slow though he was, were arranging the despatch of some Irish Dominicans to Scotland long before the acts of the provincial chapter arrived in Rome. The problem was that Scotland, especially the Northern or Highland district which took in the western isles, was not so much short of Catholics as of priests. One report of 1763 said that at least eight more priests were needed at once: five for the Highlands and three for the Lowlands<sup>92</sup>. Hugh MacDonald, vicar apostolic of the Highland district, submitted a detailed description of his territory in May 1764, from which it appeared that at least four extra missionaries were urgently required<sup>93</sup>. Cardinal Castelli took a very personal interest in the case, called a meeting of Propaganda on

<sup>91</sup> The original sealed acts of the chapter, addressed to Fr. Power O.F.M. of St. Isidore's, are in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 45. There is a copy of the full text of the general's letter (26 Jan. 1766) confirming and commenting upon the acts in TA, Act. Cap. Prov., vol. III, pp. 95-99. With respect to novitiates and Castelli's offer regarding Scotland — an offer also extended, though in vain, to the Franciscans and Augustinians — see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, Louvain 1972, 267-68. Also Hib. Dom. 180-83.

<sup>92</sup> "Ragguaglio dello stato presente della Missione di Scotia" presented to Propaganda by Peter Grant, the Scottish agent in Rome. APF, SC Scozia 3, ff. 57-67. See also J.F.S. Gordon, *Journal and Appendix to Scotichronicon and Monasticon*, vol. 1, Glasgow 1867, 637.

<sup>93</sup> Preshome, 7 May 1764. MacDonald to Propaganda. ASV, Fondo Missioni 100.

8 February 1765, and decided *inter alia* to ask the Dominican master general for two religious to be sent to Scotland at the expense of the Congregation. Unlike missionaries in Ireland, all the priests of Scotland received annual subsidies from Rome<sup>94</sup>.

The cardinal undertook to speak personally to the master general "to see how many missionaries he could supply", and in a memorial to Boxadors on 28 February, Castelli asked for four, or at least two Irish-speakers for the northern vicariate who would receive a "modest but sufficient" subsidy from Propaganda<sup>95</sup>. Boxadors, for reasons unknown, let four months go by before assigning two Irishmen to Scotland in June: Matthias Wynne, on the completion of his studies in Rome, and Dominic Hallinan, then a young priest at Louvain. Hallinan pleaded poor health in order to escape, but the general swept his excuses aside and put him under formal precept of obedience to go<sup>96</sup>. In fact, Hallinan never did go to Scotland. A hostile witness, writing in 1769, claimed that an Irish Dominican of Louvain, on being assigned to Scotland, was so terrified by the prospect that he lost his reason. And indeed the provincial, when listing Hallinan as a member of the convent of Ballindoon in September 1767, admitted that he had been out of his mind for the previous two years<sup>97</sup>.

This tragic set-back was unknown to Matthias Wynne as he set off from Rome in the summer of 1765. It took him thirty-two days to sail from Civitavecchia to Spain, probably to Alicante, and there he was forced to wait seven weeks for another ship to take him to Ireland. He lost another six weeks at Dublin waiting in vain for his companion (Hallinan) to arrive from Belgium, so anxious about reaching Scotland that he did not even visit his brother or other friends. Eventually he set sail from Dublin on his own, got caught in a tremendous tempest off the Hebrides, was thereby forced to take refuge for a month on an island he called Ila (Islay?), and finally landed on Uist, the scene of

<sup>94</sup> This meeting of Propaganda was called a "congresso" rather than a "congregatio generalis", and there seems to be no trace of it in the archives of the Congregation. Details of the meeting are in ASV, Fondo Missioni 100.

<sup>95</sup> This memorial too, unnoticed in AGOP IV, is in ASV, Fondo Missioni 100.

<sup>96</sup> Wynne was assigned on 21 and Hallinan on 22 June 1765, AGOP IV. 231, pp. 37-38.

<sup>97</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 292, where the date of assignation is wrongly given as 2 July. The famous "Netterville List" of 1767 has been printed in Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 92-104, with Hallinan named on p. 94.

his future labours, just two days before Christmas <sup>98</sup>. His arrival, and indeed Hallinan's too, had been anxiously awaited by the vicar apostolic from the previous August. Hugh MacDonald, bishop in the Highlands since 1731, was now a very old man and could not thank cardinal Castelli sufficiently for finding more priests. The two Dominicans would take care of the islands of Uist and Barra: "pleasant, comfortable places where destitution is unknown, where nothing is lacking to make life agreeable, distant by more than 150 miles from the fathers of the Society of Jesus"<sup>99</sup>.

The good bishop expected two but got only one, and one may deduce that it was cardinal Castelli who caused Boxadors to write to Thomas Netterville on 21 December 1765, asking him to propose another suitable candidate for Scotland at once. The provincial took his time, or found great difficulty in choosing someone for the task, for it was not until December 1766 that the general was able to send patents *ad missiones Scotiae* for Dominic Cornyn of Sligo <sup>100</sup>. In the following September the provincial listed Cornyn as being then at work in Scotland, but one feels that he went there for a few months at most, perhaps with Irish harvesters, seeing that the historians of Catholic Scotland, with excellent clergy lists and archives at their disposal, never heard of him.

So, from Christmas 1765, Matthias Wynne was the only Irish Dominican in Scotland and was destined to remain so for the next two or three years. His "station" was on South Uist and Benbecula in the Hebrides, a pair of islands so close as to be now linked by a causeway, and taken together about twenty-eight miles long by six across. Shortly before his arrival the Catholic population stood at 2,503 people, served by the coadjutor bishop John MacDonald and an aged priest named Alexander Forrester. With Wynne on the island, the bishop was able to transfer to Glenfinnan on the mainland, a much more suitable base of operation. Such references as we have to Wynne's activities

<sup>98</sup> Uist, 7 Aug. 1766. Wynne to Castelli. ASV, Fondo Missioni 100. The same packet contains five other documents, attestations and receipts, bearing on Wynne's departure and support.

<sup>99</sup> Scalán, Glenlivet, 1 Aug. 1765. Alexander Smith and Hugh MacDonald, vicars-apostolic, to Peter Grant in Rome. An Italian translation. APF, SC Scozia 3, ff. 85-89.

<sup>100</sup> 13 Dec. 1766. Boxadors to Netterville. AGOP IV. 231, p. 44. Cornyn was prior of Derry in 1777-78, and still in that neighbourhood in Aug. 1782. APF, SC Irlanda 13, ff. 205, 269-70, 500; 15, f. 239.

on Uist before 1770 are entirely favourable. In a letter of August 1766, bishop John MacDonald declared: "he is indeed a laborious and zealous man and behaves to everybody's satisfaction... He is settled in South Uist, as he wished, with Mr. Forrester, where he has enough to do, his companion being now old and infirm, so that the chief weight must be upon him, which he bears very cheerfully" <sup>101</sup>. Fr. William Harrison, pastor of Morar, Arisaig and Moidart, with responsibility also for the islands of Rum and Muck, spoke of him as a man "worthy of all praise" and went on to pay tribute to those earlier Irish missionaries who had preserved the faith in the Highlands and Isles after the Reformation <sup>102</sup>. Similarly, in August 1767, three of the bishops spoke very highly of Fr. Wynne when asking Propaganda to see to his subsidy; they were taking care of his needs until it should arrive <sup>103</sup>.

After this date one hears little more of Matthias Wynne's exertions on South Uist until 1770 when he left Scotland for ever. In the interval, he wrote twice to cardinal Castelli: in February 1768 to say that he had been gravely ill throughout the previous summer (a haemorrhage of some kind from which he had fully recovered) and in August 1769 to say that everything was twice as expensive on Uist as anywhere else in Scotland <sup>104</sup>. He found that the rate of exchange in Edinburgh was better than in Dublin, and that two of his letters, sent to Rome through Dublin, appeared to have been lost. The people on the island were so poor that whatever little they gave him, he felt obliged to give away again in alms. The vicar apostolic permitted him in June 1769 to visit his friends in Ireland for two months, but he delayed availing of the kindness because of an outbreak of fever among his flock and because the pastor of the "nearby island" was sick. It is this second letter which first suggests an unfortunate turn of events which would drive

<sup>101</sup> Glenfinnan in Moidart, 22 Aug. 1766. MacDonald to Peter Grant in Rome. Scottish Catholic Archives (hereafter SCA), Blairs Letters, L 1766. For this and other documents from the same collection, I am entirely indebted to the courtesy of the archivist, Mgr. David McRoberts, Columba House, Edinburgh.

<sup>102</sup> Ad Sanctum Malrubium in Arisaig, 8 Jan. 1767. Wm. Harrison to cardinal Albani. APF, SC Scozia 3, f. 92. Harrison claimed in this letter that, when all other priests had been captured after the rebellion of 1745, he alone remained to serve Moidart, Arisaig, and the islands of Eigg, Canna, Uist and Barra.

<sup>103</sup> Speymouth, 1 Aug. 1767. Three vicars apostolic to Castelli. APF, SC Scozia 3, ff. 95-96.

<sup>104</sup> Uist, 25 Feb. 1766 and 23 Aug. 1769. Wynne to Castelli. Both letters are in ASV, Fondo Missioni 100.



him from the island within a year. The laird of South Uist, he explained, had died as a true Catholic just three years before, whereas his heir was a Calvinist.

This heir, MacDonald of Boisdale, laird of 175 Catholic families, decided about the year 1769 that all his tenants should change their religion just as he had done himself. Their children were invited to learn English and writing under a Presbyterian teacher, which invitation they accepted until they were forced to write blasphemous and even indecent things at school. During the Lent of 1770, flesh meat was forced into the mouths of such children as refused to eat it. On hearing this, Matthias Wynne compelled the people to take their children home, with the result that Boisdale forbade the two priests to set foot on his lands or exercise their duties among the people. Not only that, but he threatened to put them both in jail unless they left the island and swore to twist Wynne's head from his shoulders should he meet him on the road.

Father Wynne stood his ground until about May 1770, for he was still on the island when Boisdale called all his tenants to a meeting before Whit Sunday, giving them the choice either of renouncing their faith or of being evicted from their holdings. As one man, the entire Catholic community of South Uist declared they would give up their lands and beg rather than sign the renunciation of faith he held out to them. Boisdale then drew back, realizing that he might well be left with no tenants at all, and asked only that they allow their children to be brought up as Protestants. Once again they refused, the laird gave them a year to think the matter over, and Matthias Wynne left for Dublin in June<sup>105</sup>.

By his own account, for Wynne wrote from Dublin in October explaining matters to cardinal Castelli, he left South Uist for Ireland on the advice of both bishop and people, foreseeing that further trouble lay ahead, and with the precise intention of preparing a passage to St. John's in Newfoundland for the entire Catholic population of

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<sup>105</sup> The whole incident is fully described by J. Gordon, *Journal*, 78-83, on which book see note 92 above. Also by George Hay in a pamphlet, *Memorial for the suffering Catholics in a violent persecution... in one of the Western Isles of Scotland*, [London 1771 or 1772], of which there is a copy in APF, SC Scozia 3, ff. 122-27. There is also a letter (Preshome, 23 July 1770) from three of the bishops to Castelli in ASV, Fondo Missioni 59. They were then expecting the arrival of an Irish Augustinian whom Castelli had found for them, but who accepted instead a military chaplaincy on the continent. See J. Gordon, *Journal*, 86.

Uist<sup>106</sup>. At the time of writing he expected some families to reach Dublin shortly and at least 150 families in May 1771. It was essential that he should stay in Ireland to make the necessary arrangements and that Propaganda should provide him with the means of meeting these unexpected expenses. He never afterwards returned to Scotland where the bishops (in June 1771) not only regarded him as a deserter but complained of the "far-fetched and laughable things" concerning the persecution on Uist about which he had written to them from Ireland<sup>107</sup>. They were very soon proved wrong and Wynne right, for 400 islanders left for Carolina in 1771 and another hundred for St. John's in the following year. Within three years of their departure, the unspeakable Boisdale, for reasons known to God alone, so far repented of what he had done as to grant unlimited freedom of religion to such few tenants as remained on South Uist.

Dominic Bragan, another Irish Dominican, had already been in Scotland for two years when Father Wynne left and was to stay there for two years more. Like Wynne, he came to the mission on finishing his studies at SS. Sixtus and Clement in Rome (July 1767) duly fortified, as his predecessor had been, by the faculties and 150 scudi given him by Propaganda Fide<sup>108</sup>. He was assigned to the most northerly part of the Lowland District in Banffshire, well north of Aberdeen on the eastern coast, so that (while remaining in Scotland) he could scarcely have been farther away from his confrère in the Hebrides. The clergy lists place him at Shenval in 1768 and at Glenlivet from 1769. Thanks to the large estates and patronage of the Duke of Gordon, Glenlivet had a Catholic population of more than a thousand within the small radius of ten miles and was in fact the most heavily Catholic area in the Lowlands. It also sheltered the little seminary called Scalan, and it was precisely from Scalan that the two vicars apostolic and their respective coadjutors wrote to cardinal Castelli (29 May 1769), partly to thank him for sending Wynne and Bragan, both of whom they highly praised, and partly to ask that the two missionaries be dispensed from saying the Office of the Dead and that of the Blessed Virgin in view of their laborious apostolate<sup>109</sup>.

<sup>106</sup> Dublin, 20 Oct. 1770. Wynne to Castelli. ASV, Fondo Missioni 59.

<sup>107</sup> Scalan, 22 June 1771. Three bishops to Castelli. Ibidem.

<sup>108</sup> His assignation (29 July 1767) is registered in AGOP IV. 231, p. 45. His receipt for 150 scudi to Propaganda (18 July) is in ASV, Fondo Missioni 100.

<sup>109</sup> Their petition was granted on 29 July 1769, and their original letter is in

One hears no more of Dominic Bragan, save that he remained at his post, until he wrote from Tombea in February 1771 to Fr. John Reid at Preshome: the letter shows only that he was short of money and had a droll sense of humour<sup>110</sup>. By June of the same year, affected by some abdominal sickness, he was threatening to return to Ireland, but bishop Hay at Edinburgh was able to assert on 15 July that Father Bragan, despite his serious illness, had decided to remain in Scotland and had laid aside all thought of leaving it<sup>111</sup>.

Although listed as having left Glenlivet in the summer of 1771, Bragan can have done so, if at all, only for a brief holiday, perhaps in Ireland. For in November of that year he was writing again to John Reid of Preshome, mostly about books, giving his own address at Glenlivet as "Vallumbrosa". This time he cannot have been short of money, since he offered Reid any price he wanted for a particular book they had recently spoken about, and again showed his natural charm when writing about Fr. Alexander Geddes<sup>112</sup>.

Munmore join me in compliments to you and Mr. Geddis and congratulate with the latter on the victory he has gained over these two gentlemen who did call for him at his own house. They appeared as fond to see him as he was to shun them. However indeed he needs not pride himself on so shameful a victory. But after all if my good friend Mr. Geddis sends by this occasion only a few of his excellent sermons, I shall engage all my interest to restore him to the favour of his very angry friends. Being now ten o'clock at night I must conclude without either stop or comma your very humble servant Dominick Bragan.

Despite his resolution of 1771, despite even his cheerfulness, ill health forced Father Bragan to leave Scotland forever about June 1772. When explaining his decision to cardinal Castelli, to whom also he sent a medical certificate, he promised to return should his health improve. So few were the missionaries in Scotland, he remarked, "that even any old imbecile would be useful there". In the same letter he asked

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APF, Udienze 10, ff. 541-47. According to Gordon, *Journal*, 59, Bragan was first sent to Glenlivet to assist Mr. Guthrie who had become lame as a result of bad bone-setting.

<sup>110</sup> Tombea, 4 Feb. 1771. Bragan to Reid. SCA, Blairs Letters, Q 1771.

<sup>111</sup> Scalán, 23 June 1771. Three bishops to Castelli, with a postscript from the fourth, George Hay, dated Edinburgh, 15 July. ASV, Fondo Missioni 59.

<sup>112</sup> Vallumbrosa [Glenlivet], 17 Nov. 1771. Bragan to Reid. SCA, Blairs Letters, Q 1771.

to be recommended to the bishop of Meath, Augustine Cheevers O.S.A., in whose diocese he intended to settle until he either recovered or died<sup>113</sup>. His Scottish bishop, when asking for reinforcements on Bragan's departure, paid tribute to him as "a worthy and zealous priest"<sup>114</sup>.

Bishop Cheevers, then extremely old, undertook in May 1773 to find a parish for Dominic Bragan, despite the rule of *concursum* for such positions and the long queue of candidates already in line, and did in fact succeed in doing so though the name of the actual parish does not appear<sup>115</sup>. When the bishop became senile a few years later, his coadjutor Eugene Geoghegan took over the day-to-day running of the diocese of Meath and, apparently during 1776, deprived Bragan of the parish he "administered"<sup>116</sup>. Charles O'Kelly took the matter up at Rome in January 1777, but to no purpose, for the former missionary in Scotland died a few weeks later on 17 February "in the 36th year of his age" and was buried with the Franciscans of Multifarnham. From the inscription on his tomb it would seem that he then belonged to the Dominican convent of Mullingar nearby<sup>117</sup>.

There is no need to say very much about the last of these missionaries to Scotland, Albert Hope. He was a member of the Roman, not of the Irish province of the order, and seems to have taken the habit at Viterbo in April 1756. To this extent he comes onto the stage rather as a Melchisedech, though the likeness is only half correct in that Albert Hope (whatever about his father) most certainly had a mother: a native of Edinburgh, a convert before 1762, a millstone round his neck both in Italy and Scotland, while being (one says so with regret) both mentally unstable and given to drink. Hope's widowed mother was already in Italy by 1762, and already in receipt of a pension from the Holy Office, when her Dominican son petitioned James III for the money necessary for her to travel back to Edinburgh<sup>118</sup>. The master general

<sup>113</sup> Aberdeen, 20 May 1772. Bragan to Castelli. ASV, Fondo Missioni 59. Castelli's letter of recommendation (15 July 1772) is in APF, SC Irlanda 13, ff. 24, 33.

<sup>114</sup> Undated petition from George Hay, answered by Propaganda on 11 July 1772. APF, SC Scozia 3, ff. 110-11.

<sup>115</sup> 16 May 1773. Cheevers to Castelli. AFP, SC Irlanda 12, f. 57.

<sup>116</sup> Rome, 11 Jan. 1777. Chas. O'Kelly to Castelli. Ibidem, 13, ff. 23, 34.

<sup>117</sup> The inscription is given by A. Cogan, *The Diocese of Meath*, vol. 3 (Dublin 1870) 599.

<sup>118</sup> N. MacDonald Wilby, *Father Albert Hope's Mother*, in *Innes Review* (Spring 1972) 77-79. The writer prints two of Hope's letters (1761-62) from the

permitted him, on the insistence of cardinal Castelli, to go to Scotland on 25 May 1771, although Hope himself had recently asked not to be moved from Viterbo where he had recently rented a house for his mother<sup>119</sup>. Whatever confusion there may have been, Castelli was able to tell the vicars apostolic on 12 June that he had found another Irishman "prompt and ready" to replace Matthias Wynne<sup>120</sup>. Prompt was the word, for Albert Hope and his mother reached Edinburgh on 13 September.

Gordon tells us that Father Hope "was suffering from ague caught at sea. Dr. Hay took care of him and kept him with himself until he was well. He was then appointed to the Shenval mission, to relieve Mr. Cruickshanks, who retired to the chaplaincy at Traquair House early in October"<sup>121</sup>. Unfortunately, the poor Dominican found his mother's conduct impossible. "To come to particulars", he wrote to bishop James Grant of Aberdeen, "I have too much reason to think that the poor woman's head is turned and crack-brained by all her actions and words". She claimed that Mass was offered to the devil and that those attending Mass were practising witchcraft against her. While he was away from home she stole his money to buy drink, besides drinking all his altar-wine "to a little sup which was only sufficient for one Mass". One can imagine how this discredited him with the people of Shenval, for his mother spoke to others, even to the local Protestants, just as freely as she did to him. Yet, after explaining this embarrassment to bishop Grant, Albert Hope went on to discuss what appeared to him an even greater difficulty<sup>122</sup>.

Besides all this, another thing gives me as much concern if not more, and that is how to regulate myself with some of my people that commit manifest usury, taking five per cent yearly for the *only loan* of

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Stuart Papers at Windsor, but not a third (of 1772) in the same collection (vol. 459, no. 63) in which Hope acknowledges an alms of 12 scudi from Charles III.

<sup>119</sup> AGOP IV, 240, p. 3. Also a letter of the general's from the Minerva (18 May 1771) to cardinal Castelli, explaining the background. Hope's mother was not actually at Viterbo, but expected to arrive there soon from Nice, and Hope felt obliged to assist her. Castelli obviously knew that Hope wanted to go to Scotland, but the general waited a week for Hope to clarify the position. ASV, Fondo Missioni 50.

<sup>120</sup> SCA, Blairs Letters, Q 1771.

<sup>121</sup> J. Gordon, *Journal*, 88. The same book provides a long account of the "usury controversy" on which the above summary is almost entirely based.

<sup>122</sup> Shenval, 9 Apr. 1772. Hope to James Grant. SCA, Blairs Letters, S 1772.



their money, and will not believe it unlawful because the law of this country permits it. And they object to all my reasons, that never any churchman, though they have had very wise and pious ones, ever before me, spoke to them in the manner I do in regard of usury.

On bishop Grant's very sensible advice, he finally decided that he and his mother should separate as soon as possible. Nor did he think it would prove very difficult to manage "had I six or seven pounds for that purpose, for then I would conduct her to Aberdeen and send her off to France immediately, if any occasion offered, or to London, where occasions are always at hand for France"<sup>123</sup>. In the event she went at least to London by November 1772, leaving her son in bad health "in those frozen barren mountains" where she was convinced she would have died herself had she not reached London in time: "for it was impossible for me to resist in the excessive cold and misery that is there"<sup>124</sup>.

So much for his poor mother, of whom we hear no more, but what about the taking of interest on a loan? He would not accept the practical advice of his kind bishop Grant, who suggested that since Rome had never condemned what was universally practised in the British Isles one might reasonably argue that she condoned it. The bishop also suggested that "if your particular delicacy cannot bear admitting people engaged in this practice to the holy sacraments, give them leave to apply to some other discreet person". The bishop also sent him a recent pamphlet by "Philopenes", *Usury explained or conscience quieted in the case of putting out money at interest*. Hope set the whole matter before Charles O'Kelly O.P., theologian of the Casanatensian library at Rome, but disagreed even with his authoritative reply and wrote again from Shenval to O'Kelly on 27 November 1772<sup>125</sup>.

I read this treatise [by Philopenes] and found it full of false doctrine. He [bishop Grant] ...makes it lawful to take the five per cent because the government allows it, and that *absolutely* without any condition whatsoever. This is the common practice it seems to me by his letter he would have me conform to. But hitherto I have admitted none

<sup>123</sup> Shenval, 14 May 1772. Same to same. Ibidem.

<sup>124</sup> London, 12 Dec. 1772. Margaret Rose Hope's postscript to a letter (Shenval, 27 Nov. 1772) from Albert Hope to Chas. O'Kelly at Rome. Ibidem. Even at this date, Margaret still received a pension from the Holy Office, for which she wrote out a receipt in good Italian after her postscript.

<sup>125</sup> Reference as in preceding note.

to the holy sacraments that follow this practice nor never will, and consequently can be of little or no service here. Wherefore I beg you would obtain from our general my licence for returning home, for I am resolved not to stay here unless you get cardinal Castelli to put a stop to this perverse abuse by getting it condemned by the Holy See.

So far so bad, but Hope went further still by carrying his problem into print under the pseudonym "John Simple" on 1 January 1773 in the pages of a popular Edinburgh weekly. All sorts of people joined in the controversy at once and it was carried on in the same magazine until June. Even bishop George Hay contributed seven letters on the subject, all of which were signed "Michael Meanwell". One may as well let that great bishop have the last word, not only on usury, but also on Albert Hope who left Scotland for ever in May 1773<sup>126</sup>.

The reasons he gives to me for the part he has resolved on, are that his constitution cannot bear out with the rigours of these missions, and that he cannot accomodate his mind to the practice of interest as customary in this nation. I had written him a long letter on this subject and have just now published, in one of our Edinburgh magazines, a Treatise upon it in a series of letters... All who have examined these papers are thoroughly satisfied on this head, but nothing is able to make an impression on Mr. Hope. The plain matter of fact, as far as I can judge, is, the honest man is heartily tired of our painful and laborious life, and is glad to have such a handle as this of conscience to be a pretext for leaving it. This is another instance, though I own, considering his first appearance, an unexpected one, how little we can depend upon any but those of our own country.

Father Hope went back to Italy, back to that convent of La Quercia in Viterbo to which he belonged. Certainly he was in residence there by May 1774<sup>127</sup>. And so far as one can judge he remained there until 26 February 1777 when he was named bursar of SS. Sixtus and Clement, the house of his Irish brethren in Rome. Leaving both the bursarship and his fellow-countrymen in March 1781, he went first to Vi-

<sup>126</sup> J. Gordon, *Journal*, 123-25. The following quotation is taken from the full text, supplied by Gordon, of a letter (17 May 1773) from Hay to Grant, his Roman agent, enclosing a letter (not found) from Hope to Castelli.

<sup>127</sup> The date of his profession at La Quercia (27 Apr. 1757) and even his age — he was born about 1736 — can be gathered from two old catalogues (1769, 1780) of all the members of the Roman province. AGOP XIII. 14010. His presence at La Quercia in May 1774 is attested by AGOP IV. 246, p. 190.

terbo for a few months, then to Tivoli, just east of Rome, and finally (in February 1785) to Terracina where he was to remain until at least 1789<sup>128</sup>. There on the Mediterranean shore, a few miles north of Gaeta, one finally loses track of Albert Hope, the last and not the most fortunate of these Irish Dominican missionaries to Scotland.

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<sup>128</sup> SCAR, House-council book (1769-97), pp. 111-125 *passim*. His appointment as bursar is noted in AGOP IV. 240, p. 10. He reached SS. Sixtus and Clement from Viterbo on 9 Mar. 1777, and after two terms as bursar left the house shortly after a decision was taken that the bursar should have no more pocket-money than the lectors, save for one scudo a year (about five shillings) to buy shoes. For his later movements within the Roman province see AGOP IV. 254, p. 362; 256, p. 300; 258, p. 336.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Peace and Stability 1765 - 1778

Leaving strict chronology to one side, this chapter disposes of two earlier topics: the home novitiates, finally granted in 1774 but largely defunct by 1800, and the story of the mission to St. Croix, carried forward here until its close in 1786. Otherwise the narrative follows the usual pattern, taking three provincials in turn and discussing events within their terms of office. The first two were the Netterville brothers; the third was Martin French of Esker who would have become bishop of Clonfert had he not been hanged in effigy at Paris. Relations between the regular clergy and the hierarchy were reasonably good except at Cork where the bishop wanted friars to be merely his curates and in Ardagh where the bishop encouraged his parish priests to quest for corn. On the death of the archbishop of Dublin in 1769, the friars of various orders pioneered a successful technique: by submitting a veto on four particular candidates, they got a new archbishop to their liking.

No check was, or could be put to the numerical decline already evident since 1745. Rural houses began slowly to disappear, partly because their few members were drawn into a parochial ministry. On the other hand, there was still an air of peace and stability. The city convents and those in the larger towns settled down to improve their chapels without let or hindrance from an ever more liberal government. There was even a new foundation at Dundalk where the wandering friars of Carlingford found a home. On the continent a splendid new college opened at Lisbon in 1771; Louvain had perhaps more students than ever before. And none of the three colleges of the province was as yet disturbed by the rising tide of anti-regular legislation.

### THE NOVITIATE QUESTION, 1766-1769

By sending missionaries to Scotland, even though the few who went did not stay long, the Irish province had kept its side of a bargain. It remained to be seen whether the new prefect of Propaganda, cardinal

Giuseppe Castelli, would now reconsider the prohibition of novitiates in Ireland. True enough, only the Dominicans had responded to his request. The Franciscans refused, since most of their friars were over sixty, and the one Augustinian promised to the Scottish bishops never actually arrived. Perhaps the very weakness of this response brought home to the cardinal prefect just how serious the situation was. At all events he lost no time in proving himself a man of his word. In September 1766, Propaganda permitted the Canons Regular of the Lateran — Ireland's smallest group of regulars, hardly twelve in all — to give the habit to six postulants: "enough to prevent their extinction, too few to injure the rights of the archbishop of Tuam or hurt the feelings of his clergy". Thus, for the first time in sixteen years, Propaganda yielded, though ever so little, on the novitiate question. The other regulars took heart on hearing the news<sup>1</sup>.

Not that the friars were simply waiting for Rome to smile. They had already organised their own campaign, directed largely towards winning the bishops to their side. James Brady, bishop of Ardagh, told cardinal Corsini in May 1765 that he had recently been asked by the friars to join "some other bishops" in requesting the Pope to revoke the decree prohibiting novitiates. Bishop Brady refused, considering that decree to have been "very wisely framed". The bishops of Connacht took the opposite view in a short statement signed before April 1766 by Mark Skerrett, archbishop of Tuam, and all save one of his suffragans. Some of the bishops of Ulster proved equally sympathetic. On 15 April 1766 the Franciscan provincial, James MacDonnell, passed on news of their efforts to Charles O'Kelly O.P. whom the bishops of Connacht had expressly named as their Roman agent in the affair<sup>2</sup>.

I send you two leaves of our almanack, in one of which you may read the case of the charter schools which every day increases in number and revenue. This and decrees against regulars will soon extinguish what was long attempted, and yet the heaviest stroke is from the Propaganda which will effectually annihilate what they ought to promote. And it is more wonderful that they who never gave a penny to forward

<sup>1</sup> On Castelli's promise and missionaries in Scotland see above, p. 334. The episode of the Canons Regular, who were largely confined to Co. Mayo, is discussed by H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars in Ireland*, Louvain 1972, 268-70. The rest of this chapter, unless otherwise noted, is drawn from the same work, pp. 271-95.

<sup>2</sup> The full text of MacDonnell's letter is in H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in *Coll. Hib.* 8 (1965) 84-85.



the mission here should labour to suppress these, who these two hundred years, at their own hazard and expense, supported what is now by so many arts attacked.

All the bishops of your plaga [Connacht] signed a petition, except Kirwan [Robert, of Achonry], to get leave to admit candidates here. Dr. Reilly, Cheevers and Macartan [all of Ulster] readily joined. Blake [archbishop of Armagh], etc. pretend but will do nothing. Several are strongly against. The second leaf I send shows the [Franciscan] houses, parishes, etc., which when you consider the few that are to serve and they mostly aged, you will see what deficiency now is and, as many daily die and few or none succeed, will be every day greater. The bishops are sensible, and call, invite, nay threaten and compel regulars to accept of charges [i.e. parishes], and as they call and take the best, their own houses, wanting such, are left forsaken. And they indeed soon learn to support their relations and forget *Abraham qui genuit eos* and become rather adversaries than friends to their former acquaintance.

The next step was to frame a formal appeal from the religious orders to Propaganda, stating explicitly what they wanted from the congregation, how many novitiates for each order, in what places and subject to what rules. The work was well under way by the end of 1766 and the beginning of 1767, by which time Thomas Netterville, the Dominican provincial, seems to have taken the brunt of the work on himself. Netterville sent some of his earlier drafts of the petition to Peter Killikelly O.P., bishop of Kilmacduagh, hoping that Killikelly might win the support of Dr. Blake, archbishop of Armagh, for the projected appeal. Blake, curiously enough, lived at Carrowbrowne near Galway, within walking distance of the Dominican bishop but two or three days' journey from his own diocese. Killikelly, a former provincial, read the drafted petition with a practised eye. After discussions with the Franciscans of Galway, he wrote to Father Netterville on 23 December 1766, suggesting somewhat ungenerously that the Carmelites and Capuchins should both be left out. Their modest numbers did not entitle them to equal terms, while permission for them to establish novitiates in provinces in which they had no convents might lead to trouble later on. Killikelly thought that the Dominicans should ask for four novices a year in each province, a total of sixteen, and that they should seek two novitiates in each province "as one house cannot conveniently get rooms and beds for the novices and the Fathers" living in it<sup>3</sup>. Had this precaution

<sup>3</sup> Full text edited, loc. cit., 88-89. Killikelly addressed the letter to Phrapen Lane, Dublin, which was not the address of the Dominican convent.

been taken, the new novitiates might have been more successful than they were.

On receiving an immediate answer from Father Netterville, the bishop walked to Carrowbrowne in the snow, carrying the freshly amended text of the great petition. Although snowbound in the house for eight days, so that the archbishop had to meet him several times a day whether he liked it or not, Dr. Killikelly's mission was a failure. Even when he offered to frame a new petition to the primate's liking, all he got from archbishop Blake was the verbal promise that he would write to cardinal Castelli "to give the three mendicant orders the leave they require to receive and profess every year four novices for each province in some convent or convents that will be appointed". Obviously, the Carmelites and Capuchins had been dropped at this stage, but the Calced Carmelites were soon readmitted and the case went ahead in the name of the "four major orders".

Thomas Netterville, a gentleman by birth, was so furious at the primate's behaviour that he opened a long letter to Charles O'Kelly on 14 April 1767 with a tirade on the subject. What stung him was not so much Dr. Blake's refusal as the empty promises in which that refusal had been so thoroughly wrapped<sup>4</sup>.

Since my last to you did not fail to often solicit the primate by the means of our good friend Dr. Killikelly to sign, conformable to his promise to Dr. Cheevers [bishop of Meath] and me, and that repeatedly, a petition in favour of our receiving novices here. To this end we drew up two different forms which I enclosed to Dr. Killikelly at different times, which the Doctor showed to His Grace and were equally found fault with by him, and consequently rejected. Upon which Dr. Killikelly told him that he would draw up one, and such a one indeed as he would like, but this was likewise rejected. And to apologise in some measure for his refusal and breach of promise to Dr. Cheevers and me solemnly protested he would himself write to Propaganda in our favour. Which I am to think he neither did yet or ever will do. For after his many promises to Drs. Killikelly, Cheevers and me, and the many professions of love and friendship for the regulars of this kingdom, and his ardent wishes for the repeal of them decrees of the year fifty, I will never more believe him or rely on his word or promise than I would on that of the meanest person in his diocese. In this affair he has acted unbecoming a bishop, a clergyman, and gentleman.

<sup>4</sup> Full text edited, *loc. cit.*, 90-92.

This letter to Rome was accompanied by other documents, attested at Dublin by the four provincials a few days earlier. There was, for instance, a formal commission appointing Charles O'Kelly their plenipotentiary and a table of statistics showing by how much each of the four largest groups of friars had declined since 1750. The Dominicans had come off rather well by comparison with the other three orders, for they had dropped in number by only 16%, from 176 to 147, whereas the Franciscans, Augustinians and Carmelites claimed losses of about 45%. Other figures gave the age of friars on the mission in 1767, and here too the Dominicans came out better, or made more honest returns than the rest. Eighty-four of their friars, 57% of the total, were over fifty years of age, and that figure broke almost equally — forty-one and forty-three — between those in their fifties and those who were older still<sup>5</sup>.

Despite all these preparations, the case made no progress in Rome. A whole year passed, then eighteen months, without anything to show for so much trouble. Eventually, prompted perhaps by the friars, the bishops of Connacht wrote to Propaganda again on 5 December 1768. Most of the points they made had been made a dozen times before, but there were a few new touches. For instance, the friars could no longer conduct those little schools which had previously played such an important part in preparing candidates for the priesthood. Protestants were highly amused to watch the Roman Catholic church succeeding where their own best efforts had failed. Even in a parochial context there was definite need for friars. Most parishes could support only one priest. When he fell sick or grew old, the friars alone could lend a hand, and this they generally did for little or no reward. How was the parish priest to deal with an epidemic among his flock, or provide an extra confessor on the major feasts of the year? Should the parish priest be found guilty of grave sin, his bishop could not even suspend him for want of another to take his place.

Three weeks later, on 24 December 1768, the four provincials asked their major superiors in Rome to support this plea from Connacht. And yet again they approached Propaganda with a brief statement signed by eight more bishops. Among these new names were those of two Dominicans, Thomas Burke of Ossory and Michael MacMahon of Killaloe, but the paper was also signed by four bishops of Ulster who belonged to the diocesan clergy. It is curious that the friars should have rallied to their cause almost every bishop in Connacht where they had

<sup>5</sup> For the complete table see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 278.

most men, and almost every bishop in Ulster where they had least. Neither of the other provinces, Leinster or Munster, gave them much encouragement.

Charles O'Kelly, that patient laborious man, duly prepared and presented to Propaganda the extremely long petition known as "the case of the four provincials". There is no need to analyse it here. The important point is that O'Kelly now advanced the detailed conditions the friars were prepared to accept as the price of having novitiates at all: supervision by the local ordinary, a fixed number of novitiates, a fixed quota of novices to be received each year, and even an upper age-limit of twenty for reception of the habit. For all his pains, Propaganda did not pronounce on this appeal until August 1769, almost ten years after bishop Burke of Ossory first launched the campaign and about four years after the regular clergy took it up in earnest. Thomas Netterville had just ceased to be provincial when cardinal Castelli put the entire case, very fairly, before his fellow cardinals at Propaganda Fide.

This important meeting on 22 August 1769 authorised Castelli to discuss the establishment of novitiates with the regulars and then to refer back to the Congregation. The cardinal was thus free to negotiate, but both he and the four provincials would be obliged to accept certain conditions which differed in some important respects from those freely suggested by O'Kelly. For example, the novitiates were "to be opened only where the local ordinaries expressly wish them to be established". And again, the fixed quota of novices — for the Dominicans not more than thirty-four every three years — was "to include those who shall go to receive the habit outside the kingdom". All this was bad enough, but there was worse in the final paragraph of the fifth and last condition: *in cauda venenum*.

The cardinals further declare that unless the bishop of the diocese in which a novitiate is situated certifies that the superiors and novices have fulfilled the above conditions and particularly that the novices have applied themselves to the exercises proper to their state and observed the rules which will be framed, and in the manner set forth above, the profession of these novices will be regarded as null, without sentence or judicial declaration.

Propaganda had indeed given the four provincials a fair hearing. At the very same meeting, the congregation dispensed from its own decree so that the enterprising Augustinians might receive twelve novices at once. But the regular clergy found the annexed conditions so little to their liking that they could scarcely be persuaded to accept them.

## THE NETTERVILLE LIST OF 1767

Thomas Netterville's chief claim to fame and gratitude is the detailed catalogue he compiled of all the convents of the order in Ireland, giving the name, age and status of those who served in them. No other eighteenth-century provincial did as much, nor does it take from his achievement that the catalogue was the fruit of obedience, not to say compulsion. Belated obedience too, since the first call for lists of this kind came from the general chapter at Bologna in 1748. The master general took the matter up on 25 January 1766, ordering the provincial to send to Rome after visitation an account or *status* of every convent, with the name, duties and office of every friar. Father Boxadors, knowing the Irish well, lent urgency to the command by refusing to promote any of those postulated for degrees in Ulster until this ample *status* reached his desk. The task was completed at Louvain on 2 September 1767 with the help of a secretary, Michael Thomas Merritt. Boxadors was so pleased with the result that he asked for yet another list of all the brethren living outside Ireland. Nothing of the kind has come to light, and it is highly unlikely that Netterville ever attempted one<sup>6</sup>.

The famous list is closely modelled on the similar information for 1756 to be found in Thomas Burke's *Hibernia Dominicana*, without any significant improvement in method or wealth of detail. The two lists are rather too close in date for useful comparison, but since the province was in decline they do reveal quite a few changes even within the space of eleven years<sup>7</sup>. Raymund Tiernan of Athenry, professed in 1712, was now the only laybrother in the whole country. There had been two in 1756. The provincial forgot to include himself as a son of Drogheda, yet even with this important addition, the number of priests came only to 155, as against 179 in 1756, a clear slump of 14%. Not since the height of the "penal times", about the year 1718, had there been so few Dominicans in Ireland.

The distribution of manpower among the four internal provinces was still unequal. Ulster, with 17%, and Leinster with 23% had exactly

<sup>6</sup> For the decision of 1748 at Bologna see MOPH XIV 141. The list itself has been edited by H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission*, in *Coll. Hib.* 8 (1965) 92-104. Netterville included an excellent account of Holy Cross, Louvain and of the three monasteries of nuns under his jurisdiction. The statistics for Louvain are omitted from the following calculations.

<sup>7</sup> The data from *Hib. Dom.* is analysed above, pp. 257-259.



the same proportion of priests as in 1756, but Munster had increased by two percentage points (to 19%) at the expense of Connacht (41%). Connacht, where there were sixty-five men, still constituted the core of the province as a whole, even though these figures attribute to Leinster some Connacht migrants who were hard at work there: e.g. James Heynes of county Galway at Rosbercon, Patrick Hart of Ballindoon at Trim, Edmund Fitzgerald of Sligo in Dublin and Hugh Reynolds of Connacht near Naas. One can detect here the beginning of that slow process whereby the rural convents of Connacht would yield in importance to small urban houses like those in Cork and Limerick, and in the fulness of time to the even smaller ones at Kilkenny and Waterford.

Thomas Netterville's precise indication of the age and years of profession of each individual deserves rather more attention than can be given to it here. Curiously, it even justifies the suggestion that life-expectancy in Ireland increased dramatically between 1756 and 1767. At the beginning of that short period, Thomas Burke could find only four Dominicans aged seventy and upwards. Father Netterville, at the end of it, found no less than seventeen. The oldest, at eighty-one, was Dominic Burke of Athenry. At the other end of the scale, only two priests were under thirty, exactly as in 1756. This should be ascribed to the lateness of priestly vocations rather than to a lack of them, and also to the long years of study spent abroad. Excluding the oldest and the two youngest, the ages of the rest were as follows.

30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70 to 79
25	32	50	30	16
16%	21%	33%	20%	10%

One does not have to look very long at these figures to realise the gravity of the situation. Practically two-thirds of the Dominicans in Ireland were over fifty, while almost a full third were more than sixty years of age. Eleven years earlier, the proportion of friars over fifty had been only one half. The lower age-groups also show a disquieting inversion, for those in their forties easily outnumbered those in their thirties. Our statistics take no account of the three foreign colleges, in which even the teachers tended to be young, nor of the many strays on the continent who might return at any time, but they do show a decidedly downward trend and that it was high time to find a remedy. Judging by the year in which each person on the list entered the order, one can see that this decline set in about 1741, a full decade before Propaganda

closed the novitiates. For this calculation, the oldest man in the province has been omitted but the two youngest retained.

1709-1718	1719-1728	1729-1738	1739-1748	1749-1758
15	27	46	34	33

The progression here is quite normal until one reaches 1738, for the number of friars increases according as their age grows less. Then, over the following decade, there is a 26% drop which can in no way be imputed to any decree of Propaganda Fide. Severe famine in the early 1740s may perhaps supply a reason, unless the Dominican superiors made a deliberate effort at that time to cut back on the number being received<sup>8</sup>. There were clearly two booms in the admission of novices: between 1735 and 1740, and again between 1746 and 1751. By the time Father Netterville compiled his list thirty years later, there were still thirty-nine survivors of the first boom, of whom no less than thirteen had taken the habit in 1737. From the second boom (1746-1751), thirty-two survived, including ten who entered in 1749 when rumours of the closure of novitiates filled the air. Of those who entered continental novitiates after 1751 only eleven were at work in Ireland in 1767.

So far, none of the traditional thirty-eight convents had been abandoned for lack of men. The four provinces, as in 1756, had about ten convents each, Connacht having most with twelve and Ulster least with seven. But did all these houses really exist, or were some only convents of paper? On this crucial point Thomas Netterville might have saved historians a lot of trouble by being more explicit, or at the very least more consistent. He applied the term *conventus*, without qualification, to only ten foundations: Drogheda, Urlar, Roscommon, Athenry, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Kilkenny and Dublin. Only two of this group, Athenry and Dublin, were expressly described as living the common life, "*simul commorantes*", though this was surely intended for all except perhaps for Kilkenny. The lists of those assigned to the remaining twenty-eight convents are introduced by such phrases as "*in districtu versantes*", even though this second group includes convents which most certainly had a fixed residence. Netterville himself applies his "*simul commorantes*" to Trim and implies the existence of a house at Rathfran where three sick priests could "scarcely get out of bed". Yet

<sup>8</sup> The decline of 66% for the decade 1739-1748 noted above on p. 258, has to be understood in the light of the figures given here. It refers to those actually on the mission in 1756, not to the total of those admitted during that decade.

one would never imagine from his list that there were Dominican houses, however small, in Dundalk, Newbridge, Longford and Mullingar, to mention only a few places for which there is independent evidence.

Five houses were assigned to the care of a single priest: Burrishoole in Connacht, Lorrha and Youghal in Munster, Arklow and Aghaboe in Leinster. Not one of these convents, except perhaps Burrishoole, saw the end of the eighteenth century, and indeed Arklow and Aghaboe may well have been lost before Netterville put them on his list. John Daly, described by the provincial as living alone in Arklow, was actually a curate in Dublin, fifty miles away. There is also reason to believe that Patrick Keely, "alone in the district of Aghaboe", held a parish far from the mouldering ruins of his convent<sup>9</sup>. Father Netterville does not credit either of these solitary priors with a pastoral ministry, but he does describe twenty-two others as parish priests, curates or chaplains. All told, at least fifteen of the thirty-eight "convents" had some sort of community life, some fixed residence, even though the habit could not be worn and their thatched mudwall cabins would not have borne comparison with the stables of many a continental priory.

Some other interesting details occur, almost by accident, in this famous list. There were still five Dominicans in the convent of Cavan, established by bishop Michael MacDonogh O.P. about thirty years before. One of them was parish priest of Drumlahane where presumably the community lived. The interesting point is that the Franciscans — quite rightly, it would appear — were throwing doubt on the legitimacy of the foundation and Andrew Campbell, bishop of Kilmore, had refused to let the Dominicans quest. Another item concerns an aged priest, Thomas Roche of Strade, who had once spent two years in prison "for the Catholic faith". This would have drawn a smile from John Fottrell, one of Netterville's predecessors, for Roche was imprisoned in 1739 for performing clandestine marriages and behaved so badly when he got out that the provincial regretted his release<sup>10</sup>. Netterville also noted, when explaining why the friars of Derry lived outside the city, that not even the Catholic laity were allowed inside the walls. At the very end of the catalogue there are long lists of the nuns of Dublin, Galway and Waterford. Drogheda, the only other monastery in the country, was

<sup>9</sup> On Daly see L. Taheney, *Dominicans serving in Dublin Parishes*, in *Reporitorium Novum*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1962) 157. And on Keely, see T. S. Flynn, *The Dominicans of Aghaboe*, Freshford 1975, 23-24, 34-35.

<sup>10</sup> See above. pp. 175, 180, 197.

not under the provincial's jurisdiction and so he said nothing about it. By this date the monastery at Waterford had been dissolved. One of the three sisters found a home with the nuns of Galway. The other two, because their dowries were too small, took shelter with their families in Waterford itself.

#### THE FOREIGN COLLEGES, 1765-1769

Thomas Netterville took an interest in the rebuilding of *Corpo Santo*, visited and reported on Louvain, but played no part in the affairs of SS. Sixtus and Clement, the house in which he had himself been formed, beyond directing a few novices to Rome towards the close of his provincialate. It was the master general's prerogative to appoint teachers in all three colleges.

At Rome one notices the first appearance of a practice which would later spread throughout the province: the use of two Christian names rather than one. John Thomas Troy and Francis Thomas Levins are early examples of a custom which would last well into the nineteenth century. There was also a tendency, noticeable even in the official documents of the curia, to refer simply to "St. Clement's", as though the community had begun to spend less of the year at St. Sixtus. Numbers rose rather sharply from fourteen in 1765 to twenty-one in 1769. Of this latter figure, three were laybrothers, seven lectors or other officials, six students, four novices and an aged missionary named Dominic Colgan. So far as novices were concerned, only two — Simon and John Strong, nephews of the provincial — were received within this period until four were clothed in the early months of 1769: two for the convent of Lorrha and two for Drogheda. They were joined in August by yet another, and all five, almost an unprecedented figure, made their novitiate in the house. Perhaps their very number made this practicable. Since they formed a substantial group there was no need to send them, as was usually done with single novices, to the *Minerva* or to *La Quercia* in Viterbo<sup>11</sup>.

The failure of their vineyards was not the only financial disaster of 1765 for the Irish Dominicans in Rome. A priest who owed them more than 700 scudi went practically bankrupt and all they got in satisfaction was a rented apartment<sup>12</sup> on the street which leads directly from St.

<sup>11</sup> H. Fenning, *The Book of Receptions and Professions*, in *Coll. Hib.* 14 (1971) 27-29; and also *The Vestibary Book*, in *Coll. Hib.* 10 (1967) 66-70.

Peter in Chains to the street commonly called the Corso"<sup>12</sup>. In 1767 they sold chalices and candlesticks to pay urgent debts and even dipped into their capital reserves, forgetting to ask the permission of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. On 25 March 1768 the community was happily absolved from the censures thereby incurred, but was less happily ordered to invest fifty scudi *per annum* for the next seventeen years to restore the capital sum disbursed. This time fortune was on their side, for cardinal Canale, commendatory abbot of St. Clement's, at once began to pay them "for the first time" the annual pension of fifty scudi recently stipulated by a papal bull of Clement XIII<sup>13</sup>. Times were hard, so hard that two lectors loaned money to the community, but yet of the five novices of 1769, only one paid a pension to the house<sup>14</sup>. Clearly, in 1769 at least, the college at Rome was doing all it could to make good the lack of home novitiates.

King James III, for so long a benefactor and patron of SS. Sixtus and Clement, was laid to rest in St. Peter's on 7 January 1766 "with all the splendour due to a king". Successive popes had recognised his status for long decades after the other courts of Europe had closed their doors to the exile, but times had changed and Clement XIII was ready to abandon an outdated policy. The new "king", Charles III, might come to Rome but he would receive no public honour save such as was due to him as Prince of Wales. Thinking that the prohibition did not apply to Charles' subjects, the heads of the English and Scots colleges, as also of the Franciscan and Dominican houses in Rome, "sang Te Deums for Charles' accession and prayed for him by name". All, including Patrick Kirwan, prior of SS. Sixtus and Clement, were banished from the Papal States. Kirwan, it would seem, received the prince with royal honours at St. Sixtus on a somewhat inappropriate day, 1 April 1766. On the eighth of the same month he was formally stripped of his priorship, given twenty-four hours to leave Rome and ordered to the convent of Centocelle. Next day, John T. Troy wrote a hurried note to Andrew Lumsden, the prince's secretary<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> SCAR, no. 37 (house council book), pp. 67-68.

<sup>13</sup> Loc. cit., pp. 74-75, according to which the bull was dated 6 kal. Jan. 1767. See also AGOP IV, 240, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> SCAR, Accounts, *recepta*, under date. The exception was Aug. McMahon.

<sup>15</sup> The undated note is in Windsor, Stuart Papers, vol. 434, no. 170, printed here by gracious permission of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II. There is another in the same collection (vol. 437, no. 73) written at Civitavecchia by Pat. Kirwan himself just before his departure for Ireland in autumn 1766. His deposition is noted in



Dear Sir,

A very extraordinary and unexpected event which, I believe, will be for ever remembered by the members of this house and handed down to the latest posterity, prevented my waiting on His Majesty this morning in the name of this community to wish him a good journey and safe return. Father [Patrick] Kirwan our prior is just departing for Civitavecchia whither he has been ordered to repair after a very short warning in order to punish him, as some term it, for having complied with his duty towards the King on the 1st inst. at St. Sixt. We cannot determine how long his stay there may be, but from his being deprived of all his employments in this house and many other circumstances, we imagine he will never be permitted to return hither. The hurry I am in, occasioned by the preparations for his journey and other incidents, puts it out of my power to be more explicit on this subject, and will I am sure sufficiently apologise for me and the faults hereof. We beg you'll present our dutiful respects to the King, whereby you'll infinitely oblige every one of us, but in particular your most obedient and very humble servant.

Wednesday morning.

John Troy.

John Murphy was appointed vicar *in capite* on 12 April and prior of the bereft community on 3 October 1766<sup>16</sup>. On the first occasion, the vocals were forbidden to elect; on the second, there were not enough of them to do so. Since only four had the right to vote and they did not want or perhaps could not afford an outsider, three of them postulated the fourth. The master general fell in with the plan, dispensing freely from the *alternativa* despite all the trouble such dispensations had caused at St. Clement's only two short years before.

John Antoninus O'Dwyer, prior and regent at Holy Cross, Louvain, at the beginning of this period, fared no better than Patrick Kirwan had done at Rome. Father Boxadors rebuked him time and time again: for flouting his commands regarding the transfer of students, for admitting novices ignorant of Latin, for making a formal precept against entering the rooms of others, and finally for daring to recommend lectors for promotion without the consent of the house council<sup>17</sup>. Only once did the master general take the part of the prior-regent, and that

AGOP IV, 231, p. 40 and SCAR, no. 57, p. 69. The quotations in the paragraph above are from A. Shield, Henry Stuart: Cardinal of York, London 1908, 188-91.

<sup>16</sup> AGOP IV, 231, pp. 40-42. SCAR, no. 57, pp. 69, 71. In both cases, the date given in the house-council book is one day later than that in the general's register.

<sup>17</sup> AGOP IV, 231, pp. 39-44 *passim*.

was when the house council complained that he was driving the theology students too hard. They were brusquely told to imitate the person they accused<sup>18</sup>. The unfortunate man offered his resignation in August 1766 and was permitted to leave for Ireland in the following March. His successor was none other than Patrick Kirwan, the prior expelled from Rome, a coincidence which did nothing to sweeten the temper of Tomas Boxadors so far as Holy Cross was concerned. His very first letter to the new superior was a diatribe on the neglect of sung Vespers and Mass<sup>19</sup>.

Non possumus non vehementer mirari tantam esse istius adeo numerosi conventus, in quo sunt 35 fratres non numeratis conversis, divini cultus negligentiam ut Vesperae nonnisi diebus quibus Prior habeat officium, Missa vero conventualis tantum diebus festis cantentur. Quam severissima animadversione dignam divini cultus negligentiam dissimulare minime volentes, paternitatem tuam mandamus ac stricte praecipimus, ut Missam conventualem, Vesperasque quotidie cantari, omnesque legitime non exemptos choro adesse facias.

Almost as soon as this ordination came in the post, Thomas Netterville reached Holy Cross from Dublin. His original intention had been to arrive about the beginning of May, and perhaps he did, but it was not until 2 September 1767 that he sent his long catalogue of the brethren, including the community of Holy Cross, from Louvain to Rome. At the time he wrote there was a staff of only six priests, but a very large community: nine students of theology, all ordained, thirteen students of philosophy (of whom three were priests, although professed for at most two years), eleven novices and nine brothers. A middle-aged priest, Nicholas Fitzgerald of Tralee, was rather unfairly listed after the professed novices; he was mentally ill and had been twenty-seven years at Louvain. All told then, a community of forty-nine with every prospect of numerical expansion considering that the simple novices were proportionally more numerous than the students of philosophy, and they in turn absolutely outnumbered the theologians. When acknowledging Netterville's list, the general permitted the students to preach in the refectory twice a year to prepare themselves for the mission. The provincial must have convinced Father Boxadors that none of the students was ready for transfer to St. Clement's, for Luke Concanen

<sup>18</sup> Loc. cit., p. 40 under date 15 Mar. 1766.

<sup>19</sup> 6 June 1767. Loc. cit., pp. 44-45.

and Stephen Joseph Taylor did not reach Rome until June 1769, four years after the master general first asked for them by name. Thomas Burke, bishop of Ossory, passed through Louvain on his way to Rome late in 1769 and discovered that Father Netterville's visit was still remembered there <sup>20</sup>.

As for what Master [Charles] Kelly was told of Tom Netterville's expenses, I believe it, for besides the viatick, he and two (I think) more went parading in that country, and to Aix la Chapelle, Spa, French Flanders etc., and after he left Louvain they accompanied him to Brussels, Ghent, Bruges and Ostend. Besides, in the convent great dinners, and long ones too. And they often told me that they lost their rest while he was there. I never seen a close [i.e. tight-fisted] man in power but [was] merciless to others in expenses, as if they'd display a generous spirit they have not, while a truly generous man spares his friends and leans on himself, though still with frugality, endeavouring to keep the medium between avarice and prodigality. Frank [Netterville] would shine much more in prelacy. Besides, he is a graduate of the school.

The building of the new college at Lisbon went ahead throughout Father Netterville's provincialate, but since the work was not finished until 1771 it is better to postpone a full account of the project and simply to mention here the provincial's interest in the college. He first wrote to Father Boxadors about Lisbon on 30 August 1766, asking for jurisdiction over both nuns and friars and saying that he did not think any of the priests actually at Lisbon were capable of raising funds. As to the second point, Netterville was fairly close to the mark. There is in fact a racy description of the brethren in Lisbon written by Dominic O'Connor at Madrid early in October 1766: a description based on letters he had received from Bernard Brullaughan at Lisbon itself <sup>21</sup>.

He [Brullaughan] complains greatly of not having more Fathers of some supposition [i.e. promise] in the house in case he drops himself, fearing the Portuguese should become masters of all his labours. But I believe this dread is no more than an imaginary notion of his own, and striving to move people to join him. He says Father [Martin] Horan is grown very sickly, Father [Eugene] McCrohon almost decrepit, the rector [Dominic Delamar] extreme fat and heavy, Father

<sup>20</sup> Leghorn, 30 Apr. 1770. Burke to Troy. Dublin Diocesan Archives (hereafter D.D.A.), 29/4.

<sup>21</sup> Madrid, 1766. O'Connor to Chas. O'Kelly. SCAR, no. 22, doc. 31.

Barry full of the gout and other ailments, himself old and sickly not much better than the rest. Can't walk as before but a-horseback. What persons are we then to continue such an undertaking (says he) threatened every day by the provincial of this [Portuguese] province to take all to himself und under his own government according to the orders he has from Court ... How long will this subsist if we have no subjects to maintain our prerogatives and exemption? Young people won't do. We must have at least three or four grave fathers that will make a good appearance at Court and supply the principal offices as they fall vacant. All this is to be seriously considered and the General obliged to permit, nay to command the provincial of Ireland to send us capable subjects without loss of time ... Now you have the substance of his two letters to me.

Thomas Netterville had in fact addressed himself to the problem before ever Brullaughan wrote to Madrid, but the answer he got from the master general towards the end of the year offered only a partial solution. There was no question of putting the college under the provincial's jurisdiction, but he might name some suitable priests whom the general would then authorise him to send to Lisbon. George Jones and James Keating, both former students of Corpo Santo, were eventually chosen to go to Lisbon as collectors of funds on 25 July 1767<sup>22</sup>. Netterville continued to raise money in Ireland for the project, but was so annoyed by the attitude of the master general that he otherwise washed his hands of the whole business and did not even mention when writing to Charles O'Kelly on 14 April 1767 the half-measure the general had proposed<sup>23</sup>.

By the last letters from Lisbon our college goes on briskly. The general flatly refused me the least glimpse of authority with a *vehementer miramur* that should even think to apply for it. So how they will do for subjects there I can't tell. [John] Dolphin, the nuns of Buon Success declare they will not receive, even if sent by the general, and if I should send him they protest against me and will have recourse to the provincial of Portugal or the Court. I find they are now, as heretofore, a lawless people, so I shan't trouble myself any more about them. I procured in my visitation 2,500 pefaces for the college, which was no small help from this poor province. I likewise got the Compan-

<sup>22</sup> The date on which the general authorised the provincial to send them « *auctoritate nostra* ». The provincial's letter of 7 April, in which he submitted the names, is now lost, but mentioned in AGOP IV, 231, p. 45.

<sup>23</sup> For the complete text see Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 90-92.

ion [of the general] 400 discharged, which you will acquaint with. I requested Mr. [Edmund] Fitzgerald to let you know this six months ago, which I hope he did.

There were still some Irish priests and students scattered through the convents of Spain, fending for themselves outside the three foreign colleges of the province. Too little is known of their number or identity to let slip this opportunity of quoting again from the letter of 1766 written by the Irish procurator at Madrid to Charles O'Kelly in Rome.

Young [Dominic] MacDonnell is still at Bom Success. The rector doesn't say more of him but that he's well. Father [Daniel O'] Kean at Seville is son to the convent of Tralee, and Father Master [Eugene] McCrohon has a nephew called Mr. Owen MacCrohon who wants the general's licence to take the habit of our order in the convent of Xerez in Andalusia. He begs you'll call for said licence to his R.mo as he hopes the youth will make a good religious and is to profess for the convent of Tralee, being his native country ... Little Reynolds in Toledo is well and Brother Brullaughan I hope will soon join him. Father Kelly is changed to Victoria for health sake.

#### THOMAS NETTERVILLE'S WORK IN IRELAND, 1765-1781

We know practically nothing of the provincial's day-to-day work in Ireland itself, apart from his involvement in the novitiate question. No dispute with any bishop disturbed his term of office. The visitation of 1766 during which he collected so many Mass stipends for Corpo Santo seems to have been the only visitation he made. During his first two years he arranged the transfiliation of five priests from the convents of which they were "sons" to those where they actually worked<sup>24</sup>. Save in the case of Dublin, these transfiliations show no desire to build up the strength of any particular convent, though they do imply the weakening of some of the houses involved, notably Aghaboe, Rathfran and Longford.

Writing to Rome in April 1767, Father Netterville had spoken of Dublin: "our chapel and house of Bridge Street are almost finished.

<sup>24</sup> The five priests were Jn. O'Neill from Cavan to Drogheda (12. Oct. 1765), Pat. Hart from Rathfran to Trim (7 June 1766), Nich. Travers from Longford to Mullingar (12 Sept. 1766), Pat. Crawley from Aghaboe to Dublin and Dermot Egan from Drogheda to Dublin (both on 20 Sept. 1766). AGOP IV. 231, pp. 38, 41, 42, 45.



They will by far surpass in beauty and strength any in this city" <sup>25</sup>. When Terence Reilly, a pillar of that community since 1721, died in July 1765, the provincial wanted Troy to come back from Rome to take his place. The master general disagreed. "We have other plans for him", said Boxadors, leaving one to wonder just what he had in mind <sup>26</sup>. Had the master general consented, John T. Troy would scarcely have ended his days as archbishop of Dublin. There was building at Esker too, and a new house in the small northern town of Dundalk to which the priests of Carlingford had recently moved. For this latter detail we are indebted to the sin of a parish priest whom the archbishop of Armagh commanded on 6 November 1766 to make an eight-day retreat with the Dominican Fathers "already living in Dundalk" <sup>27</sup>. In the same year, Francis Quirke quested in the name of the convent of Mullingar, the first to do so for nearly twenty years, but it is not clear whether the provincial told him to do so <sup>28</sup>.

Thomas Netterville came to the end of his term of office in summer 1769. That August he became vicar general of the Drogheda nuns and remained so until his death. In this capacity he signed the nuns' account-books every October and noted in 1777 the renewal of an earlier decision that on the death of each sister £ 12 should be laid out in Masses for her soul, the money to come either "out of her fortune" or from the house. His annual appearance in October does not, however, prove his residence in Drogheda. Members of the Dominican friary nearby were from time to time named confessors of the nuns by the master general.

In October 1769 the aged bishop Augustine Cheevers of Meath asked Propaganda Fide for a coadjutor, and asked specifically for a veteran priest of the diocese named Eugene Geoghegan. Since the congregation delayed, there was plenty of time for a troublesome parish priest to calumny Geoghegan and for Thomas Netterville to encourage thirty-five of the leading Catholics of Meath to sign a petition urging his own appointment. His cousin Lord Gormanston recommended him in a letter of 18 June 1770 to cardinal Neri Corsini whom Gormanston had once met in Rome. The diocesan clergy resented Netterville's inter-

<sup>25</sup> Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 91.

<sup>26</sup> 25 Jan. 1766. AGOP IV. 231, p. 40.

<sup>27</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 744a. The building at Esker was done by Martin French, later provincial, and so is discussed further on.

<sup>28</sup> A. Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, vol. 2 (Dublin 1867) 463.

ference. One of them, parish priest of Nobber, told Corsini in October 1770 that this Dominican had ignored both canonical and Irish practice (an interesting distinction) by soliciting the support of the laity in his own favour. Granted, the man was truly worthy, "of high birth, of great family, but he never did a day's work in this diocese, but always lived at his ease in Dublin". Four months later Eugene Geoghegan became coadjutor bishop of Meath<sup>29</sup>.

At much the same time the northern diocese of Kilmore fell vacant by bishop Campbell's death on 1 December 1769. Not only Thomas Netterville, but also his brother John Francis, showed some interest in the situation. On this occasion Propaganda settled matters in less than four months and all we know about recommendations in favour of the Dominican brothers is what Propaganda itself knew on the day of the great decision: namely that "they were to be proposed". This useless information came to Rome in a letter dated 12 January 1770 from the nuncio at Brussels. Thomas Netterville, the nuncio added, had been twenty years on the mission and served as prior of different convents. More recently, while provincial, he had been "loved and esteemed by all for his zeal and unstained character. His more than ordinary prudence marks him out as one who seems born to rule". One of Propaganda's anonymous advisers echoed this compliment, remarking that Netterville had governed the Irish Dominicans "with prudence and praise, even the praise of his master general". The evidence leaves the strong impression, especially since a Franciscan was appointed to the vacant diocese, that Thomas Netterville would have become bishop of Kilmore in 1770 but for the fact that he had not one word of Irish<sup>30</sup>.

One finds Father Netterville's signature again in the account-book of the friary in Drogheda in March 1772, June 1773 and July 1774, as though he was a permanent member of the little community in Mill Lane. Soon after, just before Christmas 1775, he was elected prior of Dublin after a little domestic drama reported by bishop Thomas Burke on 24 December<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> The papers on the case are in APF, Acta 141 (1771), ff. 22-26; SOCG 830, ff. 101-108, 111-20.

<sup>30</sup> The original letter from the nuncio is now APF, CP 137, ff. 258-59. The other papers on the vacancy occur *ibidem*, ff. 203-08, 282-84, 312-13; SC Irlanda 13, f. 577.

<sup>31</sup> Kilkenny, 24 Dec. 1775. Burke to O'Kelly, D.D.A., 29/4. Netterville thus succeeded Pat. Crawley who was prior of Dublin on 25 Jan. 1774. Some papers

In Bridge Street they are greatly divided. They could not agree to make a prior *intra*, and therefore before the end of the month, to prevent a devolution, the majority elected one *extra* and that is Tom Netterville. Then issued a protest of three against two vocals. The provincial appointed Master [John] Daly to examine into the affair. He gave his report against the three protestants, so that it's thought the election will be confirmed.

Confirmed it duly was, and Netterville continued as prior of Dublin until summer 1778 at least. There is nothing to suggest that he returned to Drogheda on finishing his term of office. On the death of Thomas Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, in 1776, John T. Troy at Rome proposed Thomas Netterville "*voce et scriptis*" to succeed him. Propaganda chose Troy himself for Ossory, but that did nothing to lessen Troy's anxiety to see Netterville a bishop. On reaching Ireland he composed a generic recommendation in his favour, one to be used in any vacancy, and prevailed on two other bishops to sign it. On 25 May 1778, Eugene Geoghegan died, leaving the ninety-year-old bishop of Meath in urgent need of another coadjutor. Troy wrote at once to cardinal Castelli to say that of all the many candidates Thomas Netterville was the one most worthy to succeed. John Carpenter, archbishop of Dublin, prompted by Charles O'Kelly, declared that he knew Netterville well: "a gentleman with whom for a number of years I have been on a very friendly and intimate footing... he has always conducted himself with extreme decency and propriety". Augustine Cheevers himself, bishop of Meath, formally asked on 28 July 1778 for Thomas Netterville, "prior of Dublin".

Other unsigned petitions, including one from Francis T. Levins, prior of St. Clement's, tell us that Netterville was now fifty-seven and had spent thirty years on the mission. Not only was he a native of Meath with many illustrious relations in that diocese, but he had "illustrious relations" in England too. There was also the telling detail that he had a personal allowance of £ 100 a year, which would relieve the diocese of having to support him. Father Levins too passed favourable judgement on his provincialate: "he governed the province with prudence, moderation and great success"<sup>32</sup>.

signed in favour of the Capuchins show that T.N. was prior on 29 June 1776 and 31 Jan. 1777. Vin. O'Brien signed them as lector of philosophy and vicar of the convent of Dublin on 31 Jan. 1777. Rome, Irish College, Liber XVI, ff. 153-54, 161.

<sup>32</sup> This and the preceding paragraph are based on APF, SC Irlanda 13, ff. 182-98, 341-42, 396, 401. Two weeks before his death, Eug. Geoghegan proposed Mich.

Since the venerable bishop Cheevers died only three weeks after asking for a coadjutor, the question was one of some importance. It was a matter of filling one of the largest dioceses in Ireland and at the same time of balancing political forces within a hierarchy recently divided on the question of an oath of allegiance to the government. In the event, Propaganda chose Patrick Joseph Plunkett who was to prove one of the finest Irish bishops of the century. Thomas Netterville had been passed over yet again, so perhaps he felt consoled when elected provincial for the second time in 1781.

#### JOHN FRANCIS NETTERVILLE, 1769-1773

The provincial was succeeded in summer 1769 by his own brother Francis, two years his junior in the order. Francis too was a "Sixtine" and a much more seasoned one than Thomas, for he spent eighteen unbroken years at Rome from 24 June 1739 when he took the habit in the upper choir of St. Clement's from the prior, Thomas Vincent O'Kelly. Francis took also the religious name John, but made little use of it in later life. At the time of his profession he made his vows in the hands of Thomas Burke, later bishop of Ossory, and in the presence of many notables including Michael MacDonogh, bishop of Kilmore, and John Brett, later successively bishop of Killala and Elphin<sup>33</sup>.

The future provincial proved a fairly clever student, making his way with credit through the two years of philosophy and four of theology then required at St. Sixtus. He was fortunate enough to start his studies in 1740 at a time when there were no less than thirteen students in the house. Four others began philosophy under Dominic Morragh at the same time as he: Clement Colgan, Ambrose Gallagher, Matthew Casey and Vincent Dogherty<sup>34</sup>. Netterville's rating in examinations went up from year to year, rising steadily from "*bene*" to "*optime*" to "*egregie ac laudabiliter*". He was specially praised for his application and power of memory. From January 1743 he began to receive sacred orders and

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Fleming O.P. of Trim as the priest most worthy to succeed him. His letter, with others on the vacancy, have been edited by John Brady, *Some Documents concerning the Diocese of Meath*, in Arch. Hib. 8 (1941) 203-211.

<sup>33</sup> SCAR, no. 37, ff. 93-94.

<sup>34</sup> *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* (1701-43). AGOP XI. 3600. The succeeding volume (1743-88) is in a different archive, SCAR, no. 53.



was ordained a priest at the Lateran on 13 March 1745<sup>35</sup>. On 5 July following he reached the apex of his student career by defending public conclusions in the basilica of St. Clement's before cardinal Neri Corsini to whom he dedicated his theses. Shortly after, he contracted some dangerous disease but soon recovered.

Netterville's examination for the lectorate on 16 September 1746 was another *tour de force*: the records of the studentate describe him as "*egregius studens ac solida argumentandi promptitudine ac subtilitate eximius*". After that, though he is not mentioned in 1747, he methodically stepped up one rung of the academic ladder every two years: *lector artium* in 1748, master of students in 1750, second regent in 1752 and finally first regent in 1754. On quite a different plane, he was secretary of the convent from 1750, in which capacity he always signed his name "Nettirvill". Soon after, he was elected subprior and then master of novices as well. On 23 March 1755 he became prior of the house, with permission to continue as regent and with a dispensation also from the *alternativa*. Like his brother, John Francis Netterville started out as a son of Drogheda in Ulster, but was translocated to Dublin in Leinster on 22 August 1749<sup>36</sup>.

Father Netterville was not destined to complete even one term as prior in Rome, but he had time enough to give the habit to John Thomas Troy — which explains why bishop Burke of Ossory could speak of Troy as his "grandson" — and to collect two of the honorary degrees of the order. He became bachelor or *praesentatus* in July 1755 and master of theology on 5 November 1757, on the very same day as his elder brother. Juan Tomas Boxadors personally conferred on him the coveted mastership<sup>37</sup>. Four days later he resigned the priorship, with all due permission, because Augustine Cheevers, bishop of Meath, had written to say that his presence in Ireland was "necessary"<sup>38</sup>. One is at a loss to say why, for there is no reason to believe that Netterville took a parish in Meath. There may have been some question of family property or inheritance. At all events, the former prior next appears, not in Dr. Cheever's diocese but in Dublin.

<sup>35</sup> Rome, Archivio storico del Vicariato, Liber Ordinationum (1737-42), p. 328; Liber Ordinationum (1743-48), pp. 1, 23, 41, 90, 132.

<sup>36</sup> The translocation is noted in AGOP IV. 217, p. 115. The remainder of the paragraph is based on the house council book, SCAR, no. 57.

<sup>37</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 153, 171.

<sup>38</sup> Loc. cit., p. 171.



The earliest reference to his activities in Ireland is a somewhat doubtful one, since it may possibly refer to his brother Thomas. Archbishop Lincoln of Dublin was taking an interest in the vacant diocese of Ossory, even to the extent of making a visitation and appointing an administrator there. Writing to cardinal Spinelli on 26 August 1758, he complained of "a certain Mr. Netterville, a young Dominican, highly ignorant, who has hardly anything to recommend him except a small patrimony. He has been at some pains for a little while to take the lower clergy of Ossory by surprise so that they may sign a postulation in his favour, but I did not neglect to tell His Excellency at Brussels about it"<sup>39</sup>. On 12 November 1760, John Netterville was named vicar general and ordinary confessor of the Drogheda nuns, a three-year appointment renewed regularly until he became provincial<sup>40</sup>. At much the same time he became vicar of the nuns of Dublin, but since this was in the gift of the provincial it is not possible to date the appointment. Occasionally he signed the account-books of Sienna, Drogheda, as often as four times a year, but yet seems to have lived in Dublin where his "other" nuns in Channel Row were grateful whenever "Mr. Netterville's servant" brought them a salmon.

Archbishop Lincoln of Dublin failed to place his own candidate, James Purcell, in Ossory which went to the Dominican Thomas Burke. The fact did nothing to improve his attitude towards the friars. John F. Netterville was one of those regulars who had to do an oral examination in moral theology before the archbishop in 1759, and then suffer the "mortification" of being granted faculties for one year only<sup>41</sup>. That was a bitter pill for a master of theology to swallow. Netterville was still at Dublin on 20 January 1761 when he signed a protest against what Dr. Lincoln had said about confraternities and processions, and in Dublin he remained until his election. The provincial chapter of 1761 named him historian of the province and he was continued in the same office by the chapter of 1765. In the meanwhile, certainly by 20 October 1764, he had become prior of Dublin and was later elected for a second term<sup>42</sup>. The question now arose as to whether he might succeed his

<sup>39</sup> See p. 276, note 87. Since Lincoln knew so little of this Netterville, he more probably referred to John (newly come to Ireland) than to Thomas who had lived in Dublin since 1749. The phrase "highly ignorant", which could not be truly used of either brother, illustrates the archbishop's usual style.

<sup>40</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 7. In succession to Pat. O'Diamond deceased.

<sup>41</sup> See above, p. 279.

<sup>42</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 35, under date 15 Dec. 1764. Prior also in Sept. 1767

brother in the provincialate. Thanks to the step taken in 1749, John belonged to the province of Leinster and might immediately succeed Thomas who belonged to Ulster, but there still remained the constitutional impediment that they were brothers. On 12 November 1768, the master general brushed this difficulty aside by dispensation and John Francis Netterville, prior of Dublin, was elected provincial on 17 June 1769 by thirty-six votes out of forty-two<sup>43</sup>. He was forty-seven years old at the time.

The definitors on this occasion were Denis O'Connor, John O'Neill and two future provincials: Thomas Dalton and John Dolphin. Another provincial of the future, Martin French, was elected definitor-general. The chosen *conservatores privilegiorum* among the bishops were exactly those so named already in 1765. John O'Daly became historian of the province in succession to Father Netterville and it was decided that the provincial archives should be kept at Louvain<sup>44</sup>. Most of the ordinations concerned the college of Holy Cross. Not a word was said about novices, because negotiations with Propaganda Fide on that subject were far advanced, but it was decided that Louvain should have twenty-four students, six from each province, and no more. Those admitted to the habit over and above that quota were to go elsewhere for their studies after profession. Eight years before, the provincial chapter had explained how conventual life was being undermined because the more capable friars were being thrust into parishes. In 1769, the chapter took a less passive view by roundly denouncing those who left their convents simply to suit themselves (comm. 1).

Cum in hac desolata provincia multorum conventuum dissolutio, fratrum dispersio, regularis disciplinae relaxatio, aliaque gravissima mala exinde proficisci noscantur, quod multi ex nostris, saecularium personarum patrocinio, parochias obtinentes, vel parochorum coad-

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according to the "Netterville list" discussed above. Th. Burke mentions his second term, broken by election as provincial. *Supplementum Hib. Dom.*, 871.

<sup>43</sup> AGOP IV. 240, pp. 1-2. Election confirmed on 22 July 1769.

<sup>44</sup> The acts of the chapter are in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 47. The chapter of 1720 had designated Louvain for the archives, but the chapter of 1757 designated Dublin instead. The archives at Louvain were lost in 1794 on the French invasion of the Netherlands. So far as is known, John O'Daly wrote nothing on the history of the province, save for valuable notes on the history of the friary at Newbridge. On 27 Apr. 1771 he received the general's licence to print a small work in Irish of which no copy is known to survive: *Instructio catechetica de natura Iubilaeorum et Indulgentiarum*. AGOP IV. 240, p. 3.

jutores facti, conventus suos deserant, capellas conventuales etiam diebus festivis sacro destitutas relinquant, ac extra conventus saeculariter vivant, non sine magno saecularium scandalo ac suorum animarum periculo. Nos huiusmodi malis in nostri ordinis dedecus, huiusque provinciae perniciem palam vergentibus quantocius obviare volentes, R.A.P.M. Provinciali committimus ipsumque impense rogamus ut in suo visitationis decursu huiusmodi ordinis desertores proprii potius commodi intuitu quam sancto animarum zelo abductos ad suos conventus redire et in forma communitatis quantum fieri potest vivere compellat, nisi tamen in aliquo casu ipse aliter expedire prudenter judicaverit, qua de re ipsius conscientiam omnino gravamus.

The other three commissions were really postulations for candidates who lacked some legal requirement for promotion. For example, Hyacinth Berrill of Drogheda had taught theology for only three years; one year too little for postulation to the mastership *titulo scholae*. Similar requests were made for John T. Troy, aged twenty-nine, and George Plunkett, aged twenty-eight. By no coincidence whatever, Berrill, Troy and Plunkett were all Sixtinians and it was only natural in that age of patronage that the new provincial should have remembered them. By contrast, the acts of the chapter are curiously brief where one would have expected them to be long. Apart from the three "commissions" mentioned, only six candidates were advanced for the degrees of the order, and these six were postulated only for places already vacant by death or promotion. Considering that the chapter of 1765 postulated thirty-eight, Father Netterville showed remarkable restraint. Likewise, though the matter was less easily controlled, there were only fifteen names of those who had died over the previous four years, as against thirty in the list for 1765.

When confirming these chapter acts two years later, Father Boxadors took up a point they did not mention<sup>45</sup>. He had already permitted parish priests to act as priors, provided they lived in their convents, but he had heard that this was not being done. Even when urgently needed in their convents they had to travel immense distances to reach them. If these reports were true, the provincial was to make it his business to prevent the election of such unsuitable priors in future.

<sup>45</sup> The confirmation of the acts is simply mentioned in AGOP IV. 240, under date. For the text of Boxador's letter one must consult TA, Acta Cap. Prov., III, 100-03. The general promoted all who had been postulated, even Berrill, Plunkett and Troy, and at least six others proposed by the provincial according as vacancies arose during his term.

## AN ARCHBISHOP FOR DUBLIN, 1769-1770

Patrick Fitzsimons, archbishop of Dublin, died on 25 November 1769 after little more than six years in office. Dublin, the capital of the country, was just beginning to grow in population and influence, and while Armagh might claim the primacy, the then primate was an ineffective man and his diocese a largely rural one. Dublin was the seat of power, a prize worth fighting for. Many curious details come to light as one sifts through the postulations and calumnies of two hundred years ago. Who would have thought, as the nuncio at Brussels did, that the "Spaniards" (meaning priests educated in Spain) were so strong that no "Frenchman" could hope for promotion in Dublin?<sup>46</sup> Or that, even among the Spaniards, the "Fingal faction" controlled the chapter?<sup>47</sup> The full story of the vacancy is a fascinating one, but the only point at issue here is the decisive part played in that story by the regular clergy.

Although the friars had had no difficulty with Dr. Fitzsimons, the wounds inflicted by archbishop Lincoln were still fresh and there was every likelihood that the new archbishop would be one of a handful of diocesan priests who had worked with Lincoln against the friars and would certainly maintain his policies. The question of a test-oath for Catholics was also in the air. Archbishop Fitzsimons, it was said, had been in consultation with the government on the subject, and the friars were much afraid that the bishops would strike some bargain with the Protestant authorities at their expense. The temporal power of the popes loomed large in the search for an acceptable formula of allegiance and the regulars, so often called "the pope's dragoons", did not want a Gallican archbishop. There was every reason for them to intervene. The surprising thing is that they intervened so well.

This may have been the first time in the eighteenth century when the provincials of the four major orders signed a joint statement on the filling of a vacant diocese. They acted quickly, even more quickly than the diocesan chapter, for their postulation to Propaganda Fide was signed on 28 November, just three days after archbishop Fitzsimon's

<sup>46</sup> Brussels, 2 Jan. 1770. Nuncio to Castelli, APF, CP 137, ff. 223, 226.

<sup>47</sup> Dublin, 16 Dec. 1769. Mich. Nall to secretary of Propaganda. The fact that so many curates were also canons was due, Nall said, to the power of the Fingal faction. Loc. cit., ff. 241-42.



death<sup>48</sup> They proposed Thomas Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, who was in fact a native of Dublin and had worked as a priest in the city for more than a decade. At the time the four provincials wrote, bishop Burke was already in Rome and no doubt would have accepted the archbishopric had it been offered to him. There were those who wrongly suspected him of going to Rome with the sole intention of returning with the pallium<sup>49</sup>. But Thomas Burke was too much a realist to regard himself as a serious candidate. After all, he had spent the last nine years in litigation with the leading clergy of the capital. Even Charles O'Kelly O.P. pointed out to the cardinals of Propaganda Fide that a regular would not be acceptable. The strongest attack on 'Thomas Burke's suitability came from the bishops of Ferns and Kildare, both (like Burke himself) suffragans of Dublin<sup>50</sup>. It was already widely believed, they wrote in March 1770, that Burke's appointment might be expected any day. The two bishops implored Rome "to spare them such an evil, and not permit that restless and unyielding spirit, the enemy of all peace and concord, on whose word or promise no one could ever rely" to be raised above them. Were Burke to come back as archbishop, the very Dominicans of Dublin would cross themselves and swear that nothing would ever have compelled them to advance him to any position in the order, not even to a vote in their chapter. While just an ordinary friar in Dublin, the two bishops claimed, Thomas Burke was feared within the walls of his own convent.

Why then, if this was true, had the four provincials put his name forward with so much confidence? Rather, one suspects, as a straw man whom they would have liked but knew they would not get. Their second candidate was relatively unknown, a young canon named John Carpenter who had shown some ability in 1764 when attempting to recover the Irish college at Lisbon from the king of Portugal and whom the provincials now praised as one who abhorred party politics, "a promotor of peace and concord". Carpenter was supported by viscount Nicholas

<sup>48</sup> Latin original in APF, CP 137, ff. 260-61. J. F. Netterville signed first as a matter of protocol, the Dominicans having come to Ireland before any other friars.

<sup>49</sup> e.g. Pat. Rob. Kirwan, bishop of Achonry, who wrote to Propaganda on 3 Dec. 1769 describing Burke as "an enemy of peace and quiet". APF, CP 137, f. 225. In fact Burke began to prepare his adliminal visit to Rome a full year before Fitzsimons died. The general issued commendatory letters for him as early as 28 Jan. 1769. AGOP IV, 240, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> 10 Mar. 1770. Nich. Sweetman of Ferns and Jas. O'Keeffe of Kildare to a cardinal. APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 511, 515.



Taaffe and three canons of Dublin, but by no one so strongly as by Thomas Burke in Rome. Bishop Burke, the last of the Jacobites and a fierce opponent of such test-oath formulae as he had seen, twice urged cardinal Castelli to choose Carpenter: "*qui potens est in doctrina sana et eos quī contradicunt arguere*". Carpenter might be trusted "to attack the notorious illicit oaths whereas certain other people would do the very opposite"<sup>51</sup>. Other commentators at Rome and Dublin warned Propaganda Fide that to put in Carpenter would be equivalent to handing the archbishopric to Thomas Burke or Charles O'Kelly.

The cathedral chapter of Dublin met on 4 December 1769 to postulate three of their own: Christopher Bermingham, James Plunkett and Andrew Morgan<sup>52</sup>. They also asked, quite bluntly, that no regular be promoted since friars were offensive to Protestants in general and to the government in particular. According to Michael Nall, a priest of Dublin, Plunkett and Morgan were only "shadows in the postulation", candidates of little weight who would offer no real challenge to Bermingham<sup>53</sup>. Nall also tells us that Bermingham was the leader of the "Fingal faction" and had excluded canon John Field from the postulation even though Field got ten votes at the meeting. All things considered, Christopher Bermingham had good reason to expect promotion. He was the only serious candidate proposed by the diocesan clergy.

It was at this point that the four provincials played their boldest and most original stroke. Working through their superiors general and Roman agents, particularly through John T. Troy O.P., they lodged a formal veto against four candidates<sup>54</sup>. The text, which is worth printing in full, expresses the different reasons why the friars interfered at all.

Vacando presentemente la sede metropolitana di Dublino per la morte del fu monsignore arcivescovo Patrizio Fitzsimons, si rappresenta per parte delli regolari di Dublino richiedersi un successore dotto, prudente, pacifico, ed inimico al perniciosissimo sistema di pensare intorno le prerogative della Santa Sede, e li regolari, introdottosi in tutta l'Irlanda ma specialmente in quella diocesi e provincia d'alcuni

<sup>51</sup> [Rome], 27 Jan. 1770. Unsigned note in Burke's hand. APF, CP 137, f. 266. The provincials had also a third candidate, canon Ter. McLaughlin, at the end of their postulation.

<sup>52</sup> Latin original in APF, CP 137, ff. 227-29.

<sup>53</sup> As in note (47) above. Nall mentioned that Bermingham's true family name was Horish; the family had changed it in difficult times.

<sup>54</sup> The document, unsigned and undated, is in Troy's hand. APF, CP 137, ff. 243-44. There is a copy, perhaps a draft, in SCAR, Codex I, vol. 2, ff. 431-32.

poco avveduti e scordevoli del zeloso rispetto mai sempre mostrato da loro antenati alla sede di Pietro.

Perciò li detti regolari stimano essere loro dovere d'informare la S. C. di Propaganda Fide per mezzo delli loro superiori generali ed agenti in Roma, che dalli molti candidati o pretendenti alla successione, alcuni meritano d'essere affatto esclusi, ma principalmente li seguenti.

1° Il Signore Cristoforo Bermingham vicario capitolare, per essere stato vicario generale ed intimo consigliere del fù arcivescovo, e promotore del troppo noto affare de' giuramenti proposti alli Catolici d'Irlanda dal vescovo eretico di Derry [Frederick A. Harvey] ed ingiuriosi non meno alla fede cattolica che alla Santa Sede.

2° Il R. Signore Canonico e Parocho [Giovanni] Field, non solamente per li motivi addotti in riguardo del Signore Bermingham, ma ancora per essere poco dotto, e singolarissimo per la sua avversione alle prerogative del Papa e Sede Apostolica.

3° Il R. Signore Parocho [Giacomo] Plunkett, ancora di poca dottrina, ed aderente alli principi e massime delli sudetti signori.

4° Il R. Signore Giacomo Pursell residente in Roma, per essere poco dotto e niente sperimentato nelle cose della missione; imbevuto però nelle massime delli tre sureferiti signori mediante un continuo carteggio con li due ultimi arcivescovi di Dublino.

Li regolari d'Irlanda fondatamente prevedono che nel caso che fosse promosso alla vacante sede qualch'uno de' detti quattro signori, o altro connesso o aderente a loro, sarebbe storbata la pace del sacerdozio per tutto il regno d'Irlanda, come successe in tempo di Monsignore Lincoln con scandalo universale; essendo questi quattro signori dichiarati avversari del clero regolare.

The lot fell on John Carpenter, "a poor tailor's son, an unbeneficed, inservient and indigent priest", who ruled the see of Dublin until 1786 and left a name still held in veneration<sup>55</sup>. Bishop Burke, already making his way home, got the news at Florence. "Now orthodoxy will be countenanced and whigism discouraged", he wrote to Troy, "and I can govern my diocese without appeals. Moreover, the fine air of Kilkenny and polite people will, under God, promote longevity"<sup>56</sup>. He was delighted, above all, by the exclusion of a "*lupus rapax*", his favourite term for priests like William Egan of Clonmel, later a bishop,

<sup>55</sup> The quotation is from a letter (Florence, 17 Apr. 1770) from Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4. See T. Wall, Archbishop John Carpenter and the Catholic Revival, 1770-1786, in *Reportorium Novum*, vol. I, no. 1 (1955) 173-82.

<sup>56</sup> In a postscript of 3 April to his letter of 31 Mar. 1770. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

who did not share his views on the temporal power of the popes. The same "joyous letter" from Charles O'Kelly brought Burke the news that both Nettervilles had been passed over for Kilmore in favour of a Franciscan. Even this pleased the Dominican bishop: "I am glad a regular is promoted to Kilmore, it's evident they are excluded only from archbishoprics". On his slow progress home through Lisbon, he consoled himself with the thought that but for his own active presence in Rome, John Field and not John Carpenter would have carried the day, leaving him to face not only a ravening but a mitred "wolf" on his return to Dublin.

#### LISBON AND LOUVAIN, 1768-1773

There were still no students at Corpo Santo in 1761 but the new college was at last beginning to rise and hopes were high that studies might begin within two or three years. Charles O'Kelly at the Minerva in Rome was still its most dedicated patron and fund-raiser. A letter he wrote to Martin French of Athenry gives one a fair idea of his devotion, achievement and technique <sup>57</sup>.

I return you my hearty thanks for your offer of prefaces. For my own personal obligation I don't stand in need of any, yet hundreds discharged to my intention would be of great advantage to our college in Lisbon, the rebuilding of which I have more at heart than any other temporal concern. Since two years [i.e. since 1766] I have got 2,100 discharged for them in Ireland chiefly by Dr. Fallon and my friend, our [Edmund] Fitzgerald in Dublin's means. Corsini gave me £ 250 Irish for them and General Burke at Naples £ 12. In short, in Masses and collections, with all that I have myself spared since eleven years in this city, I have sent them £ 650, whence you may judge how much I have that college at heart. It and the church are risen far above the first story at the cost of £ 3,000. Master [Bernard] Brullaughan, the only truly active person there, sent me the plan of it. When finished, and that I hope will be in less than three years, it will be magnificent, beautiful and commodious for a community of thirty-eight friars.

If our [Thomas] Devenish be there, tell him this from me and that I am the most surprised of any living at his silence since he came to Europe [from St. Croix], and at his backwardness in not helping his own darling Corpo Santo. As to you, dear Sir, your new excellent house of Athenry puts all pecuniary help out of your power but do,

<sup>57</sup> Rome, 8 June 1768. TA, Letters, under date.

do all you can by yourself and others in the line of prefaces. I don't limit any number, for any number great or small will be usefully and securely applied. Your unpatriotick and meanspirited Lovanists refused lending or giving them at interest £ 300 which they have fruitless in their *depositum*.

Bishop Burke of Ossory, having made Carpenter archbishop of Dublin, left Rome on 7 March 1770 and travelled slowly home, sailing that summer from Genoa to Lisbon. He stayed at Lisbon from August to November before taking ship again for Cork and has left some account of his visit in the supplement to *Hibernia Dominicana* <sup>58</sup>. Dr. Burke, bearer of Clement XIV's good wishes to the royal family, was received at court, met even the Marquis de Pombal — "the Cromwell of Portugal" as Brullaughan described him — and helped the cardinal patriarch to consecrate three bishops. He found Corpo Santo as yet unfinished but far enough advanced for him to bless the new church on 13 October 1770 and to carry the Blessed Sacrament on the following afternoon in solemn procession from the old church in the Rua Formosa to the new. College and church together formed an "isle" or block almost exactly on the site of the college destroyed in 1755 but yet in strict alignment with the new plan for the city. The Irish Dominican community, "about ten" Burke says, had a house in the Rua Formosa for which the king paid rent and served the little church beside it until bishop Burke led them to Corpo Santo. They thus began to use the new church about eight months before they could move into the new college of which it formed a part.

The letters Thomas Burke wrote back to his friends, John T. Troy and Charles O'Kelly at Rome, and some of their letters to him, fill in many details and would indeed tell practically the whole story but that the series is incomplete <sup>59</sup>. Dominic Delamar, still pro-rector of Corpo Santo, wrote to bishop Burke on 7 February 1771. "Last Advent we removed from Rua Formosa but, as you remember, there was no place or room quite finished at Corpo Santo. We were obliged to take an apartment in the next house antiguous to the college, where we are very ill accommodated, being in a smoky house. But I hope that before the month of June we'll be all, the few that are, in our cells in the college" <sup>60</sup>. Since

<sup>58</sup> *Supplementum Hiberniae Dominicanae*, s.l. 1772, 853-55.

<sup>59</sup> Burke's letters are mostly in D.D.A., 29/4, and those of his two friends in D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>60</sup> Kilkenny, 8 Mar. 1771. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

the master general had offended Pombal, his authority was not recognised in Portugal and his subjects forbidden to correspond with him. That is why Dominic Delamar, rector since 1758, remained so long in office. Bishop Burke was present when the new papal nuncio, Mons. Conti, "desired Delamar not to write to Boxadors. He healed what is past *signo crucis* and made Delamar easy in point of obedience for the future"<sup>61</sup>. In the same letter, Burke took Delamar's part against Bernard Brullaughan or Bradley, a priest in whom Charles O'Kelly placed more confidence.

I really think Delamar is the fittest man to be rector. Besides his exceeding good conduct in the last troublesome ten years, he has less of our wretched provincial partiality. Bradley is well stocked that way. He tells a confounded deal of lies, tho inoffensive but to himself... Making collections in cities and towns of this kingdom for Corpo Santo is an excellent scheme in theory but not in practice, as you'll give me leave to tell you. In the capital [Dublin] our brethren are heavily indebted and pay interest for the building of their chapel. In Cork, the second Dublin, Daniel [i.e. Albert] O'Brien made a good large shell of a chapel but can get neither money nor credit to finish it, and in all human appearance it will remain next to a chaos till his dying day. How then can our brethren in this kingdom make collections for Corpo Santo? Had it been situated in the Spanish dominions, your laudable endeavours... would turn out effectual, but not otherwise, as I was informed in Lisbon.

The bishop would himself have asked the king of Portugal for a contribution, but "the really royal bounty of 1,000 moydores so recently received hindered me by the Fathers' advice to move for Corpo Santo"<sup>62</sup>. In May 1771 he took malicious enjoyment in the news that "when Dominic MacDonnell died he left after him in the deposit of Bon Success about a thousand crowns, and the procurator before him... did the same". The Irish nuns seem to have kept the money. What really amused the bishop was that when he was there "Bon Success was laying out money (returned to them) at interest, and Corpo Santo looking for the like, but Bon Success would not favour them for obvious reasons"<sup>63</sup>. New lectors were appointed that summer and some students rounded

<sup>61</sup> Kilkenny, 18 Dec. 1770. Burke to O'Kelly. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>62</sup> Lisbon, 2 Oct. 1770. Burke to Troy. Ibidem.

<sup>63</sup> Kilkenny, 25 May 1771. Burke to O'Kelly. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.



up to begin class in autumn 1771. The master general issued the patents even though the regular clergy of Portugal were now under the sole jurisdiction of the cardinal patriarch of Lisbon. William Lonergan and George Plunkett, teachers at Louvain, were ordered to Lisbon in July, but Plunkett was almost at once replaced by another "Lovanist", Andrew MacCormick. Patrick Vincent Donnellan, a student at the Minerva, was told to forget about finishing his studies and to go to Lisbon to teach philosophy. James French, a cleric at Cremona, is the only new student whose name appears in any record<sup>64</sup>. Although the college was built for a community of thirty-eight, including twenty-five students, it is hardly likely there were ever so many in the house.

Due to the loss of the college records, the history of the new Corpo Santo will probably never be known. At any rate it got off to a good start. Bishop Burke heard glowing reports of the "public conclusions" or scholastic debates held in autumn 1772 after the first academic year, but since his correspondent O'Kelly had the same news from the same source, the bishop merely touched on the subject. "Lonergan was the best lector at Holy Cross. MacCormick too is a good one. It was well done to send the best lectors and students. The patriarch is now the [master] general of Portugal, and both general and provincial of Corpo Santo and Bon Success... The companion [i.e. assistant general] of Spain, to whom my compliments, can clear up this point: what apology might be made at the heel of p. 428 in *Hibernia Dominicana* for the non-execution of the charming diplomas you so dextrously procured? In Lisbon they say the king of Spain would not permit a public collection for a house out of his own dominions"<sup>65</sup>.

Early in 1776, the year of his death, bishop Thomas Burke had some slight difficulty, "a very short-lived blast", with the government or civic authorities which led him to mention that Lisbon would be his refuge "if infirmities or any other cause should compel him to cross the seas"<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Lonergan, Fleming and Donnellan were assigned on 2 July, and French on 20 July 1771. MacCormick was appointed on 31 August after Plunkett resigned. AGOP IV. 240, pp. 4-5.

<sup>65</sup> Kilkenny, St. Clement's day [23 Nov.] 1772. Burke to O'Kelly. D.D.A., 29/4. Burke asked this question because he was preparing to publish a supplement to *Hib. Dom.*, and a second edition of the whole work. On O'Kelly's "charming diplomas", see above, pp. 300-303.

<sup>66</sup> Kilkenny, 22 May 1776. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4.

I am glad [William] Lonerger succeeds [Bernard] Bradley. He is a man of abilities and was the best lector at Holy Cross when I was there. He is with all a religious of address, good behaviour and activity, and is a nephew of the famous Father Sheehy. I am in strong hopes he'll find out some ingenious way to finish the church contrary to my prediction, as is completed the house on the other side of the main [main?] street<sup>67</sup>. I wish he got the college made a formal convent with a novitiate, as you mention, in which case for obvious reasons they'd live with more harmony under the nuncio than the general or provincial.

Propaganda's small but useful subsidy to Holy Cross, Louvain, was discontinued in 1761 and offered again in 1763 under a condition — the taking of a missionary oath — which the master general absolutely forbade<sup>68</sup>. Not long after, the community were forbidden to quest in Wallony and lost a government pension of 400 florins. In these circumstances they turned to Propaganda again, and if they had no great hope of success they cannot have been disappointed in the result, for they were none the richer for it. The only benefit of their overture to Rome was to leave us a most interesting letter penned on their behalf by the nuncio at Brussels to cardinal Castelli<sup>69</sup>.

Trovomi ora in grado d'incomodare l'Eminenza Vostra in quanto alla petizione che le verrà fatta dai religiosi Domenicani Irlandesi del convento di Lovanio affine d'essere aggraziati della pensione di scudi 120, quale per 100 e più anni goderon già i medesimi insino al 1761. Veramente la comunità è così numerosa, e le rendite sono tenui a segno, che non sanno soddisfare ai debiti onde sono aggravati, ed a stento grande possono sussistere.

Sono sopra sessanta religiosi, cioè per gli studi sette attuali professori, un procuratore, un maestro di novizii, 34 studenti, novizi 11, e dieci conversi, e per altro l'entrate non arrivano a scudi soli seicento. È stato di un sommo pregiudizio al sodetto convento la proibizione fattagli di questuare nelle parti Gallo Belgiche, nè mi è potuto riuscire con le raccomandazioni appresso Monsignore Arcivescovo di Cambrai

<sup>67</sup> Seemingly a reference to a shop built and rented out by Corpo Santo, mentioned in Burke's letter (Kilkenny, 9 Mar. 1776) to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4. "I am glad the house near Corpo Santo is finished. It will set well, being an excellent place to run goods. In that very quarter many, as well as John Fonseca, made fortunes".

<sup>68</sup> See above, pp. 316-319.

<sup>69</sup> Brussels, 7 May 1771. APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 592-93. There is a dorsal note, "si aspetta l'accennato riscontro", but no other trace, not even of the promised petition, in APF.

d'arrecar loro verun aiuto. In oltre soggiocano all'infortunio della sospensione tuttavia d'una pensione di 400 fiorini, che loro veniva somministrata da questo governo.

Una gran parte di edificio della residenza è in cattivissimo stato, minacciando rovina, ed è poi cosa indubitata, che nel detto convento Ibernese fioriscono distintamente la regolare disciplina e gli studi, cossicche ben quattro dispute pubbliche vî si sostengono tutti gl'anni con sommo decoro, ed è a giusta ragione riputato come il sostegno principale ed il seminario dell'Ordine di quella provincia.

Quindi è, che per tutti li detti motivi in parte già noti alla S. Congregazione, mi sono io mosso a soddisfare ai giusti desideri del moderno priore [Giovanni Nugent], soggetto di zelo grande, e di esimia virtù, non meno che a quelli di tutta la comunità, dirigendomi immediatamente alla Eminenza Vostra per pregarla ad avervi il più benigno e generoso riguardo potendosi ben fondare sopra la verità di tutto l'esposto.

The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from this generous letter is that the Irish province, with thirty-four students and eleven novices at Louvain, was far better off in 1771 from the point-of-view of recruitment and training than it is at the present day, even were one to leave both Rome and Lisbon out of the reckoning. Granted, the house was falling down and the whole community of more than sixty had to take to the roads of Flanders every autumn to beg their bread, but at least it was a going concern and the problems of Holy Cross were not insuperable. The same kindly nuncio wrote on their behalf to the archbishop of Dublin in November 1771; a sort of commendatory letter which the prior, John Nugent, probably presented to Dr. Carpenter in person <sup>70</sup>. Bishop Burke claimed that the community "shamefully lost" their government pension because of some theses defended or endorsed by John Nugent himself, "and could not even get audience of Count MacNeny till I did it for them with [Patrick] Kirwan. That great man made me but a very cold promise and I found after he could not do otherwise" <sup>71</sup>. None the less, Burke praised them for their reliance on divine providence. "You see", he wrote to Charles O'Kelly, "how

<sup>70</sup> Brussels, 11 Nov. 1771. Latin text ed. P. Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, 3rd series (Dublin 1884) 323-24.

<sup>71</sup> Burke mentions this in two letters from Kilkenny. On 25 May 1771 to O'Kelly. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2. And on 7 July 1772 to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4. In the second, the bishop reported John Nugent as having said that the pension *had* been recovered, but Burke doubted it: "especially as his theses did the mischief",

the Lovanists were blessed with a plentiful *depositum* when they supported thirty-three novices at once, after losing two pensions. In my memory the like never happened in my beloved house " of St. Sixtus <sup>72</sup>. At that particular time studies were practically suspended in Rome, to Thomas Burke's regret, but John Troy defended his policy in a letter to the bishop on 13 November 1771 <sup>73</sup>.

The Lovanists are resolved to lessen their family very considerably from an apprehension of future misfortunes. We supported the usual number and more till our credit was at stake and circumstances were actually alarming. They increased their income by increasing their family. This is not paradoxical, as the more beggars the greater begging. Whereas we struggled under the disadvantages of multiplied expenses and less income than usual.

#### THE MISSION TO ST. CROIX, 1765-1786

There is, unfortunately, no question here of following the steady progress of the " Irish Dominican mission " to the Danish West Indies, for that mission was steady only in its decline. All one can do is to piece together the story of how St. Croix passed from Dominican control into the hands of Irish diocesan priests, and how those priests in their turn were defeated by all those obstacles — a tropical climate, sickness, poverty and discord — which had defeated the Dominicans before them.

Thomas Devenish, superior of the mission, left the island in disgust in 1763 on learning that Nicholas Tuite, patron and founder of the mission, had brought out a secular priest as his private chaplain. He returned in 1765, " determined " to finish out his days on St. Croix, but changed his mind in a matter of months, left everything to his only subject, Terence MacDonnell, and sailed off again to Grenada. MacDonnell mentioned him on 16 June 1769 in a long letter to Charles O'Kelly <sup>74</sup>. " He lived at the Grenades chiefly these five years ... he went to England last year ... he often came to see us: in fine he went when he pleased and came when he pleased ... he went from the Gren-

<sup>72</sup> Kilkenny, 15 Sept. 1771. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>73</sup> Rome, 13 Nov. 1771. Troy to Burke. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>74</sup> Ed. by H. Fenning, 'The Mission to St. Croix in the West Indies: 1750-1769, in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 118-22. This letter is quoted and used throughout the rest of this section without further reference.



ades to North America for his health sake a short time ago". The last we hear, from an unfriendly source, of this inconstant spirit is that he left St. Croix for good about 1769 and by 1775 had married a widow in Jamaica <sup>75</sup>.

Terence MacDonnell was then, for all practical purposes, the only Dominican in the Virgin Islands after 1764. The planters could not agree among themselves. "They never will join", said MacDonnell, "in any public good. They are unhappily disunited. No community of any persuasion half so much. All the clergy that ever they had here never could reconcile them. Their disorder is so old and violent that it would require no less than a Peter or Paul to cure them of it". They would not agree to pay for the "pretty estate" from which Devenish had expected so much. Some offered an annual subscription to support the clergy. "Others said that if the clergy would go to their houses they would be welcome to take pot luck with them. This was their final resolution and so we live ever since... When I have money I dine at home. When I have none I look out where the largest smoke is". The planter who had gone security for the estate took the land himself. MacDonnell keenly regretted the obstinacy and self-sufficiency of his flock. "No restraint can be put on their pleasures and liberties. If a clergyman attempts it or even checks them, even in general, he will get more ill will from several of them than thanks".

Not that MacDonnell was always alone, the only priest on the island. Maurice Roche, a priest of Cloyne, was brought out by two planters about 1766 with the intention that he should be MacDonnell's companion and fellow-worker. The only companion MacDonnell wanted was a Dominican one. Unfortunately, Father Roche brought no credentials with him from Europe, nor did any documents follow him to St. Croix, and those who had brought him out with such golden promises paid nothing towards his support. Terence MacDonnell permitted him to say Mass only for a year, "after which, seeing that no credentials come, nor no provision made for him by those gentlemen that brought him out... he went to Ireland quite displeased with them. He will not come in haste to the West Indies again, or any man that will take his advice" <sup>76</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> St. Croix, 7 Sept. 1775. Chris. MacEvoy, prefect, to Propaganda. APF, SOCG 844, f. 155.

<sup>76</sup> Paris, 25 Nov. 1765. D. Henegan, *proviseur* of Irish college, attests that Maur. Roche of Cloyne diocese studied for six years in the college and will prove a good missionary in St. Croix to which Propaganda is about to send him. APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 286.



Charles O'Kelly at Rome may have prevented Roche from receiving faculties on the grounds that two Dominicans, John Jennings and Hugh Conway, were licenced by the general to go to St. Croix in July 1765, just six months before Father Roche applied to Propaganda<sup>77</sup>. But Jennings never saw the West Indies and Conway took his time going there. There was also Luke O'Reilly, Mr. Tuíte's chaplain since 1762, who got along quite well with Father O'Donnell. "He was a good man. He and I were always upon good terms. He always assisted me when I called upon him, and no more". But this diocesan priest took sick about 1767, went to North America in search of better health in 1768 and died at Philadelphia in December of the same year.

Apart then from occasional fleeting visits by Thomas Devenish, Father MacDonnell saw no priest at all after Luke O'Reilly's departure. Time and again he pleaded with the planters to bring out more priests from Europe and make arrangements for their support. He even threatened to leave the island himself unless he had another priest to assist him as he assisted others. The trouble was that MacDonnell insisted that since the mission had been entrusted to the Dominican order, only Dominicans should be brought out to serve it.

Mr. Tuíte is gone for Europe last month [May 1769]. One Mr. MacEvoy and Mr. Theobald Burke, planters of this island and members of our community, went with him, in order to spend the winter at home and come out in summer ... These two gentlemen that went along with him [Mr. Tuíte] told me that they would bring a clergyman each of them at their return. I answered them saying I would be very glad of it and much obliged to them, provided they would be of my order. They candidly told me that they would pay no respect to any Order ... but that they would have the clergymen they pleased and would give the money they could afford to those they liked best. I had a hot dispute with them upon this head. I would be glad they would be disappointed if in case they would get any people to petition to Rome for any such indulgence it may prove detrimental to our poor mission here. Though bad a circumstance it is at present it may answer in process of time ... I have done all I possibly could for so many years in support of it, through thick and thin, in spite of all the ill will I may get thereby. Therefore it would give me infinite concern, that which cost me so much labour and time, and has cost so many of my brethren their lives in this place, should go to decay. I did not stay in the country for the lucre of profit or gains or good treatment, for I really had not

<sup>77</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 38.

the one or the other since I came to the country. Now I beg to be assisted with clergy of my order, and I will support the cause longer and longer though sickness and climate has reduced my constitution very much. I'm able to labour still, so if your reverence [Charles O'Kelly] will be so kind as to get my faculties renewed together with the authority of a vicar apostolic, I hope I will live to give you satisfaction and bring matters here to better order.

One cannot but feel somewhat sorry for Terence MacDonnell. Without knowing it, he had lost the confidence of Nicholas Tuite and since Tuite enjoyed the *ius patronatus* of the mission, O'Kelly fell in with Tuite's view that "it would be quite improper" to renew MacDonnell's faculties. Why so "improper" no one troubled to explain. So, in the letter just quoted, the Dominican missionary was confidently appealing to a confrère who was ready to abandon him. Robert Tuite of London explained to Propaganda in July 1769 that his father's chaplain, Luke O'Reilly, had recently died and that "the only priest on St. Croix", none other than our Terence, "intended to leave it soon"! At Tuite's specific request, Propaganda issued faculties for John Nesfield, a missionary in England educated at Douai, on 17 December 1769<sup>78</sup>. Nesfield reached St. Croix before May 1770<sup>79</sup>. Two other missionaries received similar faculties a little later: Christopher MacEvoy, recommended by the bishop of Ardagh, in March 1770, and Terence Kieran, a priest of Armagh who had studied at Paris, in July<sup>80</sup>.

Thus in the course of 1770 no less than three diocesan priests reached St. Croix and one would dearly like to know what Terence MacDonnell, now without faculties and rejected even by Nicholas Tuite, felt about this strange reversal. Perhaps he was consoled by the unexpected appearance of another Dominican, Hugh Conway, in the same year. But Conway, having taken six years to reach the island, left it after as many months<sup>81</sup>. Still another Dominican, Dominic Fitzpatrick of Galway, proposed to visit St. Croix in summer 1771 to collect the effects of a deceased relative. Nicholas Tuite thought this a "sleeveless errand"

<sup>78</sup> APF, Udienze 10, ff. 632-37.

<sup>79</sup> St. Croix, 9 May 1770. Nesfield to Nich. Tuite at London, asking for wider faculties. APF, SC America Antille 2, ff. 180-81.

<sup>80</sup> APF, Udienze 11, ff. 55-57, 129-35. Robert Tuite applied to Propaganda in each case. Challoner of London issued faculties *ad septennium* for the English islands to Nesfield (31 Mar. 1770), MacEvoy (30 Apr. 1770) and Kieran (Oct. 1770). Westminster Diocesan Archives, vol. XLI, doc. 161.

<sup>81</sup> APF, SOCG 831, ff. 74-78, 97-101.

because he had never heard of the person supposed dead. Father Fitzpatrick seems to have got his islands mixed up, for he went in fact to his brother in Guadeloupe and found not a fortune but a tomb at St. Rose, Grand Cul de Sac on 16 September of the same year<sup>82</sup>.

The next important step, in which Charles O'Kelly collaborated fully, was that Propaganda on 8 July 1771 named Christopher MacEvoy prefect of the mission with authority not only over the Danish islands but over the Dutch island of St. Eustatius too<sup>83</sup>. Whatever about MacEvoy's success, he wrote a fine account of the mission on 7 September 1775 which constitutes our only source of information for the four-year period it covers and well deserves at least partial quotation here<sup>84</sup>.

Quo tempore fasciculus tuus advenit [c. Oct. 1771] et per annum antea, fui solummodo sacellanus in domo amici et proh dolor! religio fuit in miserrimo statu. Rev. P. Terentius McDonald ordinis praedicatorum tunc rexit principalem ecclesiam et per multos annos antea. Rev. P. [Hugo] Conway supradicti ordinis fuit rector ecclesiae in parte occidentali per paululum temporis. Duas tantummodo ecclesias publicas habemus in hac insula, quae est divisa inter nos in duas partes fere aequales et sunt quasi duae parochiae. Dominus [Thomas] Devenish eiusdem ordinis, qui huc advenit cum P. McDonald in anno, ni fallor, 60<sup>o</sup> aut 61<sup>o</sup>, abiit ante adventum meum et nunc est, ut pro certo audio, in matrimonio coniunctus cum vidua in insula Jamaicae.

Ambae ecclesiae fuerunt fere desertae. Perpauci ex albis audiebant Missam, et multo minus confessiones faciebant. Quoad nigros, aliqui eorum fuere baptizati, sed vel male instituti fuerunt in religione vel omnia oblita fuere, nam constanter vivebant ut pagani. R.P. Conway abiit quia stipendium putavit nimis modicum, et revera non sufficiebat pro suo alimento. Nam omnia sunt hic immodice cara, et est nihil pro nihilo aequae respectu missionariorum ac caeterorum.

Rev. P. MacDonald quater scripsit Romam ut renovarentur suae facultates, sed nullum responsum recepit. Propter hoc silentium iudicavi quod non fuisset in mea potestate eas illi communicare. Hoc

<sup>82</sup> The date and place of burial are given by Cloud Mercier T.O.P. in notes left in AGOP, with the additional detail that a layman, John Fitzpatrick of the parish of Aran, co. Galway, aged about sixty, was buried at Baie Mahaut on 19 Jan 1776. London, 31 May 1771. Nich. Tuite to O'Kelly. "I am sorry you have been put to so much trouble to procure faculties for Mr. [Hugh] Conway. I am informed that he is determined to quit the island. As to Fr. Dominic Fitzpatrick... if he has not yet left Spain, I think he had best first write to me". APF, SOCG 831, ff. 78, 97.

<sup>83</sup> APF, Acta 141, ff. 167-71; SOCG 831, ff. 63-101.

<sup>84</sup> Latin original, written on St. Croix. APF, SOCG 844, ff. 155-58.

illi dixi, et facultatibus suis finem fuisse a multis annis. Noluit tamen cessare. Catholici moleste tulerunt quod de eo quotidie audiebant. Utrum fama, quae fuit violentissima et in ore omni populo, fuerit vera aut falsa, nescio, Deus scit. Quidquid sit, prudenter agendo cum eo et leniter, pacifice et sine strepitu emigravit in insulam Sancti Iohannis ubi nunc [1775] est et agit ut pastor. Quid agendum? ... Ei successi in regimine ecclesiae principalis.

Rev. di Domini Nesfield et Kieran, viri vere pii et docti, quibus inimicus virulentissimus nihil potest exprobrare, tunc fuerunt et adhuc sunt sacellani, et strenue et cum felici successu laborabant inter albos et nigros eis subiectos, et aliquoties inter alios quando tempus permisit. Talis fuit status missionis versus finem anni 1771.

It is interesting to notice that the two Dominicans, MacDonnell and Conway, still cared for the only two churches on the island, the principal church "in town" and the other at the "west end" of St. Croix. Nesfield, Kieran and even MacEvoy the prefect served simply as private chaplains until both Dominicans moved away in the second half of 1771. Of Terence MacDonnell, living without faculties on the Danish island of St. John until at least 1775, we hear no more. Hugh Conway went to one of the English islands for which he had taken out faculties at London in November 1770. Eight years later he wrote to bishop Challoner from Grenada and had his faculties renewed. Unfortunately, we have only an Italian copy of part of his report<sup>85</sup>. Bishop Challoner of London cited it in August 1778 when speaking of Grenada where his vicar, Benjamin Duhamel O.F.M. Cap., had recently died.

La migliore, o per parlar più giusto, la sola relazione che io ho avuto dello stato della religione in quella isola dopo la sua morte, mi è stata mandata da un religioso domenicano irlandese chiamato il Padre Ugone Conway. Egli mi scrive dunque, che egli serve una parrocchia in quell'isola, e che il Padre Beniamino prima di morire [1777] era stato obbligato di abbandonare l'isola, e che il suo coadjutore parimente Cappuccino aveva offiziato nella sua assenza nella parrocchia di S. Giorgio, e dopo la sua morte era stato eletto dall'assemblea con pluralità di voti parroco di S. Giorgio. Ma per un'anno solamente. Egli soggiunge:

<sup>85</sup> Conway was born about 1722 and professed for Kilmallock in 1742. The college of St. Thomas at Seville granted him the S.T.M. in 1753 and he worked in Ireland from 1758 to 1765. The provincial chapter of 1765, giving these details, asked the general to confirm his mastership. Licenced to go to St. Croix on 27 July 1765. AGOP IV, 231, p. 38. For his faculties from London, see Westminster Diocesan Archives, vol. XLI, doc. 119, 161. The report quoted above is in a letter (7 Aug. 1778) from Challoner to his Roman agent. APF, Fondo di Vienna 37, ff. 200-01.

« Vi è qui un tal Abate Romefort venuto da Martinico. Egli era Domenicano, ma è stato secolarizzato per cagione di certe dispute insorte coi suoi superiori di Martinico. Questo uomo cerca di essere parocho di S. Giorgio, e fra tanto, sento, officia nella parrocchia di S. Davidde. Le parrocchie di S. Patrizio e di Granpauvre sono pure servite da due soggetti, i quali non avevano facoltà dal P. Beniamino, col quale non volevano avere veruna connessione. Quello di Granpauvre è in buon concetto per i suoi costumi appresso i suoi parrocchiani per quanto ho potuto sapere dai medesimi. Ho cercato di convincerlo che i suoi superiori regolari francesi non li potevano dare una legittima missione per questa isola. Egli è Carmelitano. Mi risponde che se vi è qualche irregolarità nella sua missione, si deve tutta attribuire al naturale duro e violento del P. Beniamino. Il parocho di Marguy fa il suo dovere, e quello che è a S. Giorgio si è parimente condotto bene. Ecco in poche parole lo stato presente della nostra missione. Mi dispiace di dovere aggiungere che vedo sminuire più ogni giorno lo spirito di pietà fra questi abitanti. Con tuttociò se credete a proposito, son pronto a rimaner qui ancor qualche tempo ».

Fin qui il P. Conway. In conseguenza di questa sua esibizione gli ho rinnovato le sue facoltà per sei anni [12 Feb. 1778] ma non mi sono arrisciato di autorizzarlo a dare simili facoltà ad altre persone. Di tutto ciò vi prego di render consapevole Mons. [Stefano] Borgia, insieme co'miei più sinceri rispetti.

A pity Father Conway wrote of everyone except himself. He had a parish on Grenada, but we are not told what parish it was, nor have we any means of knowing when he came to the island first. In the letter quoted above he speaks with a certain air of authority, as though long familiar with the local scene. He was prepared to soldier on in Grenada "for another while", but again we do not know how long he did. One may conclude that he was back in Ireland by 1781 since the provincial chapter of that year put him forward for the *praesentatura* on the strength of the "many years" he had spent in the British West Indies. But yet he can be traced to Grenada again in 1784<sup>86</sup>. Perhaps Father Conway left Grenada in 1779 on its recapture by the French and returned towards the end of 1783 when the island was ceded back to the English by the Treaty of Versailles. The provincial chapter of 1793 noted his recent death without venturing to tell anyone where he died.

Going back again to Christopher MacEvoy's report of 1775, one

<sup>86</sup> The year 1784 is the only one for which his presence in Grenada is attested by R. Devas, *Conception Island*, London 1932, pp. 19, 294, 308, 419.



finds the name of yet another Irish Dominican on St. Croix: a priest named James Duane who came out in August 1772 to serve the "western church, abandoned and widowed" since the departure of Hugh Conway almost a year before. Clearly, though MacEvoy took possession of the "principal church", neither of the other secular priests so much as entered the second chapel. They were private chaplains, obliged to serve the families and slaves of those who paid them. In 1773, bishop Challoner gave Duane faculties for the English islands at MacEvoy's request, but the new recruit did not last long. He left St. Croix for Ireland on 29 June 1774, "offended with his flock and they with him". Lest this should leave the wrong impression, it is better to quote Father MacEvoy's words of praise and explanation.

Fui eodem tempore in insula S. Eustachii. Per quod discere poteram post reditum meum, parochiani perperam egerunt, nam fuit vir vere probus, et nihil potuit quispiam in suis moribus reprehendere; et videbatur bene dispositus ad omnia missionis munera peragenda. Sed infauste dissiderunt, et non est nobis hic potestas coercendi gregem solvere salarium, cui non vult. Haec est nostra miseria vere plangenda: non licet missionario hic fodere nec mendicare. Ex populo pendet pro victu et amictu, quod est incommodum gravissimum et missioni multum obstat. Nam sic tenetur sacerdos tacere quando debet latrare.

This James Duane was, like Hugh Conway, a son of the Munster convent of Kilmallock near Limerick, and was known in the order as Antoninus. On leaving St. Croix in 1774 he disappears completely for seven years. Perhaps, again like Father Conway, he found employment on one of the English islands. Most likely, he returned to Ireland by 1781 in which year the provincial chapter postulated him for the *praesentatura* in view of his labours "as a missionary" since 1760. In 1784 he took out a lease on a house in Thomas Street, Waterford, which was the dwelling of the order there for about thirty years. When he died on 12 June 1815, the *Waterford Mirror* remarked that he had been "distinguished through life for simplicity of manners and purity of zeal". The newspaper was wrong, however, in giving his age as ninety-two for he was only eighty-five.

So ends our account of Irish Dominicans on St. Croix. If their mission "failed", so did that of Christopher MacEvoy and his friends, and for much the same reasons. John Nesfield died on the island on 5 February 1777<sup>87</sup>. MacEvoy's vice-prefect, probably Terence Kieran,

<sup>87</sup> Catholic Directory for 1850, London 1850, p. 161.

went home and took a parish in Ireland. The prefect's feet and ankles began to swell, so he took to wearing gaiters and heavy woollen stockings. By the time he left St. Croix for good, about 1784, he had not enough money to keep a horse-boy<sup>88</sup>. Two planters who maintained chaplains died, and then on 25 August 1785 a hurricane destroyed sugar plantations and estate houses. Propaganda was anxious in 1786 that MacEvoy should go out again from England, and indeed he said he would with an Irish Franciscan named Edward Coen, but there is no reason to believe he ever did<sup>89</sup>. Hyacinth Kennedy, one of the first Dominicans to die on St. Croix, spoke for them all, secular and regular alike, when he prophesied in 1760 that the evangelisation of "this uncultivated place will be a work of many after I am rotten in my grave before it is completed"<sup>90</sup>.

#### THE NOVITIATE QUESTION, 1769-1773

Once the cardinals of Propaganda Fide laid down the five conditions under which novitiates might open again in Ireland, cardinal Castelli began to correspond in September 1769 with the four provincials concerned. Sensing how little the regular clergy would relish the proposed conditions, he began by writing only to the Franciscan and Augustinian superiors<sup>91</sup>. The Franciscans thought twelve novices a year too low a quota for their needs and baulked at the proposal that validity of profession should depend on the approval of the local ordinary. The Augustinians objected to the "guaranteed viaticum" intended to prevent young religious from begging the price of their passage abroad for

<sup>88</sup> London, 7 Feb. 1786. Mac Evoy to cardinal prefect. French original. APF, SOCG 872, ff. 381-84. There were then still two priests on St. Croix, but MacEvoy did not give their names. He here described his attempt to recover the estate bought for the clergy in 1762. He brought the case to court in St. Croix, whence his enemies had it referred to Copenhagen, but Copenhagen referred it back to St. Croix and there had been no decision since. In 1778, Rob. Tuite applied for faculties for Henry Kendall to serve as a chaplain on St. Croix. APF, Udienze 16, ff. 391, 396.

<sup>89</sup> APF, Acta 146 (1776), ff. 33-52; SOCG 844, ff. 155-72; APF, Acta 156 (1786), ff. 119-30; SOCG 872, ff. 369-86. This was probably the Edmund Coen O.F.M. who died at Newport Pratt, Co. Mayo, on 6 Sept. 1803 aged fifty-one; Catholic Directory for 1850, London 1850, p. 176.

<sup>90</sup> Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 93.

<sup>91</sup> For fuller details on this phase of the story see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, Louvain 1972, 296-317.

studies on the continent. Both groups thought the upper age-limit of twenty far too low. Cardinal Castelli's reply to the Franciscan provincial on 6 January 1770 speaks for itself:

With respect to the number of novices, you ought to know that the sacred congregation never intended the restoration of novitiates to enable the regulars to reach again their numerical level of 1750, since their excessive strength in that year gave the bishops cause to complain of them and request the decree prohibiting novitiates. Since, therefore, the sacred congregation merely intended the regulars to maintain their present strength, it considered that your order would be sufficiently provided for if it were permitted to receive as many candidates as would prevent your further decline... The sacred congregation had to insist on the condition which gives you the greatest offence [i.e., making validity of profession depend on the bishop's approval], for it felt in duty bound to see that the novices, if they were to be admitted again, would be as well instructed as possible. When the novitiates were under the control of the religious superiors alone, there was such negligence in the testing of novices and their training in regular observance that the sacred congregation after long and repeated complaints from the bishops, had no choice but to close the novitiates altogether. Hence it has now decided that it must appeal to the vigilance of the bishops if the novitiates are not to fall again into the same grave disorders as before.

In other words, the regulars were on their knees and that was where cardinal Castelli intended them to stay. However, he was negotiating and by offering slightly less than the cardinals had already decided to give, he left himself room for manoeuvre. Once he knew what the Franciscans and Augustinians thought about the terms, he wrote on 16 March 1770 to the Dominicans and Carmelites, modifying slightly the fifth and least acceptable condition. Yet the local ordinary would still have to testify, before a novice made solemn profession, that he had lived in the novitiate for the whole year of probation under the direction of the master of novices and had not gone wandering outside the convent. In default of such an attestation, his religious profession would be regarded as null and void. Castelli offered the Dominicans three or four novitiates and a maximum of thirty novices every three years, four less than Propaganda had already decided to grant them.

John F. Netterville received the cardinal's letter just as he was about to set out on his first visitation of the province, so instead of calling a meeting of the definitory as the Franciscans had done, he explained

Castelli's offer to each community in turn. The result, however, was the same. For the Dominicans too, like the Franciscans before them, unanimously declined to open novitiates in view of the conditions to which the whole scheme was subject. Seeing that the bishops were to have such strict control over the admission and profession of novices, even to the extent of affecting the validity of profession, they would rather do without novitiates than accept a proposal which could only disturb their good relations with the hierarchy. Netterville conveyed this decision to cardinal Castelli from Dublin on 21 December 1770, just a month after the Franciscans had written to the same effect<sup>92</sup>.

Quum litteras quas die 16 mensis Martii ultimo elapso Eminentia Vestra mihi scribere dignata est, eo precise tempore acceperim quo visitationem per hanc provinciam instituere decreveram, opportunius mihi visum est iis responsum differre usquedum patribus provinciae conditiones exponerem quas Sacra Congregatio pro restitutione novitiatum in Hibernia requirit, eorumque iudicium desuper exponerem. Iis itaque in decursu visitationis meae consultis ac praefatis conditionibus perpensis, easdem non acceptandas iudicaverimus. Cum enim iuxta tenorem praescriptum, tam admissio et professio novitiorum, quam conditionum in iis admittendis ac valide profitendis observantia ordinariarum inspectioni tam stricte subiiciantur, ne discordiarum et disputationum cum locorum ordinariis daretur occasio. Ad haec ergo evitanda, ac ad pacem et concordiam cum iisdem fovendas, consultius arbitramur in praesenti quo versamur statu tranquille permanere.

Only the two larger orders took this stand, relying on their foreign colleges to keep them going until the offer of better terms. The Augustinians, more resourceful than the rest, made a separate peace with Castelli and got permission in 1771 to receive twelve novices at once. With this concession, cardinal Castelli regarded the whole case as closed and handed over all the letters exchanged, with his own account of the negotiations, to the archivist of Propaganda. In his view, "the regulars wanted novitiates merely to suit themselves and did not wish to depend in any way on the bishops, so as not to be obliged to educate their novices even as well as they could", given the circumstances of the country. There is no admission here that the four provincials were better placed than he to judge the situation, no appreciation of their foresight, no awareness that they valued religious profession too highly to leave its validity open to the slightest doubt.

<sup>92</sup> The original is in APF, SOCG 825, f. 301.

Late in 1772, all the bishops of Connacht asked that the Carmelites be permitted, as the Augustinians had been, to receive twelve novices at once. In the same year an imperial edict forbade religious profession in the Austrian Netherlands to anyone under the age of twenty-five. A similar decree had affected the Irish Franciscan college at Prague since 1770, but this later one struck Louvain where both Franciscans and Dominicans had colleges<sup>93</sup>. Neither order could now afford the luxury of refusing Propaganda's terms. When the emperor Joseph II launched the reforms for which he was called "the sacristan", the whole situation changed overnight. As the Franciscan provincial put it: "the axe is laid to the root". A new meeting of the four provincials followed at Dublin on 12 March 1773. All were now ready to accept, joyfully and gratefully, any concession similar to that made to the Augustinians, provided only that Propaganda would make it a permanent one. Cardinal Castelli must have been pleased to hear from the provincials again, for he soon replied on 5 May 1773 spontaneously offering them the sort of conditions for which they had asked in vain three years before. The quota of novices allotted to each order would be increased; the Dominicans might receive thirty-six every three years. The age-limit too, formerly set at twenty, would be raised to twenty-two. Nor would Propaganda insist on the guaranteed viaticum for each novice. And so far as episcopal control was concerned, the bishop would merely have to testify that the novices had not gone wandering about the countryside. The provincials answered at once, accepting the new conditions with unconcealed delight<sup>94</sup>.

Eminentissime Princeps S.R.E. Cardinalis Patrone Colendissime,

Pro rescriptis quinta Maii transmissis, cordatissimas rependimus grates. Regulas circa tyrocinia observandas, lubenti amplectimur animo. Inviolabilis adhaesio et cura nostra indefessa in exequendis S. Congregationis regulis indubium suppeditabit argumentum, decretum sub auspiciis Eminentissimi Principis proxime emanaturum, non contra sed pro Dei gloria et missionis emolumento militare. Debita qua per est humilitate, punctum sequens candidae disquisitioni et altiori iudicio S. Congregationis submittimus. Recipiendorum aetas ad annum

<sup>93</sup> Dan. Kennedy received the habit at Holy Cross in 1774 and spent the year of his novitiate there. Being then too young to profess, he set out on foot to make his solemn profession at La Quercia, Viterbo. H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 371-72.

<sup>94</sup> Original in APF, SOCG 837, ff. 60-61.



vigesimum secundum restringenda est, et in ditionibus imperialibus ad annum vigesimum quartum restricta jam est. Annus vigesimus secundus tyronibus in Hibernia elevandis optime quadrat, et huic ordinationi libenter subscribimus. Cum vero partem candidatorum in conventibus nostris transmarinis, qui in territoribus imperialibus siti sunt, elevare necesse sit, nonne aequitati et prudentiae S. Congregationis consonum foret, si pro recipiendis in praefatis regionibus indultum concederetur pro anno vigesimo quarto ad normam edicti imperialis usque dum altefatis potentiis aut revocare aut emollire praefatum edictum placuerit? Sola urgente necessitate provectionis aetatis candidatos unquam recepimus, et simili cogente necessitate in ditionibus transmarinis pro hoc indulto supplicamus. Pro omnimodo sospitate Eminentissimi Principis vota fundimus et perennimus, obsequiosissimi clientes et servi,

Dublinii, 5 Junii 1773. Joannes Franciscus Netterville, S.T.M. et prior provincialis ord. praed.

Antonius French, Franciscanorum provincialis.

Petrus Butler, S.T.M., provincialis O.S.P. Augustini.

Patritius O'Mahony, provincialis Carm. Calceatorum.

The further task of establishing the new novitiates did not fall to Father Netterville, for his provincialate came to an end within a month of his signing this letter.

#### JOHN F. NETTERVILLE'S LAST YEARS, 1769-1781

Father Netterville went on visitation of the province twice, in the summers of 1770 and 1772, following what seems to have been the usual practice. Apart from his discussion of the novitiate question as he made his rounds in 1770, the only trace of what he may have done on either occasion is his signature on the account-books of Esker, Drogheda and Channel Row. At Drogheda, having taken out a new lease on their house in 1771, the brethren practically rebuilt it. Since the provincial "built and decorated a room at his own expense", the house council agreed on 10 March 1772 that he might use it<sup>95</sup>. Thus one of the finest traditions of the fifteenth century flowered once more at Mill Lane, Drogheda, in the early dawn of Catholic emancipation. The new church

<sup>95</sup> Drogheda, St. Magdalen's, account-book (1771-86), under date. John O'Neill was then prior and Hy. Berrill (by appointment of the provincial) subprior. The other signatories were Th. Netterville, John Byrne, Th. MacDonagh and Vinc. Meany who sometimes called himself Talbot.

in Bridge Street, Dublin, was almost finished but heavily in debt. Patrick Crawley, a student at Corpo Santo before the earthquake, went specially and successfully to Spain in May 1771 on a fund-raising tour. By July of the following year, bishop Burke at Kilkenny was able to report the result. "Bridge Street chapel is completely finished and decorated. It is indeed very elegant, but was greatly indebted till Crawley sent home the needful. He is not returned as yet but soon expected". John O'Connor of the Dublin community marked the occasion by publishing his *Essay on the Rosary and Sodality of the most Holy Name of Jesus*, the most substantial devotional work written by any Irish Dominican before the present century.

On ceasing to be provincial, John Francis Netterville was appointed prior of Drogheda by the master general. His patents were read before the community at Mill Lane on 11 October 1773. So much we learn from the account-book of the house, but we are not told why the community could not elect a prior for itself, nor (granting that they were too few) why the new provincial was unable to appoint one. Stranger still, Netterville's appointment was not entered in the registers of the master general. One feels that with two Nettervilles in a community of six, these noble brothers enjoyed some kind of *ius patronatus* in Mill Lane. Drogheda had long been singled out as the future novitiate for Ulster, and yet when almost everything was settled, the community made a written statement to the effect that the house could support six and no more. Both Nettervilles duly signed. Even Martin French, the new provincial, confirmed this decision of 18 July 1774. The only conscientious objector was Hyacinth Berrill whom someone in the community considered mad<sup>96</sup>. Berrill's formal protest, though heavily scored out in the book, deserves quotation: he objected "*in forma iuris contra omnia predicta uti illegitima et contra bona communia et particularia religionis et ordinis nostri tamquam ex factione consiliata pro bono particularium*".

Father Netterville did not finish his term as prior of Drogheda. The provincial appointed Thomas MacDonagh to succeed him on 15 December 1775, and there is no later mention of him as a member of that community. Apparently Netterville fled from Drogheda to Dublin in July 1775 because his elder brother Robert was called to trial and John

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<sup>96</sup> His signature in the account-book is often followed by insulting comments in another hand; e.g. S.T.M. "licet indignus", or "turbati capitis".

Francis was afraid of being cited as a witness. More than a year later, on 25 September 1776, bishop Thomas Burke of Ossory died. The whole weight of "Gallican" influence, lay and clerical, was brought to bear on Propaganda in favour of Patrick Molloy, a priest of Kilkenny postulated by the chapter and clergy of the diocese. Charles O'Kelly suggested the promotion of John Thomas Troy whom "the late bishop had considered the most capable member of his province and who had helped him very much in preparing the appendix to *Hibernia Dominicana*". By this time, Troy was prior of St. Clement's whence he wrote to Propaganda on 21 November 1776 recommending both Thomas and John Francis Netterville. Troy claimed to represent "many in Ireland who had proposed both on similar occasions in the past". There were hardly any other candidates, nor did the officials of Propaganda wait for latecomers to arrive. The cardinal prefect and his secretary just settled the matter between themselves. When the cardinals assembled on 26 November 1776 to decide this and other issues they were simply told that there were three candidates in the field: Troy "who has all the best qualities", John Netterville and Patrick Molloy "whom it does not seem opportune to promote, some objection having been brought against him". Naturally, the cardinals voted for Troy, endorsing a choice which neither they nor anyone in Ossory would have reason to regret<sup>97</sup>.

This was the last occasion on which John F. Netterville was proposed for a vacant diocese, and for that matter the last trace of the man himself. He died on 9 October 1781, either at Dublin or in the country home of friends in Meath.

#### MARTIN ANTHONY FRENCH, 1773-1778

Even though hardly one of his letters survives, the new provincial was a lot more colourful than his predecessors. He was born in 1718, the eldest son of a Protestant gentleman, near the convent of Esker, the "house of refuge" from Athenry. There were three branches of the

<sup>97</sup> APF, Acta 146, ff. 324-25; SOCG 845, ff. 411-40. There are some other papers on Molloy in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 511-12, 515-29, 537-42, 553-59. On 12 Oct. 1776, archbishop Carpenter of Dublin wrote to Propaganda saying that both he and bishop Sweetman of Ferns strongly opposed Molloy's promotion. He had taken the oath and thereby rejected the authority both of his bishop and of Propaganda. Carpenter proposed three pastors of Dublin for the vacant see of Ossory. APF, SOCG 845, f. 426.

family in the area, but we do not know to which of the three he belonged. Since his Christian name was Anthony, he may have been the son of Anthony French of Colemanstown, frequently mentioned in the Esker account-books. Alternatively, he may have been a French of Rahasane, for which family there are some obits (1719-1738) in the same record, or more likely still a French of Loughrea where he would later preach most frequently and find, in his quest for a mitre, the strongest local support. At an early age he renounced a patrimony worth £700 a year in favour of his younger brother, kept only an annuity of twenty pounds for himself and became a diocesan priest<sup>98</sup>. We are not told to what diocese he belonged, but in keeping with the custom of the time he was ordained before beginning his studies.

In January 1742 the friars of Esker received a substantial benefaction, delivered to them by a Mr. Martin French who may well have been the future provincial. There is no evidence that he received the habit, and therefore his religious name, at Esker. Within a few years of ordination, perhaps in autumn 1743, he entered the novitiate at Holy Cross, Louvain. There is a list of that community, drawn up in April 1745, in which he appears as a student of philosophy, and another in which he is said to have left Holy Cross for Ireland in 1750<sup>99</sup>. The Irish provincial hoped in 1749 that Martin French would stay as a lector in the college, but in February 1750 he was dispensed from the last seven months of his course of studies, was shortly after elected bursar, and in the following May was permitted to visit Ireland where he wished to assist "and perhaps convert" his dying father<sup>100</sup>. His intended career in the schools was thus nipped in the bud by his appointment as bursar, and although he was "approved for the lectorate", whatever that vague phrase may mean, his later degrees within the order were conferred *titulo missionis* and not *titulo scholae*, by title of teaching.

Hardly a year later, on 10 November 1751, the master general permitted him to work at Port Louis as field chaplain to the Irish Brigade in the service of France<sup>101</sup>. By October 1752 he was with Lally's Irish

<sup>98</sup> The Esker account-books (1721-1853) are at Tallaght. The details about French's patrimony and ordination are in APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 323. For the year of his birth, loc. cit., f. 363.

<sup>99</sup> The lists are printed above on pp. 192 and 262. His public defence of a thesis at Louvain is mentioned by A. O'Flanders, *The Irish Dominican College of Louvain*, in *The Irish Rosary* (Aug. 1927) 605.

<sup>100</sup> AGOP IV. 217, pp. 114, 117-18.

<sup>101</sup> Loc. cit., p. 125. This includes the phrase "approbatus pro lectoratu".



Brigade at Bergues-Saint-Winoc near Dunkirk and again got permission to visit Ireland, this time because of a legacy<sup>102</sup>. The Esker account books duly note, on 8 December 1752, the sum of £2-11-6 "received from Father Martin French's begging at Loughrea". Nor was this his only visit home, for he was begging at Loughrea again in February 1755. But he was a military chaplain from 1751 and so he remained for slightly more than ten years. When his commander, Count Thomas Lally, left France in May 1757 with the intention of recovering India from the English, Martin French sailed with the troops. The voyage out took almost a full year, for Lally did not land in India until April 1758. After some initial successes he was himself besieged for another year at Pondicherry, surrendered in 1761 and brought a prisoner to London. The English let him return on parole to Versailles to defend his conduct but eventually he was beheaded at Paris in 1766, the victim of judicial assassination. Martin French survived the siege of Pondicherry, returning for good to Esker in the autumn of 1762, but left us no account of his adventures. All we have is the story, put to such good account by his enemies later on, that not only Lally but French too was accused of misbehaviour during that disastrous campaign. On returning to France, so the story goes, Father French was called to court to answer charges and fled to Ireland because he knew he could not answer them. He was condemned to death at Paris and hanged in effigy<sup>103</sup>.

At Esker he became subprior within a year and was unanimously elected prior about June 1764<sup>104</sup>. Since he had two successive terms, his priorship extended to June 1770. Father French's wealth and administrative energy show clearly in the account-books. He was said to have come back from India a rich man, but there was also his annual allowance of twenty pounds from his family, with a good deal more collected from the local gentry and those to whom he preached so often in Loughrea. Thus he was able to give sixteen pounds "as a present to the house" in October 1765, but that was as nothing compared with

<sup>102</sup> Loc. cit., p. 128.

<sup>103</sup> 28 Aug. 1767. Peter Donnelan, bishop of Clonfert, to cardinal Castelli. The bishop adds: "ad dioecesim hanc profugit, divitiis ut fama refertus". APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 365. There is a more detailed account in an undated petition by Bart. Fagan O.F.M. of St. Isidore's to Propaganda. APF, SOCG 841, ff. 290-91.

<sup>104</sup> His predecessor as prior, Peter Kelly, signed the accounts on 21 May 1764 with Martin Burke, subprior, Hy. Keaghry, Thad. Daly, John Dolphin and Martin French. French first signed as prior on 15 June 1764, with the same subprior, Peter Kelly and Th. Tully.



his contribution to the "building of the house" in 1766. On that occasion he drew £ 168 from his own capacious pocket and paid in no less than £ 232 collected from benefactors. Fr. Martin Burke, one of his subjects, donated even more, for he was able to provide £ 226, apparently from his "deposit". The two generous priests, one is glad to learn, were repaid by the convent, largely from money they and others had collected. This left the community in debt to the prior for a total of forty-two pounds, but on going out of office Martin French made them a gift of the debt and an extra fourteen pounds besides.

There is in the provincial archives a very large parchment, unsigned and undated, prepared it would seem in 1766 to be signed, though it never was, by the Esker community. This unusual document in Latin refers to another, formerly attached but now lost: a list of benefactors, Catholic and Protestant, to whom the community was obliged for the complete rebuilding of their home and whom they were to hold in perpetual remembrance. Their new house was "of such a size and so divided" that it would lodge not only the actual community "but even novices, should it later be permitted to receive them". The text exudes local pride and self-satisfaction. "While we mourn other convents of this province [Connacht], now in decay if not utterly destroyed, convents surviving only in name, we can surely rejoice that our own begins to flourish once again". All were encouraged to love and foster their "common mother", the convent of SS. Peter and Paul at Esker, once the rough untilled refuge of their fathers but now "*amoena solitudo*", a pleasant retreat. The prior, Martin French, is duly praised, since he had raised most of the money among friends and relations while contributing generously himself. Likewise Hyacinth Keaghry and Martin Burke had applied to the building of the convent the money their superiors had entitled them to keep. "Without this highly opportune help, we never could have hired enough workers to begin and finish the task so quickly". Some of the final lines mention the custom whereby friars, in sickness or old age, sought shelter with laypeople since they could not hope to find it among their own<sup>105</sup>.

Laudabilem hunc bonum commune promovendi zelum ... praesentibus et posteris ... commendamus. Utrisque plane incumbit illorum quorum interest domus statum pro viribus conservare et promovere: et hunc suum conventum tamquam communem omnium nostrum matrem filiali affectu amare et fovere. Etenim non tantum nos Ordini

<sup>105</sup> TA, Letters, under date.

genuit, sed decentem quoque in vita mansionem praebet, necnon securum et quietum refugium tempore infirmitatis et senectutis, quando saecularibus amicis oneri et fastidio esse solemus.

#### NINE CANONS OF CLONFERT, 1767-1768

On his return from India, Father French won quick promotion within the order: prior of Esker within two years, definitor for Connacht at the chapter of 1765, and preacher general for Portumna as from 11 October 1766<sup>106</sup>. Still broader horizons soon opened to his eyes when nine canons of the diocese of Clonfert formally asked the Pope on 30 July 1767 to name Martin French as coadjutor to their aged bishop<sup>107</sup>. Peter Donnelan, the aged bishop in question, had ruled Clonfert since 1733. He was eighty-two years old, "infirm, almost blind and weak of memory", and had himself explicitly asked the chapter to postulate a suitable candidate. But he was not ready to stomach Martin French. On 28 August and again on 15 September 1767, the old bishop poured out a flood of abuse in letters to cardinal Castelli, claiming that French had strained every nerve, used all his local influence, so that the chapter might postulate him secretly without a word to the bishop himself<sup>108</sup>. The first of these two letters recounted the story of French's flight from Paris on being condemned to death, and the equally surprising story that bishop Donnelan had wanted his chapter to postulate a Franciscan, Peter O'Kelly of Rome. Donnelan's second letter revealed the existence of a plot to overthrow the Irish hierarchy, a subversive attack in which Peter Donnelan of Clonfert would be the first bishop to fall. Thomas Burke of Ossory, who was behind it all, had told his followers that with Clonfert out of the way, the regular clergy would meet no further obstacle as they took over the chief dioceses in the country and set aside the decrees of Propaganda forbidding novitiates in Ireland.

There are some curious omissions in these early documents. The nine canons, while profuse enough with biographical details on French's career, do not so much as mention that he was ever an army chaplain.

<sup>106</sup> AGOP IV. 231, p. 43. He was not postulated in 1765 because definitor at the chapter.

<sup>107</sup> Latin original in APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 323. The canons mentioned French's promotion "ad lectoris officium". There was another recommendation (6 Aug. 1767) in his favour from the archbishop of Tuam and two other bishops. *Loc. cit.*, f. 363.

<sup>108</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 364-65.

The bishop, on the other hand, while strong on national plots and local influence, did not so much as mention his brother Andrew Donnelan, vicar general and dean of the chapter, who would have welcomed a postulation in his own favour but whom the nine canons firmly excluded on grounds of age. Martin French thought it better not to stress his military service, while bishop Donnellan thought it better to clear the ground of one unwanted candidate and even to send up a Franciscan smokescreen in the person of Peter O'Kelly, before admitting to Propaganda that he had a brother at all. By September 1767 it was common knowledge in Clonfert that the chapter and bishop were at loggerheads. Twenty-four "leading Catholics" of the diocese supported the canons against the bishop in a letter to the Pope; four of them were Frenches and fourteen belonged to the town of Loughrea<sup>109</sup>. Bishop Donnellan wrote again to Castelli in November, complaining of the trouble and confusion created by Martin French who had not even the decency to wait for him to weaken, much less to die, and lamenting that so many should betray symptoms of this "*episcopandi prurigo*", or episcopal itch<sup>110</sup>.

Several months later, on 5 March 1768, the nine canons who supported French complained of the way they had been vilely calumniated and even threatened by their own bishop<sup>111</sup>. Peter Donnellan declared he would deprive them of their parishes, even though it was at his own express command they had postulated a candidate at all. Martin French, they said, had preached with great success in the principal cities of Ireland, "even in Dublin", and had numerous testimonials from bishops and prefects of colleges in Belgium and France. He had similar recommendations from the Irish regiments in France among which he had carried on a much needed apostolate "*summa omnium veneratione et copioso fructu*". At this point, the whole question of a coadjutor for Clonfert hung fire and was set aside for six years. For the moment, to round off this episode, it is enough to quote a letter which Charles O'Kelly wrote to Father French from Rome on 8 June 1768<sup>112</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> 12 Sept. 1767. APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 362, 369. The Frenches who signed were Patrick and "Dominic junior" of Loughrea, Robert of Rahasane and Anthony of Colemanstown.

<sup>110</sup> 10 Nov. 1767. Donnellan to Castelli. APF, Udienze 10, ff. 396-97. The letter was in essence a request for leave for Nicholas Davies, a priest of Clonfert, to become a Franciscan. Hence the strange archival location.

<sup>111</sup> Canons to Castelli. APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 359.

<sup>112</sup> TA, Letters, under date.

"The justificative and very just remonstrance of your good and constant canons has been without loss of time laid before Castelli, who is so extremely reserved that it is next to an impossibility to penetrate his sentiments till manifested by a peremptory decision. However I am apt to believe the remonstrance made an impression on him. Not deep enough to force you as coadjutor upon Doctor Donnelan, but to deny him any whosoever he would postulate clandestinely. I mean without the concurrence of the chapter. As the affair in question is not of a litigious nature, but on the contrary a mere denial of a free grace from the Holy See, to demand a formal discussion of the calumnies thrown in casually or occasionally would have appeared an indirect demand of what has been irrevocably refused, which on my opinion would be improper at present, more especially as by the course of nature there must be shortly a very reasonable opportunity of disproving not only the calumnies, but also demonstrating the constancy and unanimity of the very same canons who interested themselves in the cause from the beginning.

For their satisfaction, assure them that I have and carefully keep in my hands, two strong attestations of your merits. One from Francis Joseph, bishop of Boulogne-sur-mer, dated 9th March 1768; the other from marechal James Fitzgerald who had served in Lally's regiment from its creation to the time it was ordered to India, and from Alexander Geoghegan, commander of the same regiment in India, together with captain Miles Hussey, Knight of St. Louis, and William Dalton, aid-major and captain. These attestations are in as strong terms as any real friend of yours can wish, and come to me franked, which I tell you that you may not think yourself so much obliged to me as you are pleased to profess. However, I believe firmly I never stand at any expense when a worthy friend of mine is in question, and I desire you spare me not on any occasion that may offer.

Mr. Kelly of Liskelly, if I am not mistaken, is now fully persuaded Doctor [Peter] Donnelan never meant seriously to favour his worthy brother [Peter O'Kelly, O.F.M.]. A letter wrote to him, Kelly, from hence, which I read and which was ostensive, has given him a fair opportunity of discovering the doctor's want of sincerity and the malignity of those who interposed calumny with no other view but that of disappointing your friends. I have reason to believe the Franciscans were not the authors of the calumny, and while the doctor buoyed them up with hopes of obtaining their desire, it was very natural they had been sanguine until their mistake of the doctor's insincerity appeared visibly

to them. The affair is now dormant, at least nothing that I could have learned transpires here relative to it.

The assurance you give of the steady disposition of your friends gives room to hope they will be satisfied in due time, but chiefly by the interposition of Doctor [Mark] Skerrett [archbishop of Tuam] and other confrères, who will not only recommend the cause of the canons but also show the enormity of the calumnies made against them and you. This is an essential point and therefore to be minded very particularly when the time of trial approaches. Corsini is so experienced in misrepresentations from Ireland that those against you made no impression on him, no nor on York, neither had they that influence on the Congregation the author or authors thereof imagined. No, these were chiefly guided by a maxim of not forcing a coadjutor upon an ordinary, of which you may assure your friends".

#### THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1773

Martin French was elected provincial at Dublin on 3 July 1773. His definitors were Hyacinth Berrill of Drogheda, Laurence Connillan of Sligo, John O'Connor of Dublin and Denis McGrath, prior of Lorrha. The convent of Bridge Street in which the chapter took place was known among the brethren as the "Old Ship", probably because there was a tavern of that name next door. Bishop Burke used the title just two weeks later when writing to Troy in Rome. "Mr. Patrick Kirwan got your letter directed to the Old Ship. He and all the other country capitularians are gone home. Though I was here in the time of chapter, yet you know I make it my study not to be an intermedler. I was glad, however, to see so many old friends, which I did not before for eight years, as four years ago I was in the continent"<sup>113</sup>. The Dominican bishop may not have "intermedled" but he kept his ears open and sent some comments on the election to Charles O'Kelly at Rome<sup>114</sup>.

You well observe that [George] Plunkett and [John] Nugent made no great figure in the last meeting, though they thought to drive all before them. One was to be provincial and the other definitor, but neither<sup>115</sup>. By what I previously heard from my Munster neighbours, there would be a stiff contention between [Martin] French and [Patrick] Kirwan, in which case a *tertius* might slip in, *iuxta illud: inter duos litigantes*

<sup>113</sup> Dublin, 17 July 1773. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>114</sup> Kilkenny, 9 Dec. 1773. Burke to O'Kelly. D.D.A., 29/4.



*tertius gaudet*, and in fact some of the definitors, namely Connellan, was so chosen. Now I fancied in that case the *tertius* might be honest [Edmund] Fitzgerald, much fitter than [John] Fottrell was in 1738 when in this manner he was chosen, the candidates being [Laurence] Richardson and [Terence] Reilly. But poor Kirwan had not one vote, though I must confess my hidden inclination was for him, being a school graduate. French with all his merits, or any like him, would not be chosen in any province of Italy.

Plunkett and Nugent wanting influence in the chapter was of service to St. Sixt's, for they did their endeavours to hinder it to get Hogan's money. It happened well that three of the definitors were Sixtinians<sup>116</sup>. Jack O'Connor behaved strenuously, for which he got my hearty thanks.

Burke's objection to French was in fact a constitutional one; only those who had taught theology were eligible for the provincialate. The final reference is to some money left by Bernard Hogan of Rosbercon and applied by the chapter to the college in Rome. Plunkett and Nugent must have wanted it for Louvain. The acts of the chapter do not mention the business. Whatever the chapter may have discussed, it was a brisk and businesslike meeting, beginning on 3 July and finishing on the 8th. The acts came quickly to the point<sup>117</sup>. Thomas Netterville and Charles O'Kelly were named definitor and *socius* for the next general chapter. The bishops chosen to protect the privileges of the order were those already appointed since 1765. Skerrett of Tuam was the only archbishop among them. Dr. Carpenter of Dublin, another archbishop, might well have been named too for the province of Leinster, but only at the risk of offending an old and faithful friend, Augustine Cheevers O.S.A. of Meath. John O'Daly was again named historian and Louvain again designated for the provincial archives.

<sup>116</sup> The reference is not to Thomas Plunkett, ex-provincial, as was wrongly stated in AFP 45 (1975) 492. Thomas was dead by 17 Dec. 1772 when his S.T.M. went to another. AGOP IV, 240, p. 6. Geo. Plunkett, also of Connacht, taught at Louvain from which he was allowed visit Ireland for three months "on private business" in June 1772. On 5 Sept. 1772 he was named first regent at Holy Cross. Ibidem. John Nugent of Munster was permitted on 8 May 1773 to resign his priorship at Louvain and return to Ireland. Loc. cit., p. 7. Because of the *alternativa*, it must have been Plunkett who wanted to be provincial, and Nugent definitor. Nugent was later provincial from 1793.

<sup>117</sup> All save Laur. Connellan had studied at St. Sixtus.

<sup>118</sup> The text used here is a copy made by Troy at Rome on 3 Sept. 1773. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 48. Th. Fottrell was secretary of the chapter.

Seventeen years had passed since the holding of the last general chapter, but the provincial was urged none the less (ord. 1) to make sure that each convent had a copy of the chapter acts to be read at table once a month. Young priests returning fresh from their studies would have to submit their written sermons, at least during their first year on the mission, to one of two priests whom the provincial would name for each province (ord. 2). This was a reaction to frequent doctrinal lapses which experienced preachers noted with concern. The third ordination, insisting on public recitation of the rosary of the Holy Name, at least on Sundays and holidays, was surely suggested by John O'Connor who had just published his book on the subject. Dominican preachers were urged to recommend both the rosary and sodality of the Holy Name, since experience proved how conducive both were "to the growth of the Catholic religion". The last ordination (ord. 4) gives an insight into the system whereby the honest missionary advanced slowly towards promotion. Each had his own "place", based on years of service, within his native province — Connacht for example — but he might lose that place by serving elsewhere. The chapter of 1773 confined itself to the case of those elected to office in another Irish province or in the Irish houses abroad. On finishing their terms, they were to recover their "former places" in their provinces of origin.

Urged by a letter from the lectors at Holy Cross, the chapter asked the general to impose on the master of students at Louvain the obligation of teaching apologetics in English every Sunday and feastday in the afternoon. One can see the value of the idea, especially since the chapter stated it. Protestants in Ireland were accustomed to discuss religious "polemics" in English, and it was as well to prepare the students, if only by giving them the vocabulary of what they would have to face. Latin was the language of the schools, but yet not quite suitable for this particular subject. What one cannot so easily see is why the students should have been expected to attend afternoon classes on their free days. "*Non in die festo, ne forte tumultus fieret in populo*"! That was the only petition of the chapter, apart from a request for the promotion of a young Sixtinian, Francis Levins, who was only thirty and had not taught quite long enough to become a bachelor. He was, for all that, "*in via*" and his personal merits were quite well known to the master general.

It may be recalled that the provincial chapter of 1765 came close to breaking all records when it postulated no less than thirty-eight candidates for the degrees of the order. John F. Netterville showed great restraint

in 1769 by bringing this number down to six. Martin French did better still, for he postulated only four, all for degrees vacant *per obitum*. However, the chapter gave him full permission to postulate others on his own initiative should any vacancies arise later during his term. The names of the dead, listed as usual at the foot of the acts, came to a total of twenty-six as against fifteen for the earlier four-year period (1765-1769).

#### THE NEW NOVITIATES, 1773-1800

While still prior of Esker, Martin French had built a new convent large enough and so constructed as to accomodate even novices. When provincial of Ireland, it fell to him to arrange the actual opening of four novitiates, the first in Ireland in twenty-four years. On 19 July 1773, the cardinals of Propaganda Fide finally agreed under what conditions novitiates might be opened and Clement XIV consented a few days later to their decree. The prefect, cardinal Castelli, aided by his secretary Stefano Borgia, then drew up a rather complicated plan to regulate the definitive erection of the novitiates. Copies of the new decree would go out to all four provincials with a request that they should choose their novitiates and send to Rome the written permission of the local ordinary for each of them. Propaganda would then write to each of the bishops concerned. But on no account were the provincials to admit a single novice until hearing from Propaganda again<sup>118</sup>. A letter to this effect was duly sent to John F. Netterville, but since he was no longer provincial when it arrived, it was Martin French who answered it eventually on 25 April 1774. He was the last of the four provincials to acknowledge the concession and the least prepared of all, for while the others were able to send the required documents to Rome almost at once, he was still in the process of finding out whether the bishops would agree to the four novitiates he had in mind. His letter to cardinal Castelli speaks for itself<sup>119</sup>.

Eminentissime Domine,

Epistolam cum decreto S. Congregationis Generalis de Propaganda Fide habita die 19 Iulii 1773 circa novitios in hoc regno denuo admit-tendos, quam praedecessori meo fratri magistro Netterville scribere dignata est Eminentia Vestra, omni qua par est reverentia recepi, ac responsum citius darem nisi obstacula praebuissent aliqui illustrissimi

<sup>118</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, Louvain 1972, 316-20.

<sup>119</sup> Original text in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 120, 123.

locorum ordinarii in quorum dioecibus existunt conventus, ut mihi satis constat, aptiores ad novitios pie et religiose educandos, de quo reverendissimum ordinis magistrum generalem certiores feci, ipsiusque responsum et approbationem recepi <sup>120</sup>. Hi sunt natus meus conventus Atheniensis in diaecesi Clonfertensi pro provincia Conaciae, conventus Corcagiensis in diaecesi Corcagiensi pro provincia Momoniae, conventus Pontanensis in diaecesi Armachana pro provincia Ultoniae et conventus Trimensis in diaecesi Midensi pro provincia Lageniae.

Illustrissimus Clonfertensis [Petrus Donnelan] testimonium praebere libenter annuit, quod regularis observantia, communis mensa et sequela chori servantur in conventu Atheniensi. Non dubito quin idem sit testaturus episcopus Midensis [Augustinus Cheevers] de conventu Trimensi, licet propter locorum distantiam, ipsius responsum ad me nondum pervenerit. Illustrissimus Armachanus [Antonius Blake] simile testimonium ferre de conventu Pontanensi renuit, ut mihi videtur immerito, cum ibi sit communitas fratrum de quorum pia et religiosa conversatione mihi constat sub regimine praedecessoris mei fratris magistri [Iohannis] Netterville, viri praeclari ac vitae religiosae zelo conspicui, quem nuper in priorem elegerunt. De Illustrissimi Corcagiensis [Iohannis Butler] consensu haud multum fido, utpote communi fama erga religiosos parum affecti, sed in decursu visitationis provinciae nostrae quantocius peragendae, meipsum certiores facturus sum.

Quantum ad conditiones a Sacra Congregatione requisitas, perquam humiliter accepto omnia decreta et singulas ordinationes quae ab ipsa emanarunt, tamquam a Spiritu Sancto dictatas. Et licet aliquae conditiones, nostris multum difficultatis afferre, attento rerum nostrarum statu, videantur, Vestrae attamen Eminentiae dictamini nunc et semper acquiescere parati sumus.

Confratrem meum Franciscanorum provincialem [Antonium French] iam ad urbem pervenisse puto. Quidquid pro suo ordine novitios spectans Eminentiae Vestrae proponet, idem pro nostro humillime propono.

Permittere dignatur Vestra Eminentia ut me, provinciamque meam, perquam suppliciter amplissimo vestro patroncinio commendem, nosque interim Deum O.M. deprecari non cessabimus, ut Vestram Eminentiam et Eminentissimos vestri sacri collegii Confratres diu servet incolumes. Eminentiae Vestrae humillimus ac obsequentissimus servus,

fr. Martinus Antonius French, ordinis praedicatorum,  
prior provincialis provinciae Hiberniae.

25<sup>a</sup> Aprilis 1774

<sup>120</sup> The general's reply does not seem to have been registered in AGOP IV. Nor has French's letter to Boxadors survived.

Thus, on setting out on his first visitation, Martin French knew that there would be no problem about a novitiate at Esker. Although bishop Donnelan had treated him roughly as a prospective coadjutor, he was willing enough to help the provincial in purely domestic concerns. And Father French was right in thinking that bishop Cheevers of Meath would allow a novitiate at Donore, the "house of refuge" from Trim. His task was to see what could be done in Cork and what was to be done for Ulster since the archbishop of Armagh had already refused to approve a novitiate at Drogheda.

The earliest trace of this visitation is in the correspondence between bishop Thomas Burke of Ossory and his friend John T. Troy at Rome. Both were concerned to get for St. Clement's the money left on his death by Bernard Hogan of Rosbercon, a remote spot in Dr. Burke's diocese to which friars such as Hogan belonged but where the order no longer had a house. When Hogan died, the money came into the hands of Patrick Bray who lived nearby in Waterford. According to the bishop, Father French "thought to get the money for Louvain, but he and [Laurence] Connellan were outvoted by three Sixtinian definitors ... hence it is obvious to guess why he endeavours to counteract the definitory". There was, Dr. Burke claimed, no son of Rosbercon "but James Hynes, a county of Galway man, who is a hare-brained fellow and would be so far from building a house there for a regular habitation that he'd squander it all in a very short time, much shorter than the house would be building"<sup>121</sup>. Martin French came on visitation to Waterford and Kilkenny before 16 July 1774, but only to "bungle the affair" in bishop Burke's opinion. By naming Patrick Bray titular prior of Rosbercon, Father French gave him full title to Hogan's money, so it was not St. Clement's, not even Rosbercon, but Bray's house in Waterford which benefitted. The exact details will probably never be known any more clearly than they appear in a letter the bishop wrote in October 1775<sup>122</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> Kilkenny, 5 Mar. 1774. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>122</sup> Kilkenny, 1 Oct. 1775. Burke to O'Kelly. Ibidem. One may also quote a letter (Rome, 19 Jan. 1774) from O'Kelly to Burke. "The provincial wrote to me, Bray of Waterford apprehended he may be put to some trouble by the heirs of that friar whose money he keeps. Again, he tells me, the sons of the house he belonged to complain highly of the injustice attempted against them and that, by that money, they could and would build a house for their habitation. He gives me but little hopes of that money. Do all in your power to facilitate the affair in favour of St. Clement's". D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.



In my late visitation I took particular care to recommend to the clergy and laity my grandson [Dominic] Quirke. He'd do very well in the neighbourhood of Rosbercon but for [Bernard] Hogan's money. They would have him make use of it towards his establishment. On the other hand the provincial put it out of his power to sue for it legally, for [Patrick] Bray, who has the money, is made titular prior of Rosbercon. So the end of it will be that upon his decease — he is an infirm gouty man — some nephew or niece of his will get it. The provincial definitory disposed of it better, but French counteracted them. He, French, hurted poor [Peter] Magennis here [in Kilkenny], for he tould in the inn that he has a great deal of money, which is false, for he being decrepid lives entirely upon charity, and without vanity mine is not wanting. But French said this to palliate his management in leaving for him a heavy bill in the inn which no provincial did before, but to the contrary left him a present. He said of me (absent) that I ought to keep house and support two or three of my Order. But in this no one believed him.

Martin French visited the nuns of Channel Row in Dublin on 6 July 1774 and then moved north. Dr. Cheevers of Meath gave written consent to a novitiate at Donore on the 15th of the same month, and the provincial was with his own subjects at Drogheda by the 18th. That was the day on which he confirmed the community decision that the friary could support only six and that no one, over and above that number, was ever to be admitted at Mill Lane. On the surface, this looks like a refusal to let the convent be used as a novitiate, but yet it may simply have been a veto on further assignments to Drogheda. We are left with two hard facts: that the archbishop of Armagh agreed three months later to the erection of a novitiate at Drogheda, and that no novice is known to have entered it<sup>123</sup>.

This first visitation was still in progress in September when John Daly of Newbridge travelled to Kilcock to meet his provincial. Daly also wished to meet his own prior, Vincent Coffey, who left his parish in Westmeath to see the provincial on the same occasion. Martin French tried to persuade Father Coffey to quit his parish in favour of Newbridge, but in vain<sup>124</sup>. Later in September the bishop of Clonfert agreed to a

<sup>123</sup> Drogheda, St. Magdalen's, account-book (1771-86), under date 18 July 1774.

<sup>124</sup> Newbridge, conventual archives, *Liber Computuum ... complectens quaedam documenta*, p. 8. This, the oldest volume in the archives, contains a chronicle begun by Daly. He said Coffey was named prior shortly before Sept. 1774 on the understanding that he would devote himself to Newbridge: "sed frustra, nam omnem eius

novitiate at Esker, and the bishop of Elphin permitted another at Roscommon, apparently to make up for the lack of a novitiate in Munster. John Butler, bishop of Cork, either refused the provincial's proposal outright or, more likely, Father French thought it better not to ask him at all. Finally, in the middle of October, Anthony Blake of Armagh agreed to the Drogheda novitiate, having refused to do so for years before. Martin French got all four signatures on the same half-sheet of paper, just as it is printed below. Considering that these four declarations took twenty-four years to obtain, Father French's half-sheet must rank as one of the key-documents in the history of the Irish province <sup>125</sup>.

Nos fr. Augustinus, Dei et Apostolicae Sedis gratia, episcopus Midensis, & c., fidem facimus et attestamus conventus S. Mariae Assumptae Trimmensis, s. ord. praedicatorum, esse domum omnino aptam, prorsusque idoneam pro educatione et instructione novitiorum ad habitum praefati ordinis recipiendorum, quia nobis apprime constat, in ea regularem disciplinam, religionis observantiam, mensam communem, zelumque domus Dei in omnibus summopere vigere. Quapropter consensum nostrum et licentiam damus ut in praefato conventu in nostra diaecesi existente novitatus pro juventute s. ord. praed. instituantur et erigatur pro provincia Lageniae.

Datum et signatum e loco nostri refugii de Randlestown hac 15<sup>a</sup> Julii 1774. fr. Augustinus [Cheevers, O.S.A.], ep. Midensis.

Idem attestamus de conventu Athenriensi in nostra diaecesi sito, hac 21<sup>a</sup> Sept. 1774. Petrus [Donnelan], ep. Clonfertensis.

Idem attestamus de conventu Roscomiensi vulgo de Mount Mary in nostra diaecesi sito, hac die 30<sup>a</sup> Sept. 1774.

Jacobus [O'Fallon], ep. Elphinensis.

Quemadmodum in rescriptis a S. Congregatione de Propaganda nuper emanatis de et super novitiatum erectione, novitiorum receptione et professione in Hibernia, inter alia cautum sit, ut in iis tantum diaecesibus instituantur ubi locus aptus, prorsusque idoneus esset pro educatione et instructione eorum; ubi etiam mensa communis & c., zelusque domus Dei in omnibus vigeret, ac praeterea ubi adesset Rev.mi ordinarii approbatio.

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curam penitus abiecit, ac suis negotiis in comitatu Midiae occidentalis unice occupatus, numquam postea licet stricte citatus, in subsequentibus visitationibus comparere voluit". Coffey was P.P. Tyrellspass, Co. Westmeath.

<sup>125</sup> The original, without any accompanying letter, is in APF, SC Irlanda 12, f. 152.

Nos igitur, experientia edocti de qualitatibus loci nominandi eiusque aptitudine, et quam fructuose in vinea Domini excolenda laboravere Rev. di Patres s. ord. praedicatorum in oppido Pontana, archidiaecesis nostrae, lubenti animo facultatem nostram per presentes impertimur RR. PP. praefati s. ordinis erigendi in novitiatuum domus suam in praefato oppido residentiam. In cuius rei fidem et robur, hisce subscribendis litteris testimonialibus nostris in loco nostri refugii, hac die 16 Octobris 1774.

Antonius [Blake], archiepiscopus Armachanus, ☩ c. ☩ c.

The other three orders — Franciscans, Augustinians and Carmelites — sent documents of this kind to Rome long before Martin French persuaded even his first bishop to sign. Cardinal Castelli permitted the immediate opening of their novitiates as early as 11 June 1774, not wishing to hold everyone up just for the sake of the Dominicans. Finally, with the onset of winter, Father French's half-sheet reached Rome and on 10 December 1774 Castelli wrote back to him, as well as to the four bishops concerned, giving his final consent.

By the terms of the new decree, each provincial was obliged to submit triennial reports on the number of novices received and the convents they entered, but the Dominicans seem never to have complied with the obligation. In point of fact, their four novitiates were not particularly successful and failed, as the novitiates of the other three orders failed, to halt their decline. There is no evidence that any novice was ever clothed at Drogheda. Donore, the house of refuge from Trim, admitted only one, James Thomas Murray, in 1787. The third novitiate at Mount Mary in Roscommon also received one novice, Dominic Lennon, in 1777. Only Esker, the provincial's own convent, proved really successful. No less than seven received the habit there between 1775 and 1778, three of whom professed for the house and the others for Burrishoole, Ballindoon and Galway<sup>126</sup>. Regrettably, this brisk pace was not maintained, for there were no novices at Esker after 1778. A modest revival in the 1790s proved only the prelude to collapse.

#### CORK, ARDAGH AND MULLINGAR, 1774

None of the four largest groups of friars established a novitiate in Cork, although all save the Carmelites had houses and chapels there. John Butler, bishop of Cork since 1763, may not have refused permission;

<sup>126</sup> For their names, with other details, see H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 325.

more likely he was not even asked for it. Sometime in 1772 or 1773, bishop Butler sent to Rome a *relatio status* or diocesan report in which he said what he had to say about friars, but which unfortunately cannot now be found. Dr. Butler would later refer back to this document and refuse to say one word more or less on the subject, but since that is lost one can judge his opinions only from the letters of those who rejected them. There is, for instance, the appeal made by Dominic Morragh, a Dominican of Cork, to Charles O'Kelly on 27 March 1774<sup>127</sup>.

The many and repeated uneasiness given us by his lordship Dr. John Butler occasion us to trouble you so often, but he lately told his mind to Mr. [Anthony] French, provincial of the Franciscans, by which he gives us the finishing stroke. He assured him that he wrote to Rome to get leave to remove the regular clergy from officiating in their respective chapels and to officiate daily in the two parish chapels of this city, and solicited for several other favours if that did not take place, all to the prejudice of the regulars. His vicar general and secretary, Fr. Barron, hearing that he told the facts to the provincial, and finding himself very much blamed in this city, had a mind to exculpate himself. On a meeting the clergy had about some affairs of marriage, confessed that he wrote that letter on said subject and on other matters as he could not now avoid it being under obedience to the bishop<sup>128</sup>. On which he and one [Patrick] Casey an Augustinian had some words of no great consequence. In short he suspended Casey and even assured him he would declare irregular if he said one Mass — the following day being Sunday — in the Augustinian chapel, unless he read publicly the following day from the altar such a recantation as was wrote by Barron, which Casey complied with.

The bishop being then in the country, and hearing the town to be all inflamed, came to town and sent for the religious superiors, blamed them for maliciously inflaming the town etc. I told his lordship it was the proceedings of his vicar general, his censures and the recantation he ordered, made them come at the original cause and inflamed the town. His lordship began to exculpate himself by saying that he did not write to get the regulars secularised or suppressed, which was maliciously said of him. I made him excuse that we never heard that he did about such terms, but that he wrote to get us removed from

<sup>127</sup> The full text is in Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 107-109.

<sup>128</sup> If the bishop did write a "letter on said subject", distinct from the *relatio status*, that letter too is missing. O'Kelly suggested to Propaganda that the bishop's Roman agent, finding his request exorbitant, decided not to submit it to the congregation. APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 120-21.

officiating in our own chapels and of consequence our residence could not subsist. His lordship said he only wished in his letter to the Pope that we were removed from our chapels and that it was rather a velleity than a wish or desire. He yesterday sent us a piece of writing to be read at all Masses, exculpating himself that he wrote nothing to Rome that could prejudice the regulars. But the regulars did not think proper to get the paper read, as it was contrary to Father Barron's declaration and even to his own words.

Two days later, about a hundred Catholics of Cork addressed a petition to Clement XIV, the famous Franciscan Ganganelli who suppressed the Jesuits, voicing their "alarm" at the report that their bishop intended to close "the four religious chapels of the regulars by uniting their members to the two parish chapels"<sup>129</sup>. Arguing that this was no way to treat "this extensive city, the second Dublin, to which Waterford is but a village", they duly set forth the several bad effects such a proposal would have, omitting others "too tedious to take up your Holiness's time". Rather than print the text, one may offer another: an undated address from the regular superiors of Cork on the same subject<sup>130</sup>.

To His Holiness Pope Clement XIV

The Humble Address of the Regular Clergy of the City of Corke  
Most Holy Father,

Having been certainly informed that the bishop of Corke has wrote to the Court of Rome to obtain an order to oblige us to quit our present respective chapels and officiate in the two parish chapels only, and that without giving us the least previous notice, we most humbly beg leave to remonstrate against this design for the following reasons.

First because our support consists in the voluntary contributions of the faithful which we receive at our chapel doors, and in the alms we receive for Mass therein (without encroaching on the bishop's jurisdiction or rights) so that to deprive us of that liberty we now enjoy of serving the faithful in these chapels would be depriving us of the means of subsisting, especially our old and infirm Fathers who are grown grey in the service of God and the conversion of souls, and are scarce able now to go from their chambers to the adjoining chapel, would never be able to go so far as the parish chapels are from them, and therefore should necessarily perish from want.

<sup>129</sup> Cork, 29 Mar. 1774. English original in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 136.

<sup>130</sup> *Loc. cit.*, doc. 139. This too is the original, addressed to Ch. O'Kelly. On paper of the same format and watermark as the preceding, and so most probably of the same date, 29 Mar. 1774.



Secondly for the inconveniencies that would arise from it to the publick, such as the impossibility of serving all the Catholicks of Corke and its environs in the parish chapels, as well for their being situated in the two most distant suburbs of the city (the second in Ireland for its extensiveness and number of inhabitants, especially Catholics) which renders it morally impossible for many persons in the centre and other parts of the town to go to them. As also because the two, nor even three chapels could not contain the multitudes on Sundays and holidays, whereas the six chapels now in being are so thronged in these days that vast numbers are obliged to stand and kneel in the streets in time of Mass for want of room within doors.

For these and many other weighty motives (which to avoid trespassing on your Holiness's condescending patience, we forebear mentioning) we, prostrate at your Holiness's feet, supplicate you not to comply with the above-mentioned request of our bishop's, which tends not to the encrease but to the diminution of piety and devotion, and we implore your apostolical benediction and protection.

Br. Dominick Morragh, master in divinity and prior of the Dominicans.

Br. Pat. Casey, master in divinity and ex-provincial of the order of St. Augustine and actual president of the convent of Cork.

Br. Laur. Callanan, guardian of the Franciscan convent.

Br. Brian McDonnell, ex-definitior, guardian of the Capuchin convent.

Charles O'Kelly kept these documents to himself, but submitted to Propaganda Fide an Italian translation of the "petition of a hundred Catholics", adding a comment which sheds new light, not on the situation at Cork but at Waterford. Dr. Butler, he said, seemed to think that the regulars of Cork could and should serve the public in the parochial chapels alone, exactly as the regulars did in the city of Waterford where they had no chapels of their own and were content to staff the parochial chapel with the secular clergy rather than seek another establishment. But, O'Kelly explained, the two cases were different. Waterford had few Catholics, while there were 40,000 in Cork. Besides, the regular clergy of Waterford, by an agreement entered into with the civil authorities and the diocesan clergy, were restricted to a fixed number of friars which would not suffice to serve a chapel of their own, and since they had no chapel whatever from the time of their first establishment "they are and ought to be content with their lot" <sup>131</sup>.

<sup>131</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 120-21. O'Kelly is referring to their re-establishment

On receiving a letter from the cardinal prefect, John Butler denied everything except what he had stated in his report on the diocese. All the rest was vile calumny. But he did insist at the end of his letter that it was ridiculous to claim that the two parochial chapels were not big enough for the needs of the city<sup>132</sup>. So ridiculous indeed that he set about building a third one almost at once. This storm in a teacup died away within the year, leaving everything as it had been before. Bishop Butler, it is true, challenged the Carmelites of Kinsale in 1775, and then the Augustinians of Cork itself in a long-drawn battle (1778-1783) as to their right to move house and home from one parish to another, but in all this the Dominicans took no part. Enough to note a casual reference made in 1778 to the fact that the Dominicans, then living in the parish of St. Mary's Shandon, formerly lived in that of St. Finbar<sup>133</sup>. Similarly the Franciscans had moved from the parish of Shandon to that of SS. Peter and Paul. The reference seems to be to fairly recent changes during the eighteenth century rather than to the old sites lost by suppression two centuries before.

Yet another dispute broke out in the midlands during 1774, helping to make that particular year the busiest of Father French's provincialate, though here again the Dominicans were only marginally involved. The plaintiffs were the Franciscans of Meelick and Athlone whose "exclusive" right to quest was being ignored by a priest who went about from door to door collecting barley, oats and wheat. The defendant was Thomas Butler, parish priest of Lusmagh in the diocese of Clonfert and of one or two other parishes, probably the present Gallen and Reynagh in Clonmacnois, subject to the bishop of Ardagh. In other words, Father Butler and his curate Roger Flynn had charge of parishes which were not merely in adjoining dioceses but in two distinct

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in the early 18th century. The most important phrase is: *« inoltre li regolari di Waterfordia per un concordato colla città e col clero secolare sono limitati ad un certo numero che non basterebbe per officiare una capella propria »*.

<sup>132</sup> Cork, 14 July 1774. Butler to Castelli. Latin original. APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 130, 141.

<sup>133</sup> Cork, 17 Sept. 1778. The Augustinians of Cork state their case. Latin original. APF, SOCG 851, f. 341. On the Carmelites of Kinsale, a very interesting case, see APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 205-08, 348-49. Propaganda held three general congregations on the Augustinian affair: 22 Mar. and 13 Sept. 1779, and 31 July 1780. These dates are a sufficient guide to the sources. But see also APF, SC Irlanda 14, ff. 186, 191; 15, ff. 309-43 *passim*.

ecclesiastical provinces. The river Shannon made its peaceful way through the centre of the battlefield.

The guardian of Meelick began work in Connacht on the western bank of the river and by April 1774 had induced old Peter Donnellan, bishop of Clonfert, and Mark Skerrett, archbishop of Tuam, to sign a set of statutes forbidding the parochial clergy to quest on their own behalf. Six canons of Clonfert also put their names to the document, while three more bishops signed it in September <sup>134</sup>.

1. Non est licitum nec permittendum rectoribus parochiarum vel per se vel per alios (ad eorum emolumentum) ostiatim mendicare, aut frumentum exigere, vel alicuius generis annonam vel obsonium misere a parochianis flagitare, cum sit contra canones et praxim universalem ecclesiae.

2. Talis praxis est omnino eliminanda, quia vergit in publicum incommodum fratrum mendicantium, quibus parochi debent pro viribus assistere ad pacem et unionem inter utrumque clerum conservandum.

3. Talis praxis redolens turpem avaritiam fortiter est extirpanda. Cum sit nociva religioni Christianae propter scandalum Christifidelibus datum, et ad tollendam occasionem de parochis murmurandum, est ab ordinariis omnino prohibenda, cum sit in parochis scandalosa et hactenus inaudita.

4. Si quis autem parochus talem mendicandi ostiatim corruptelam introducere praesumat, est primo monendus, secundo consiliis increpandus. Si his spretis contumax persiste-rit, censuris aliisque poenis ad arbitrium ordinarii est stricte cohibendus.

Has ordinationes in praxi stricte observandas ad pacem inter utrumque clerum conservandum, et ad privilegia fratrum mendicantium conservanda perutiles et necessarias censemus. Datum hac die 19<sup>a</sup> Aprilis 1774.

Marcus [Skerrett], archiepiscopus Tuamensis.

Petrus [Donnellan], episcopus Clonfertensis.

Thomas Broder O.F.M., guardian of Meelick, brought this impressive statement across the Shannon to James Brady, bishop of Ardagh, hoping that he too would accept the statutes and impose them on his clergy. Even though Broder went on his knees, Dr. Brady declared that he fully supported Father Butler and saw no reason why all diocesan priests

<sup>134</sup> Notarial copy in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 726-29. The Franciscans must have submitted a series of legal questions to Clonfert and Tuam, for the document begins simply: 'Responsio ad quaesita'.

should not quest exactly as he did. That was in August, as the corn ripened in the fields. Broder approached the bishop again in September when the harvest was in, but Dr. Brady "fled at his coming like a shadow or an arrow from the bow". A week later, the warden of Galway, James Fallon of Elphin and even Anthony Blake, archbishop of Armagh, added their signatures to the statutes of Tuam. Dr. Blake lived near Galway, a willing exile from his troubled diocese. He was also official "protector" of the Franciscans and, in any event, bishop Brady's metropolitan. The other bishops who signed the statutes all belonged to Connacht, yet another proof of the paradox that the regular clergy were treated best in the province where they were most numerous.

Meanwhile, the offending priest continued as before, ignoring the bishop of Clonfert while his other bishop, Brady of Ardagh, encouraged him to collect grain to his heart's content. About August 1775, James O'Kelly O.F.M. presented a petition to Propaganda in the name of the Franciscan and Dominican provincials<sup>135</sup>. It was a request to the Congregation to confirm the statutes of Tuam. Usually, the provincials said, the parish clergy were able to live on their ordinary revenues and those of Ardagh were no poorer than others. But if any priest of Ardagh was forced by poverty to beg from door to door, it was certainly not Thomas Butler who had less cause than most to injure both the friars and his parishioners in this way. While the bishop of Ardagh actively encouraged Butler to quest "*in proprium commodum*" and wished all priests to do the same, the regular clergy were simply concerned to protect their own right and privilege to quest.

The Roman officials were at first willing enough to tell Ardagh to stop this "novelty", but changed their minds on hearing from Augustine Cheevers of Meath<sup>136</sup>. That venerable bishop, himself a regular, had recently been named vicar-apostolic of Armagh, so he sounded opinion in Armagh and Meath before imploring cardinal Castelli to leave matters as they stood. "It is the general custom in both these dioceses for all parish priests in country parts to collect wheat within their own parishes; and considering how bad things are, they could not otherwise support themselves". Friars of various orders quested in every parish twice a year, and the diocesan clergy were quite willing

<sup>135</sup> Loc. cit., ff. 721-24.

<sup>136</sup> Propaganda had asked Cheevers for his opinion. 9 Sept. 1775. Castelli to Ardagh and Meath. APF, Lettere 226, f. 378. Cheevers' answer (24 Dec. 1775) is in APF, SC Irlanda 12, f. 290.

and thankful to let them use their public chapels for this purpose even on Sundays and feastdays, knowing well they could not otherwise survive.

Bishop Brady also wrote to Rome, explaining that when Thomas Butler and Roger Flynn solicited the free offerings of the faithful they acted with his full consent and in keeping with the common practice of the province of Armagh from time immemorial<sup>137</sup>. In any case, he went on, since the diocesan clergy worked harder and more constantly than the friars, they were all the more entitled to what they could get, especially since they needed this source of income for their own subsistence. Bishop Brady protested that he had many friends among the regulars — as much as to say “some of my best friends are Jews” — but if Thomas Broder and his like really wanted to pursue their distinctive vocation, praying for the church and the faithful, they would be better off in some foreign cloister, wearing the habit of St. Francis. Dr. Cheevers, who was appointed to settle the affair, took a calmer view while agreeing in substance with the bishop of Ardagh. It was, he declared, a universal custom throughout Leinster and Armagh for both regulars and seculars to quest. “*Si alia sit in Conacia, suae stent consuetudini*”. Such regulars as quested in Father Butler’s “Clonfert” parish might take their case to the archbishop of Tuam.

Whatever about “immemorial custom” in Leinster and Armagh, Dr. Skerrett of Tuam still insisted that door-to-door begging by parish priests, a practice “hitherto unheard of”, was a scandalous violation of the canons and universal practice of the church. Yet when he asked Propaganda to confirm the statutes he had framed to settle the dispute, he was told that his statutes must first be accepted by all or by most of the diocesan clergy<sup>138</sup>. This amounted to a refusal, but perhaps it was just as well not to legislate for the whole of Connacht on the basis of what was happening in Lismagh. In the end, archbishop Skerrett laid his well-meant statutes aside and the friars of Meelick troubled Rome no more.

<sup>137</sup> Athlone, 9 Dec. 1775. Brady to Castelli. Loc. cit., ff. 292-93. Brady reminded Propaganda of its own decree (31 Aug. 1761) on questing, for which see above, pp. 286-288.

<sup>138</sup> 4 Mar. 1776. Skerrett to prefect. APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 344-45. The prefect’s answer (25 May 1776) is in APF, Lettere 228, f. 254.

The reference to bishop Cheevers in the preceding paragraph is from his letter (18 Mar. 1776) to Castelli. The bishop summoned the contending parties, but the friars of Meelick did not appear. APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 354-55.



Another detail about questing may well find mention here. This too belongs to 1774, Father French's busy year, and belongs in fact to the very same day on which bishop Cheevers assented to a novitiate at Donore. In a Latin document signed at Tremblestown, the home of Lord Trimleston, on 15 July 1774, the bishop of Meath declared that the Dominicans of Mullingar, "hitherto prevented by lack of numbers from living together", were now sufficiently numerous to establish a community but would have to rely on the alms of the faithful for their support. Bishop Cheevers authorised them to quest throughout the diocese of Meath and warmly recommended their cause both to priests and people<sup>139</sup>. Dominicans had held the parish of Mullingar, one of the finest in Meath, since 1733. No less than five priests were assigned there in 1756 and six in 1767, though some of these held other parishes in the neighbourhood. If then there was no community at Mullingar before 1774, it cannot have been for lack of a "sufficient number". Nor is it likely, considering the importance of the parish, that poverty had prevented two or three of those assigned there from sharing the one house. More likely, the "conventual" status of Mullingar was being questioned and the Dominicans were, so to speak, taking out insurance against the likelihood that bishop Cheevers' successor would cast a cold eye on their tenure of the parish.

The three cases outlined above, in Cork, Ardagh and Mullingar, have more in common than the fact that they happened in the same year. All three had to do with money or at least with collecting grain.

One tends to imagine, or is given to believe, that the final quarter of the eighteenth century was a time of relative plenty and economic well-being for Ireland. Perhaps in some areas it was, but not necessarily in all parts of the country, and certainly not for the friar with no parish to serve nor some wealthy patron to support him. To illustrate the point, one may quote a letter written at Esker in 1778 by a young Dominican named Edmund Burke who had left Naples two years before and heartily wished he had never left it at all<sup>140</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> From a copy reproduced ten years later in the *summarium* of the case between the bishop of Meath and the Dominicans of Mullingar. SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 11.

<sup>140</sup> To Matthias Keays at S. Caterina a Formello, Naples. Original at Lisbon, Corpo Santo, E 67. Fr. Thomas Jordan and the late archivist, Fr. Dom. Clarkson, kindly supplied me with a copy of the letter.

My dearest friend,

Essex, January the 18th, 1778.

I received your very agreeable and welcome favour of the 13th of June last, which afforded me unspeakable pleasure and satisfaction to hear thereby that you and all acquaintances in them parts enjoy good health. I was in hopes of getting a letter from our good friend Father [Henry] Dolphin, but I see he has blotted my name out of the book of record<sup>141</sup>. I wrote to him twice but got no answer, and what surprises me more, you make no mention of him in yours. I beg now you'll give him my most loving and affectionate compliments and tell him I am very jealous with him for having deprived me all this time of his most amiable correspondence.

I received some time ago a letter from [Eugene] Coffey wherein he tells me he is very well and that he has got a living of ten pounds *per annum* from [Vincent Coffey] a cousin of his who resigned a parish [Fertullaugh, diocese of Meath] to him. He tells me also that he has some notion of going abroad again, but I don't believe him, for I understand he is too fond of the potatoes. Mr. [Dominic Hugh] O'Kelly is here with us most commonly and is very well in health. He has lately bought a horse and bridle and saddle, and as far as I can conjecture, has laid aside all thoughts of ever going back to Naples, being assured of the continuation of his [Neapolitan] pension in these countries. *Salute a noi*. As for my part, I would not remain here if I got a hundred a year, and am only waiting to make up as much as will bring me back to sweet Italy again.

You cannot imagine, my dear Keays, what a miserable place this is for one of our cloth. I am in it these two years and do aver to you have not, by any chances or perquisites, put forty shillings in my pocket all this time. So you see what fine encouragements there are for abiding in this horrid and beggarly country. You say if you was here, you never would think of Italy. A proposition indeed that ought to be enrolled among the condemned, for had you known the state and situation of poor Ned Browne, Mr. Hugo de Burgo [Burke] and others who came home a long time before me, you would not for a moment

<sup>141</sup> Michael Kelly, a famous singer and actor, left Dublin as a boy for Naples in 1779 with a letter of introduction to this Fr. Dolphin. "He was prior of the convent of St. Dominic, a fine pile of building... I found him in his study, which opened into a spacious garden, and everything around him breathed piety, benevolence and content. He was about seventy years old, but full of health and activity. He received me with the greatest kindness and introduced me to two friars of his order: one of them called [Laurence] Plunkett, whom I often see in London even now [1826], the other named [Augustine Thomas] M'Mahon whom I saw the last time I was in Dublin, at the friary in Denmark Street". M. Kelly, *Reminiscences*, London 1826, vol. 1, p. 26.

harbour the thought of quitting the happy place you are in, where you have a very good vestry and an exceeding good table, and what is more precious, a charitable and loving attendance in your sickness. Whereas if you was here, you might rot in your bed and perhaps be in danger of dying without the sacraments. *Basta!*

My dear Keays, I speak to you *ex corde*. So stay where you are until I shall have the pleasure of enjoying your sweet company once more. Mr. Hugo [Burke?] is going to Bilbao in Spain, and Ned Browne will be going to St. Germanus in Paris, as also Dominick Browne, because they have no means in this unfortunate place to make life any way agreeable or comfortable to them. The Strongs, I am told, are in their own country [Meath] and live well together. They have gained the lawsuit that was between them and their eldest brother and have now sixty pounds *per annum* allotted for each of them during their lives<sup>142</sup>. Simon has some time ago requested an assignation of the provincial for the house of Portumna and will soon come there, but John ... [does?] nothing else but the old trade, viz. shooting, and never appeared to the provincial or any other superior since he arrived.

This is all I have at present to say to you. Write to me soon and let me know who is your prior and if I can get a place there or at Maddaloni for myself and another good Father who intends to come along with me. And in fine, praying you'll give my love and service to Abundio, Rolandelli, the lay brothers and all the old acquaintances of Durazano and Maddaloni, I conclude, subscribing myself with sincerity, your very affectionate friend and humble servant.

Edmund Burke.

#### SS. SIXTUS AND CLEMENT, 1769-1778

Thomas Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, came to Rome in September 1769 and left it in March 1770, very pleased with his visit and pleased in particular to have found a new friend, young and intelligent, in the

<sup>142</sup> See J. Brady, The Penal Laws relating to Property and the Meath Family of Strong, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (Jan. 1944) 19-24. Thomas Burke provides some other details in a letter (Kilkenny, 1 Oct. 1775) to Ch. O'Kelly. Francis Netterville had written to Burke from Dublin on 30 July, saying he had to abscond because his eldest brother [Robert] was to stand trial in the court of King's Bench and he was afraid of being called as a witness. "The trial", continued Burke, "was for sending money to the two Strongs when at the Quercia. Their eldest brother turned Protestant and informed against Bob Netterville, whose wife is aunt to the Strongs. Their father was a writing-master and inveigled his scholar (the sister of Mr. Netterville) to marry him. These were the parents of the Strongs. Bob Netterville was honourably acquitted. If found guilty, he'd incur a *praemunire*: viz. perpetual imprisonment, forfeiture of land, goods, etc." D.D.A., 29/4.

person of his "grandson" John Thomas Troy. From the day Burke left Rome the disciple wrote constantly to the master, while the bishop wrote as often in his turn, sometimes to Troy, sometimes to Charles O'Kelly, but always intending his letters for the eyes of both. There thus grew up a bulky correspondence of which most has luckily survived. Troy attempted to satisfy Burke's undying thirst for Roman gossip, acted as his business agent, and transcribed historical documents for the supplement to *Hibernia Dominicana* and the projected second edition of the book. Invariably he left a blank half-page or more at the foot of his letter so that Charles O'Kelly might add a few paragraphs of his own.

Apart from the fact that these correspondents used a code of their own invention, or rather a set of nicknames for people of every rank, these letters are too allusive, at times too trivial, to publish in full but they certainly have much to tell us of the Irish Dominican college in Rome. Only for bishop Burke, for instance, we should never have known how little the community was familiar with Gregorian chant. On St. Thomas' day, the prior arranged for vespers to be sung in the bishop's honour. "But the worthy cantor did not know how to go about it, and with his unfeigned humility owned to me [i.e. to the bishop himself] that he did not know the Gregorian tones, and when I intoned the anthem for the prior, or regent, and the psalm for him, he modestly asked me whether the subsequent psalms were to be sung in the same tone"<sup>143</sup>. On reaching Ireland, bishop Burke learned that the course of philosophy at St. Sixtus had been suspended and some prospective students sent away. He regretted that the community had not shown as much reliance on providence as their predecessors had in the 1720s, nor placed their trust in God like the staff at Louvain "who supported thirty-three novices at once after losing two pensions". Burke also wondered how the professors were to qualify for degrees without a school of philosophy, and expressed his fear that when classes in philosophy resumed in 1773 there would be no students to attend them<sup>144</sup>. These unguarded comments cut Troy to the quick. The bishop used to tease him because he was afraid of walking too near the cows in the Forum. He offered to teach Troy to sing because, though his voice was weak, it was "tuneable". But what bishop Burke did not quite realise was that his darling grandson was now a man, regent of studies

<sup>143</sup> Leghorn, 30 Apr. 1770. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>144</sup> Kilkenny, 15 Sept. 1771. Burke to O'Kelly. Ibidem.

at St. Sixtus, with a mind and a pen of his own. When Troy's defence, spelt out phrase by phrase with controlled resentment, finally reached the bishop at Kilkenny, Burke must have licked his wounds but he would also have felt proud to see such ringing proof of his own discernment. John Thomas Troy was something more than an agreeable companion <sup>145</sup>.

I thought you knew me better than to suspect me of an affectation of mystery and obscurity when writing to you. My expressions, though obscure or defective, are not so from affectation. A grandfather should make allowance for a child. I imagined all Clementines as zealous as ourselves. Experience has proved the contrary to my great mortification. Torrione has produced seventy-three and San Lorenzo seven barrels of wine this year. We are indebted to the amount of 2,000 crowns and upwards. Both our houses are out of repair. Oil at 32 baiocchi ... and every other article of life in proportion. We are under the necessity of buying wine at a very exorbitant price ... Our quota for the repairs made about the Marana [water-course] this year amounts to 89 crowns which are not as yet paid, and this very day, 6 November, I have received peremptory orders to *rennu* the part of the street before the church and piazza of St. Clement's. If you add to all this the very great increase of expenses occasioned by the ... purchase of the new vineyard you seen, and the shameful negligence of our predecessors in cultivating the old ones, I presume you'll attribute our resolution about the course of philosophy to different motives than those you suggest.

In the year 1728 [when Burke was a student at St. Sixtus] oil was sold at 18 baiocchi, beef at three baiocchi per pound, and other articles in proportion. St. Sixt was at the same time repaired and the great Benedict XIII contributed towards the purchase of wine, after having considerably increased the income of the house. Since 1761, when our misfortunes began, the noviceship [i.e. studentate] has been constantly full and our family was never less than twenty and oftentimes twenty-four. We have never desponded and to this very hour confide in the divine providence ... Charles O'Kelly has expended 500 crowns and procured 300 from cardinal York and the late cardinal Neri Corsini, exclusive of 400 the new building at Torrione cost. He is a constant benefactor and has determined to make a fine *scassato* [outlay] this year. I call him to witness whether our accumulated distresses have occasioned any unfavourable alteration in me ...

<sup>145</sup> St. Sixtus, 6 to 13 Nov. 1771. Troy to Burke. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2. The same reference covers all subsequent quotations in this section. The texts have been silently decoded. For copies of all these documents from D.D.A., I am indebted to Rev. Dr. Kevin Kennedy, archivist of the archdiocese of Dublin.



The Lovanists are resolved to lessen their family very considerably from an apprehension of future misfortunes. *We* supported the usual number and more till our credit was at stake and our circumstances were actually alarming. They increased their income by increasing their family — this is not paradoxical, as the more beggars the greater begging — whereas *we* struggled under the disadvantages of multiplied expenses and less income than usual. Your apprehensions about boys for the future course of philosophy are groundless, as the provincial [Martin French] has already promised to send us two next summer, and should they come here before June they will probably commence their studies next September. The course of philosophy has been suspended here twice in my own time for various reasons, without any detriment to the actual professors in point of degrees. This happened in the years 1756 and 1761. We have not a circle of divinity every day, but defend the *quindenales* regularly. I hope I have said enough to inform you of our situation and motives for adopting a measure which, though unavoidable, was and is displeasing to ourselves and to all well-wishers of this house.

On 23 October 1772, Troy succeeded Michael Brennan as prior and remained in charge of the community until named bishop of Ossory in December 1776. Throughout those four years, save for the final month, he was also regent of studies. And as though that were not enough to keep him occupied, he often had to do the bursar's work as well. "The syndic", he complained, "is zealous and laborious, but of slow comprehension and tedious execution, for which reason I am forced to do much of his business". The chief problem was a lack of money. Their cardinal titular was more than willing to help. Both he and they expected 2,000 scudi from the abbey attached to St. Clement's, but Clement XIV delayed for years and eventually died without having bestowed the abbey on anyone. Their greatest asset was the vineyard called *Torrione*, thanks to which they might some day clear their debts by the sale of wine, but that, by Charles O'Kelly's estimate in 1774, would take another five years "barring bad seasons" and in the meanwhile "they must inevitably suspend the course of philosophy". Some students of philosophy were in fact examined in April 1775 after diligent application to Goudin's tract on meteors, but no new course began in that year nor was any other offered, save in theology, until the autumn of 1778. Between 1769 and 1778 nineteen clerical novices were received, of whom six left at once to make their novitiate elsewhere. The others spent the year of probation at St. Clement's, paying fifty scudi each as from summer 1773, but went to Italian convents after profession. With

two years of philosophy to their credit, they might then return to face the four-year theological course in Rome.

Thanks then to the charity of the Italian Dominicans, the number of students was reduced and the financial burden on St. Clement's eased. Troy had his troubles with the students. His confrères accused him of partiality because he kept three from Leinster while disapproving of two from Drogheda, though he had good reason for not liking the two in question. Richard Dominic Kelly "appeared with a wallet and five guineas" to begin his novitiate, not as a youth but as a man of twenty-four. While admitting that he behaved very well, Troy found him "dull, awkward and useless in choir". The other, Andrew Duffy, had been "professed at Louvain, went to Spain and misbehaved at Lisbon". He came to Rome, Troy explained, in April 1773 "in a chaise from Leric without a single farthing. In order to prevent recourses to the general, who in the end would oblige us to pay the coachman, we agreed to satisfy him and accordingly borrowed thirty crowns, which was the sum Duffy had the impudence to promise him, for that purpose. I procured his assignation for St. Mark's at Florence where he can be well educated without expense to this house or particulars. I could get no place for him in Lombardy or the Roman province but the Minerva, where he would soon shame us and be expensive". In September 1774, Pius Kindelan was studying at the Minerva, Michael V. O'Donoghue wished to finish his studies in the Roman province, and Hyacinth Kelly was ready to leave for Ireland. "After their departure", said Troy, "we shall be thirteen in family, including a secular in the kitchen. Of that number, five are students. We cannot think of increasing the community for some time. Places might be easily obtained for six simple novices in this province and congregation on condition they had sixty crowns on their arrival here. There is a promising one at St. Mark's in Florence called Dominic McDonogh from Urlar ... Thomas Carbery will enter the college at the Minerva next November"<sup>146</sup>. This dispersal of students and novices owed much to the feeling that St. Clement's was less important to the Irish province than in the past. As Charles O'Kelly put it, with "novitiates at home, and Spain open to receive them

<sup>146</sup> Th. Carbery, who later worked in New York (1815-22), was only a guest at St. Clement's on his way from Naples to the Minerva. He was not clothed there, nor did he ever receive vestimentary-money. The house-council book notes his examination for subdiaconate (26 Apr. 1775) and his priestly ordination in the Rosary chapel at St. Clement's on 21 May 1775. SCAR, no. 57, p. 99.

to study, the province can't suffer much by the suspension of the study of St. Clement's. Necessity has no law".

When speaking of "necessity", Father O'Kelly was not merely thinking of the heavy debts on the college. St. Clement's was falling down and the community poised to abandon it for ever if only they could find a better building somewhere else. Since St. Sixtus is scarcely mentioned in this correspondence, and so much emphasis placed on the need to repair or replace its sister-convent, one is led to suppose that the community spent more of the year at St. Clement's than they did at St. Sixtus. The suppression of the Jesuits put many fine buildings at the disposal of the needy or the dextrous. One group of missionaries left the church of SS. John and Paul, almost half-way between the two Irish convents, to occupy the Jesuit novitiate at Monte Cavallo. Troy and other council-members "squinted" at SS. John and Paul but "to no purpose, as the Pope immediately determined it for the Passionists near St. John's, whose founder [St. Paul of the Cross] is still living". Charles O'Kelly took up this aspect of the story on 19 January 1774 at the end of Troy's letter to Dr. Burke.

The novitiate of St. Clement's is so visibly ruinous that the novices, for fear of perishing under the ruins, can't remain therein. Neither is the old building secure without propping the wall from the chamber where you lived when last here to the head of the great stairs, and roofing anew the whole convent. We have but little hopes that the Pope, either from the abbey or from the Camera, will relieve us. And on the other hand there are so many burdensome obligations annexed *ab initio* to St. Clement's that if we could get rid of it commodiously, it would be indeed desirable. When St. John and Paul's was given to the Passionists, we instanced with the Congregation appointed for the affairs of the Jesuits for the very pretty house and well-walled garden situated near St. Mary Major, in the way [Via Merulana] from thence to St. John Lateran's wherein the Jesuits gave spiritual exercises, pretending only to the use of it until providence would enable us to rebuild St. Clement's, which at the same time we never meant or mean to do. But unluckily we were refused.

Now we are balancing whether it will not be better for us to hire an house, than to indebt ourselves irrecoverably by either rebuilding or repairing St. Clement's. More of this hereafter, but at anyrate I fancy we shall be necessitated to suspend the study for some years and only keep three fathers, viz. Troy, [Francis] Levins and [Luke] Concannon with our three laybrothers until, from our saving, we pay off our debts and find ourselves in a condition of purchasing a convenient house.

The ruinous "novitiate" mentioned here was simply a line of rooms off a corridor above the sacristy, running along the northern wall of the basilica, a low structure later cut in two by the building of St. Cyril's chapel<sup>147</sup>. By May 1774, the novices were "above stairs, separated from the rest by a wooden partition", but the feeling of crisis had passed. Some architects, apparently the last people summoned on such occasions, declared that St. Clement's could be repaired for a thousand scudi "and stand thereafter for a hundred years".

#### A COADJUTOR BISHOP FOR CLONFERT, 1774-1786

The middle years of Father French's provincialate were dominated by a second futile attempt to make him coadjutor of Clonfert, and so one must attempt some account of a complicated subject. If nothing else, the episode shows how highly the provincial was regarded in Connacht and illustrates, on the other hand, the peculiar attitudes and methods of Propaganda Fide. The whole case might be summarised and neatly judged in a few paragraphs but for a lingering doubt as to whether Peter Donnelan, bishop of Clonfert, was the Machiavelli of Connacht or had simply lost his wits.

After the impasse of 1767, when the chapter of Clonfert postulated Father French as coadjutor and the bishop indignantly rejected the idea, relations between Peter Donnelan and his canons degenerated into what he called "quasi-schism". Not even his own brother Andrew, vicar general and parish priest of Loughrea, would come next or near him, because Andrew "wanted to become bishop himself though no one thought him worthy". In this frame of mind, bishop Donnelan with only two of his priests postulated James Mannin O.F.M. as coadjutor on 10 February 1774<sup>148</sup>. Propaganda then sought the opinion of Patrick Robert Kirwan, bishop of Achonry, knowing well that he was miserable in his own diocese, wanted a change to Clonfert, and lamented his sufferings at the hands of "ambitious people like Martin French". Dr. Kirwan, in August 1774, sent the reply which was expected of him: a secular priest would be more suitable than a Franciscan<sup>149</sup>. Some

<sup>147</sup> This section was written in the same novitiate corridor, by perhaps the last occupant of the sole remaining cell.

<sup>148</sup> From Kilmurray. Original in APF, SOCG 841, f. 265.

<sup>149</sup> There were two letters (3 Jan. and 17 Aug. 1774) from Kirwan to Castelli. Loc. cit., ff. 258, 263, 276-77. He also complained in the first of Dom. Kelly O.P. of Sligo who, at a conference of clergy, falsely accused a worthy priest of unchaste conduct. The second letter says much of Kilconnell friary to which Mannin belonged.



weeks later, at the beginning of September, bishop Kirwan persuaded Dr. Donnelan to postulate him as administrator of Clonfert. Almost in the same week, Andrew Donnelan obtained the bishop's consent to canvass opinion in favour of another Franciscan, John O'Brien, as coadjutor <sup>150</sup>.

The next step made confusion worse confounded. Two weeks later, on 14 September, the old bishop and his canons signed a third postulation, this time in favour of Martin French, withdrawing the earlier request for James Mannin in view of his disastrous government of Kilconnell friary, as well as the other postulation of Achonry as administrator because of the "public outcry" it had evoked. This new postulation praised Father French highly and mentioned his "*praeclara perorandi methodus*" as though his style of preaching was not only effective but original. The archbishop of Tuam, with his suffragans of Killala, Kilmacduagh and Elphin, all added their signatures to the document by the 25th of the month. Andrew Donnelan refused to sign, despite his brother's request, remaining loyal (if loyalty it was) to the Franciscan John O'Kelly, guardian in Rome <sup>151</sup>. Bishop Burke of Ossory made a sarcastic but too hopeful assessment of the scene. "Edmund Fitzgerald writes to me that Dr. Kirwan prevailed on Dr. Donnelan to demand him as administrator of Clonfert in the beginning of September, and in the same month he and his chapter demanded Martin French as coadjutor. *Che roba!* But Skerrett, Killikelly, Fallon and Phillips signed the second demand. Surely this ought to finish that affair" <sup>152</sup>.

This glowing postulation, signed by five bishops of Connacht, was followed on its way to Rome by two other letters in French's favour: one from Augustine Cheevers of Meath and another from Mark Skerrett to the nuncio at Brussels saying what a marvellous choice the bishop and clergy of Clonfert had made <sup>153</sup>. Yet not even these sufficed to sway

<sup>150</sup> Loughrea, 27 Sept. 1774. And: Donnelan to Jn. O'Brien enclosing a letter (Cloonagh, 15 Sept.) in which Jas. O'Fallon, bishop of Elphin, said he could not support O'Brien because already committed to another (i.e. to Martin French). APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 149-50. Both letters are copies.

<sup>151</sup> Original postulation in APF, SOCG 841, ff. 279-80. A copy dated 25 Sept. 1774, in which the signatures of the other bishops appear for the first time, occurs *loc. cit.*, ff. 257, 264. Andrew Donnelan mentioned his own abstention in the letter referred to in note 150.

<sup>152</sup> Kilkenny, 6 Nov. 1774. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>153</sup> Randalstown, 27 Sept. 1774. Cheevers attests the good qualities of French whom he has known from his youth. Ml. Fleming [O.P.] secretary. APF, SOCG 841, f. 261. 23 Oct. 1774. Tuam to nuncio. *Loc. cit.*, ff. 278, 281.



Propaganda Fide which decided in April 1775 to appoint Dr. Kirwan of Achonry as administrator of Clonfert and to postpone the nomination of a coadjutor until "a suitable person" should be found<sup>154</sup>. This was the decision of the prefect, cardinal Castelli, whom bishop Burke called "Tacitus" because of his extraordinary ability in keeping his thoughts to himself. "He is as sparing of his thoughts as a covetous man of his money, and has as much pleasure in hiding them as the other in hiding his pelf"<sup>155</sup>. The remark made Troy laugh, but he was able to recall an occasion when the silent cardinal said more than he meant to. "He betrayed a repugnance to promote friars to bishoprics when I presented to him the strong recommendations that came in favour of provincial French"<sup>156</sup>.

Propaganda's decision caused great offence in Connacht. The bishops who supported Martin French took this refusal as a reflection on their honour. Four of them went so far as to address the Pope, "hoping they would not be regarded as totally devoid of conscience or piety". Dr. Skerrett of Tuam, though gentle by nature, took up his pen on 6 June 1775 to let cardinal Castelli know what he thought of him. In twenty-six years as bishop, Dr. Skerrett had never recommended anyone on the basis of blood or friendship, and he now shared the amazement, just as he shared the sorrow of the people of Clonfert who saw their postulation of Martin French set aside, although so true and just a postulation had not been sent to Rome for years. Instead of an excellent priest, almost unanimously elected provincial of his order, they had been fobbed off with a septuagenarian administrator who could scarcely ride five miles a day. If only the Pope knew Father French and the miserable state of Clonfert he would name him coadjutor at once. The archbishop ended with the remark that since Rome decided everything *motu proprio*, it should ask for postulations no more and spare Irish bishops the cost of postage<sup>157</sup>. Burke of Ossory, distantly related to Dr. Skerrett, soon found how much the archbishop disliked the proceedings of Propaganda.

<sup>154</sup> g.c. 10 Apr. 1775, no. 5. APF, Acta 145, ff. 43-49; SOCG 841, ff. 257-322, 452-55.

<sup>155</sup> Kilkenny, 9 June 1775. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4.

<sup>156</sup> St. Clement's, 29 July 1775. Troy to Burke. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>157</sup> Tuam, 6 June 1775. Skerrett to Castelli. Latin original in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 187, 192. In an earlier letter (20 Dec. 1774) the archbishop had warned Castelli of those who had written to Rome saying that Clonfert's postulation was

So much that he'll have nothing to say to them. Here are his own words. "They don't seem to have the least regard for the mission, as appeared lately in the postulation sent by the bishop, all the clergy and laity of the diocese of Clonfert, and of all the prelates of the province, one excepted, in favour of provincial French. A more unanimous postulation never I believe went to Rome, neither is there anyone to my knowledge so equally fit according to the present state of the diocese, as he is regarded and respected by all degrees of people, no one more fit to reform the various abuses crept in there, as none who may be inclined to be refractory will have any to stand by him, which would not be the case if any other was in that place. Yet they name Dr. Kirwan administrator, the remotest of all the bishops in the province, and the most unfit as very sickly and infirm, hardly able to mind his own diocese. And name Dr. Cheevers vicar apostolic for Armagh, who through his infirmities petitioned some years ago to have a coadjutor.

Pray, do these proceedings show any regard for the mission, or zeal for the salvation of souls? In my answers to Castelli and the nuncio, requiring informations about proper persons, I wrote to them pretty roundly that as no regard was paid to the representations sent by us, and that they took upon themselves to proceed *motu proprio* in naming prelates for this kingdom, it was unfit to put us to the expense of postage. I never represented any but him I thought most worthy, and that without favour or affection, and as they were despised by them, they never are to expect any from me. Certainly, as I see but little of the spirit of the Holy Ghost in their proceedings, I am determined never to trouble myself more about anything that regards them. They can do me no harm, nor I expect no good. So God direct us all ».

Thus far the archbishop of Tuam, writing to and quoted by the bishop of Ossory. Before going on to hear Dr. Burke's "commentary on the text" for the benefit of Charles O'Kelly — a series of reflections on "antimonachism" or the anti-regular spirit in high places — one

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irregular. French was absent on visitation in Ulster when the bishop summoned his chapter to admit that no one was better qualified than French to reform the diocese. Skerrett begged Castelli to approve French and so bring peace to a diocese whose constant disputes and appeals had been "killing him" for years. H. Fenning, *Documents of Irish Interest in the Fondo Missioni* of the Vatican Archives, in *Miscellanea in onore di Monsignor Martino Giusti*, I (Vatican 1978) no. 158.

It was on 20 June 1775 that Dr. Skerrett and three suffragans wrote to the Pope in defence of their honour. APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 194-95. Even Clonfert was unhappy, suspecting that his brother Andrew, already over eighty, was moving underhand to promote himself or Jn. O'Brien O.F.M. Loc. cit., ff. 203-04.

should remember a few points in Propaganda's favour. No one in Ireland had offered any clear explanation of what exactly French had done in Paris on his return with Lally from India. Had he or had he not been condemned to death, and if so for what reason? Rome knew more than Connacht, and if cardinal Castelli kept this information to himself, he ought to be given credit for protecting Martin French's reputation. Besides, why should the bishop of Clonfert, now almost ninety years of age, withdraw two postulations made in the same year and sign a third in favour of someone he had violently rejected eight years before? On the face of it, Dr. Donnelan might well have been senile or, even if *compos mentis*, have been subjected to undue pressure from three conflicting parties. In the end, Propaganda temporised by appointing no coadjutor at all. It was playing for time, hoping that some of the interested parties would die, and casting about in the meantime for some "proper person" who had studied at a pontifical college and preferably at Rome itself. What one cannot defend is the appointment as administrator of Robert Kirwan, bishop of Achonry, too old and sick for the task, and well known to Propaganda as the only anti-regular bishop in the province. On then to Dr. Burke's opinion of the Congregation<sup>158</sup>.

They are indeed in my humble apprehension very provoking. It seems to me their only view is to promote *antimonachi*, or such as are of that faction. The only one amongst the prelates in Conaught is Robin Kirwan, and you see how his interest overweighed all the rest. Castelli told me he'd never promote a Gallican, and I fancy he would not but for antimonachism. Upon this principle [Francis] Moylan was preferred before [Thomas] Dalton [O.P., for Ardfert] and yet the first thing he did after his consecration was to sign papers against the Holy See's prerogatives. Now they'll be puzzled at the Propaganda, for with regard to the test-oath there are *antimonachi* on both sides of the question. If they were all on one side they'd be victors. You remember how Clement XIV told us more than once of the Propaganda: *È una cosa stupenda come odiano li poveri frati*... As for my part I often told you personally and explicitly and no less emphatically that I look upon the best of them to be no better than conscience-draggers.

In the great search for a "proper person" who would be neither Gallican nor regular, the administrator of the nunciature at Brussels solicited in all simplicity the aid of bishop Burke himself and was treated

<sup>158</sup> Kilkenny, 1 Oct. 1775. Burke to O'Kelly. D.D.A., 29/4.

to a polite resumé of what Dr. Skerrett thought on the subject. No one, said Thomas Burke, had been so highly or widely postulated as Martin French since the time of Henry VIII. And Propaganda had thought fit to impose as administrator of Clonfert a bishop so old and so weak that one would have thought he needed a coadjutor himself<sup>159</sup>. Burke got his answer, not only from Brussels, but from his friend Charles O'Kelly in Rome<sup>160</sup>.

I apprehend your excellent letter ... shall work no change in Castelli relative to provincial French, and that on account of a court decree of banishment from France which is recorded in Paris. Should we, said Borgia [secretary of Propaganda], promote a man who was accused of being a complice in Lally's crime, be him or not innocent? I exhibited to Castelli the testimony of many officers of that Indian expedition to prove his innocence, but was answered by Borgia, *a court decree was of greater force than private testimonies*. He added let him, French, write to us from Paris and he shall be promoted.

Whatever happened in Paris after the Indian campaign, Martin French had the extraordinary capacity of converting those who liked him least. First it was old Peter Donnelan, bishop of Clonfert. Now it was the turn even of the administrator, Robert Kirwan of Achonry, who had done his share to blacken French's name at Rome. Dr. Kirwan searched Connacht from end to end for a "proper person" before admitting in February 1776 that there was none more suitable than Martin French. One was too old, another absolutely refused, a third was so ambitious "that he would take the papacy itself if it were offered to him"<sup>161</sup>. Whatever had been alleged against French regarding his dealings with Lally arose from "his timorous conscience", as had been amply proved by Laurence O'Kelly and Monsieur Fouché, doctors of the Sorbonne, in testimonials already sent to Brussels. A month later, bishop Kirwan wrote from his death-bed to repeat that French was the most worthy candidate to succeed Donnelan of Clonfert. At the foot

<sup>159</sup> Kilkenny, 5 Jan. 1776. Burke to Giovanni Maggiora. Latin original in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 311-12. Burke could not resist mentioning that Rinuccini, a 17th-century nuncio in Ireland, had been supported by regular bishops when opposed by many others.

<sup>160</sup> Rome, 3 Feb. 1776. Troy and O'Kelly to Burke. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>161</sup> 22 Feb. 1776. Kirwan to Castelli. Latin original in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 325, 331.

of the letter he said a pathetic "good-bye" to the cardinals and died on 23 March before they even received his salutation<sup>162</sup>.

Despite what Dr. Skerrett of Tuam had said about the useless expense of postage, he postulated Martin French again on bishop Kirwan's death. Again four of his suffragans put their signatures beneath his own. And again they were refused. Even Burke of Kilkenny could hardly believe the evidence as small but all-important pieces of the background gradually fell into place<sup>163</sup>.

I am sorry nothing can be done for our provincial. It's only now I believe what I heard the last time I was in Dublin, now close upon two years, that cardinal de Bernis lodged an *exclusiva* against him at the Propaganda, where doubtless he got an agreeable promise from Castelli. And if he had lodged another *exclusiva* at the Minerva before our last provincial chapter, Boxadors would not confirm the election. I was then in Dublin and heard a muttering amongst some of the capitularians that French was hanged in effigy at Paris. I told them it was incredible, otherwise we'd hear more of it before then.

The new coadjutor of Clonfert, finally chosen on 26 November 1776 to be the staff of Peter Donnellan's old age, was none other than his brother Andrew, then over eighty, whom Peter himself had described as unworthy and acceptable to no one<sup>164</sup>. When Peter died in 1778, Andrew took his place as bishop of Clonfert, yet even he after a while began to feel the weight of the passing years. In 1786, at the age of ninety-three, he asked for John Dolphin O.P. as coadjutor, but was given a secular priest instead.

#### GENERAL CHAPTER AT ROME, 1777

There is little else to add about Martin French's provincialate. On St. Patrick's day, 17 March 1775, he became *praesentatus* or bachelor of theology *titulo missionis*, having earned promotion on the field, as it were, rather than in the classroom<sup>165</sup>. After his first visitation of the

<sup>162</sup> 11 Mar. 1776. Same to same. Loc. cit., ff. 353, 356. His obit is on ff. 366-67.

<sup>163</sup> Kilkenny, 9 Mar. 1776. Burke to Troy. D.D.A., 29/4. The final postulation in favour of French by the bishops of Connacht is in APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 366-67.

<sup>164</sup> g.c. 26 Nov. 1776, no. 2. APF, Acta 146, ff. 322-23; SOCG 845, ff. 397-406. French was not even mentioned on this occasion.

<sup>165</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 8.



houses in Ireland, he took some interest in Holy Cross, Louvain, and may even have gone there in person. Charles O'Kelly remarked in July 1775, "French I fancy is disappointed and disgusted with me for some remarks I made on his method of governing the province. He began ill in the money-affair of Waterford and was too free of his formal precepts in Louvain" <sup>166</sup>. On 30 September of the same year, the general approved Father French's appointment of John Weever as master of studies there and of James Cunningham as lector of philosophy, without remarking that the appointment of professors lay outside the provincial's competence <sup>167</sup>. In 1776 there was a second visitation in Ireland of which there remains only the merest trace in the account-books of Esker and Drogheda.

No general chapter of the order had taken place since 1756. By now, Juan Tomas de Boxadors had been master general for twenty years and so he might well have continued until his death but that providence disposed of other means. He was in fact named cardinal on 13 November 1775, with the title of St. Sixtus, and although he continued as cardinal to rule the order, the election of a successor and therefore the convocation of a general chapter became a matter of necessity. In the letter of July 1775 quoted above, Charles O'Kelly anticipated these events and even picked the new general two full years before his election. "I have reason to think Boxadors is to wear the red cap shortly, in which case there will be a general chapter next Pentecost and, I think, to elect the present companion of Spain [Balthazar de Quiñones], a very worthy man". In this forecast, only the year was wrong, for the letter of convocation did not go out until July 1776 and the chapter did not meet at Rome until May 1777. John Thomas Troy was the first, in February 1776, to spot the legal consequence for the Irish province. "'Tis imagined we shall have our general chapter next year. In that case French must go on another year" <sup>168</sup>. The Irish provincial chapter, which would normally have brought French's term of office to an end in June 1777, would have to be postponed until the general chapter was well over. This point of law was obvious to Troy more than a year before the event. It ought to have been obvious to Martin French when he set out for Rome. But it was not obvious at all to the brethren in

<sup>166</sup> Rome, 29 July 1775. O'Kelly to Burke. D.D.A., Hib. Dom. 1/1, folder 2.

<sup>167</sup> AGOP IV, 240, p. 8.

<sup>168</sup> Rome, 3 Feb. 1776. Troy to Burke. As in note (166).

Ireland who held their provincial chapter and elected another "provincial" while he was away.

The general chapter was well attended, even by representatives from Russia and Mexico, but Thomas Netterville — the elected *socius* of the provincial — stayed at home in Bridge Street. However, Martin French and Charles O'Kelly were not the only Irishmen who came to vote at the Minerva. James Bodkin was there too as definitor of the Roman province of which he had recently been provincial. Pius VI presided at the meeting and Balthazar de Quiñones, the Spanish assistant general, was indeed elected on 17 May 1777. Quiñones would remain master general until his death in 1798, the helpless witness of the order's ruin, and no general chapter whatsoever was or could be held again until 1835.

Seven petitions were put to the chapter in the name of the Irish province<sup>169</sup>. The first requested that the Irish college at Lisbon be made a formal convent and novitiate like those at Louvain and Rome, yielding up whatever privileges it had as a "college" while retaining those proper to a *studium generale*. The second urged that the masters of students in all three foreign colleges be told to teach apologetics on Sundays and feastdays. Both petitions were left by the chapter "*ad arbitrium magistri ordinis*" and so they were to remain, at least so far as Lisbon was concerned, for many a long day. Then came a word of thanks to all those continental provinces which had so generously received Irish novices, students and refugees for the past two centuries, with the expressed hope that this generosity might never falter. The next three petitions, all apparently inspired by the Irish procurator at Madrid, had to do with funds in Spain. Some Irish benefactor had left a foundation of 2,500 reals to maintain an Irish confessor at the convent of Puerto de S. Maria near Cadiz, but there was some doubt as to the precise terms of his will and there had not in fact been an Irish confessor there between 1757 and 1773. Martin French sought an investigation by the provincial of Bethica, after which any restitution due should go to the Irish hospice at Bilbao. Similarly, Bilbao was to receive the effects of Irish friars, including the procurator at Madrid, who should happen to die in Spain. These matters too were left to the general's judgement, but the chapter gave its own dry decision on the seventh and final petition: "that the Irish province be free to elect as provincial any priest known to be prudent, orthodox and pious, even if he never taught theology". The

<sup>169</sup> MOPH XIV, 361-62. The original manuscript petitions seem not to survive.

chapter's verdict was that in such a case, the Irish might have recourse to the general who would himself "provide" a provincial who had taught in the schools.

Martin French and his companion, a Canon Regular, stayed at St. Clement's for twenty-four days, paying for their keep during the month of May 1777. The following undated set of postulations for the degrees of the order, all of which were granted on 14 June, suggest that the provincial had a personal interview with Quiñones after the chapter<sup>170</sup>.

Postulationes et petitiones sequentes humillime praesentat iuxta morem consuetam provinciae Hiberniae fr. Martinus French provincialis r.mo magistro ordinis.

- 1<sup>o</sup> postulat ad magisterii gradum titulo scholae pro rata Lageniae loco magistri Thomae Hope defuncti fr. praes. Michaellem Brennan qui fuit regens et baccalaureus in studio generali conventus SS. Sixti et Clementis.
- 2<sup>o</sup> postulat ad praesentaturae gradum titulo scholae pro rata Conaciae loco magistri Laurentii Conelane ad magisterium promoti fr. Pium Mullanny actualem regentem secundarium in studio generali conventus S. Crucis Lovaniensis. Cursum philosophiae in dicto conventu egregie legit et munus Sacrae Scripturae professoris obivit per biennium.
- 3<sup>o</sup> postulat ad praesentaturae gradum titulo scholae pro rata Ultoniae loco magistri Bernardi Brady ad magisterium promoti fr. Joannem Connolly actualem studentium magistrum in studio generali conventus SS. Sixti et Clementis. Cursum philosophiae in conventu S. Crucis Lovani laudabiliter legit et Sacrae Scripturae professor in dicto conventu actu existens, fuit ad Urbem vocatus ab Em.o Cardinali de Boxadors, cuius mandato promptam obedientiam praebuit.

Petit ex gratia affiliationem pro priore Limericensi actuali fr. Dionysio Magraith praedicatore generali, qui fructuose pro isto conventu laborat et in eodem affiliare cupit; cum habet consensum unanimem fratrum conventus Limericensis qui est terminus ad quem, et conventus Killocensis terminus a quo.

Father French was also received by the officials of Propaganda Fide, for he soon wrote to Stefano Borgia, secretary of the congregation thanking him "for his recent help in Rome". His visit had been suc-

<sup>170</sup> Original in AGOP XIII, 68095. The date of issue is noted in AGOP IV, 240, p. 10.

cessful beyond his hopes and he was deeply consoled to know that the calumnies made against him with regard to Clonfert had not been believed<sup>171</sup>!

Three months after the chapter, on 16 August 1777, the master general extended Father French's term of office, having heard no doubt by then of the unlawful chapter and provincial election celebrated at Dublin in June<sup>172</sup>. The provincial returned to Esker where he had lived throughout his provincialate and continued to sign the accounts of that community as provincial until 9 April 1778. Soon after, he must have received the general's decree of 18 March cassating the acts of the provincial chapter held in the previous year and appointing as provincial the man illegally elected at that meeting: Patrick Bray, prior of Waterford<sup>173</sup>. Father French, therefore, came to the end of his term of office in April 1778. As provincial, he used to quest only at Loughrea and Tuam. From 1778 he extended this work to take in also Athenry, Oranmore and Templebraher. There was no question of his leaving his beloved Esker where in fact he had another two terms as prior, from September 1779 to September 1785. In 1782 a last useless recommendation in his favour for the coadjutorship of Clonfert found its way to Rome<sup>174</sup>. In 1784 he finally achieved his heart's desire by becoming a master of theology, *titulo missionis*, on the recommendation of the preceding provincial chapter<sup>175</sup>.

The last piece of business to pass through his hands was an interesting one. Thomas MacHugh, a diocesan priest of Tuam, wished to take the habit at Esker but was over the prescribed age. It was Martin French, as prior of the house, who made the necessary application to Rome<sup>176</sup>. His name appears for the last time on the

<sup>171</sup> No place or date. French to Borgia. APF, SC Irlanda 13, ff. 480-83.

<sup>172</sup> "Ad provincialem mittitur intimatio prolongationis officii provincialatus cuius tenor in Reg. Lit." AGOP IV. 240, p. 11. Unfortunately, the register of "letters" mentioned here does not survive.

<sup>173</sup> "Ad R. P. Praes. Provinciali Hiberniae mittitur decretum cassationis electionis provincialis et actorum capituli provincialis anno elapso tempore capituli generalis celebrati. Et in eodem instituitur provincialis tunc electus R. P. M. Prior Waterfordensis fr. Patritius Bray". AGOP IV. 240, p. 11.

<sup>174</sup> 19 and 25 May 1782. Tuam and Kilmacduagh to Propaganda. APF, SC Irlanda 15, ff. 174-75.

<sup>175</sup> Appointment dated 20 Apr. 1784. AGOP IV. 240, p. 14.

<sup>176</sup> Permission granted 10 July 1785. APF, Udienze 23, ff. 280-81.

conventual account-books, which he frequently signed, on 16 October 1787 and one would take it for granted that he died very shortly after. One would indeed, were it not for the lack of any obituary notice and the strange detail that the coveted mastership he held did not pass to another until it was given to Edmund Cruice on 15 December 1804, "*post mortem fratris Martini French*"<sup>177</sup>.

<sup>177</sup> AGOP IV, 240, p. 35. Br. Gerard Norton of Tallaght very kindly searched through the acts of chapters held after 1787 without finding French's name in the customary lists of obits. Martin French probably left Esker in 1787 to spend his last decade with friends or family.



## CHAPTER SIX

# "A Visible Decay" 1778 - 1785

The history of Ireland in the last quarter of the eighteenth century is much more interesting than that of the preceding seventy-five years. Rapid economic, social and political developments, greatly influenced by events in America, France and England, led to the rebellion of 1798 and the abolition of the Irish parliament two years later. Of the five volumes which Lecky devoted to the history of this century, four deal exclusively with its close<sup>1</sup>. The story of the Irish Dominicans cannot easily be set against such a brilliant background, for they were a dwindling force of about one hundred men working in the obscurity of city chapels or country parishes. They played no united part in national events. Worse still, the sources available for their history are particularly poor, ironically poorer than those for the earlier decades of the century. Even if one limits the canvas to the story of the Irish church and the decisive steps taken towards full Catholic emancipation, one has to admit that "emancipation" did little or nothing for the friars.

### JOHN THOMAS TROY, BISHOP OF OSSORY, 1776-1786

This story, from the general exile of 1698, has been carried forward by considering each of the Irish provincials in turn<sup>2</sup>. One may, however, interrupt that series to introduce John Thomas Troy, for he left Rome as bishop of Ossory in 1777 at the beginning of this period, and was archbishop of Dublin from 1786 to the end of it. From the very start, Troy was "Rome's man in Ireland". Soon he would be the

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<sup>1</sup> W.E. Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the 18th century*, London 1913, 5 vols. See also R.B. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution: 1760-1801*, Oxford 1979.

<sup>2</sup> Martin French, provincial from 1773, was succeeded by Patrick Bray in March 1778.

widely acknowledged leader of the Irish church. His enormous correspondence reveals his influence even in English, Canadian and American affairs. At every stage of Catholic emancipation, he closely followed every political development, either to protect or to advance the interests of the church.

Troy, the son of a prosperous merchant, presented himself in July 1755 to "the gentlemen of Bridge Street" in Dublin as a candidate for the Order. Soon after, he set out for Italy, keeping a brief diary of the journey. It closed with the statement: "On Palm Sunday, April 11, 1756, I arrived at St Clement's in Rome"<sup>3</sup>, and at St Clement's he remained for twenty-one years, filling in turn every position of responsibility in the convent. In September 1776, on the death of his friend and confrère Thomas Burke, bishop of Ossory, Troy was chosen to succeed him. Propaganda recommended him to the Pope on 26 November, and on 25 February 1777 entrusted the bishop-elect with the thankless task of settling the diocesan affairs of Armagh<sup>4</sup>. The appointment of a friar-bishop at this late date was quite unusual and three decades would pass before it happened again. The secretary of Propaganda firmly excluded Patrick Molloy, the candidate of the clergy of Ossory and one supported by no less than nine Irish bishops. There had been much controversy about an acceptable test-oath which Irish Catholics might take with a clear conscience to prove their loyalty to the crown. Accusations of "Gallicanism" were freely levelled against those who favoured the oath, yet all the time Rome had refrained from any definite statement on the subject. The cardinals hardly knew what to make of the Irish scene, much less of the religious desolation and clerical feuds of Armagh. The obvious course was to choose as bishop of Ossory a man whom they knew well and on whom they could rely.

When leaving Rome on 21 March 1777, Father Troy began a more detailed diary than the one he had kept in 1756 on his way out. Trav-

<sup>3</sup> The diary was anonymously edited under the title: *Dr Troy, archbishop of Dublin*, in *Irish Eccles. Record*, 8 (1872) 371-74. The same article includes the diary Troy kept in 1777 on his way home. The latter has been more fully printed by M. Purcell, *The Way Back from Rome*, in *Studies* (autumn 1979) 200-212.

<sup>4</sup> See above p. 395. The documents are in APF, Acta 146, ff. 324-25; SOCG 845, ff. 411-40. Also Acta 147, ff. 1-2; SOCG 846, ff. 1-26. On Troy's episcopate in Ossory see W. Carrigan, *History of the Diocese of Ossory*, Dublin 1903, vol. 1, 180-201. Carrigan had no access to Roman sources.

elling mostly by land, he kept a strict incognito until his arrival at Avignon. Along the way he came across several Irish clergymen, some of them Dominicans. At Viterbo he met Br Daniel Kennedy who had walked all the way from Louvain to the local convent of La Quercia just a year before<sup>5</sup>. At Lucca, he "took chocolate" with Br Patrick Gibbons and the novices. Gibbons, recently a student at St Clement's, was to become vicar general of the Irish province in 1798. The Fr Donoghue who accompanied Troy from Pisa to his ship at Livorno was probably Michael Vincent O'Donoghue, another former student of St Clement's who had been ordered from Florence to Ireland "for misbehaviour" a year before<sup>6</sup>. On landing at Marseilles, the bishop-elect was treated to a glass of punch by another confrère, Fr John Stapleton, who had left Rome for Ireland six years before his distinguished guest! Stapleton remained at Marseilles until, after the Revolution, he left the order in 1791. The convent of Marseilles did not impress John Thomas Troy:

In the convent there are eleven friars, including two laybrothers, and six seculars. Everyone does as he likes, no observance, little learning, and that confined to *belles lettres* and knowledge of Jansenism as described by the Port Royalists. They and the other regulars are little esteemed.

His judgement on the Dominicans of Aix-en-Provence was even more severe. "The friars are like those of Marsilles, but more prejudiced against the Jesuits, Rome, etc., on account of Jansenism of which they are really ignorant. Port Royal is their school and Arnold their master. They are suspended from hearing confessions these many years past." Troy's confidence in the Order was somewhat restored at Avignon where the convent was staffed by the "very observant" friars of the province of Toulouse, four of whom were professors of divinity and philosophy.

Since this diary breaks off with Troy's visit to Paris, one is left with no personal record of his consecration on 8 June 1777 by the nuncio at the Premonstratensian abbey of Parcq outside Louvain, nor of his meeting with the Irish Dominicans of Holy Cross college in the town. The bishop finally reached Kilkenny on 14 August 1777, just two months after the provincial chapter at Dublin. Naturally, he wrote to friends and agents at Rome throughout his episcopate, but scarcely any of that personal correspondence survives.

<sup>5</sup> APF, Udienze 14, ff. 329, 334.

<sup>6</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 10.

The whole controversy about the test-oath died away within two years of Dr Troy's arrival. In August 1778, the leading laymen of his own diocese of Ossory were among the first to take it. Then, in September, the archbishop of Cashel and the bishop of Waterford, "Gallicans" both, subscribed in their turn, quickly followed by the Catholics of Galway, Cork and Dublin. The regular clergy of Dublin took the oath of allegiance on 12 October 1778, eliciting from the *Free-man's Journal* a long comment which shows something of the suspicion and condescension they had to endure<sup>7</sup>.

Yesterday a great number of the Roman Catholic clergy, distinguished by the appellation of regulars or friars, met at the court-house at Kilmmainham and took the oath of allegiance, agreeable to an act passed last session of parliament. The candour and cheerfulness with which they presented themselves to the court, and the decent, grave and firm manner in which they uttered the oath, evinced the sincerity and uprightness of their intentions, and showed that their principles, far from being repugnant to, tend manifestly to promote the true loyalty and the well-being of society. It must give real satisfaction to every lover of his country to see all ranks of Roman Catholics in common with the rest of their fellow subjects of these realms, so ready to testify their allegiance to his majesty; even those above-mentioned regulars, whose dispositions, many through prejudice deemed most distant from true allegiance, we see amongst the foremost in giving such a test of the soundness of their civil and religious principles as the most jealous suspicion could devise or the most cautious and circumspect government expect.

The same newspaper later remarked that these professions of loyalty to the crown were made: "when our affairs in America bore the darkest aspect, when the coasts of France most contiguous to ours swarmed with troops, and a storm from the united powers of the family of Bourbon seemed ready to burst upon our heads." Finally, on 29 March 1779, bishop Troy himself, at the head of his clergy, took the oath of allegiance in Kilkenny<sup>8</sup>.

#### AN ILLEGAL PROVINCIAL CHAPTER, 1777

While Martin French, then provincial, was at Rome for the general chapter of 1777, his Irish subjects held a chapter at Dublin on 21 June and elected another provincial in his place. This procedure was quite

<sup>7</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics ... in the 18-century Press*, Maynooth 1965, 191-94.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, 195, 197.

illegal, for the summoning of a general chapter automatically kept Father French in office beyond his four-year term. If the incident aroused controversy, we know nothing of it. French returned to Ireland as provincial and so remained until 18 March 1778 when the new master general Quñones cassated the provincial chapter of the year before and appointed as provincial the very man that chapter had invalidly elected: Patrick Bray, prior of Waterford <sup>9</sup>.

Although incomplete, the cassated acts are interesting. Patrick Bray, whether prevented by sickness or by knowledge of the law, did not attend. Thomas Netterville, prior of Dublin, chaired the meeting as "president of the province". The curious choice of definitors makes one suspect a coup. Edmund Fitzgerald, for instance, represented Connacht. It was his province of origin and he had once been prior of Sligo, but the fact remains that he had been working in Dublin at this stage for at least twenty years. Michael Fleming, parish priest of Donore (Trim), was definitor for Leinster and Thomas MacDonagh, prior of Drogheda, definitor for Ulster. The fourth, Patrick O'Hart, represented Munster, though by what right it would be hard to say. While originally from Connacht, he was actually parish priest of Rathmolyon in the diocese of Meath. None of the leaders of the chapter, then, lived more than forty miles from Dublin. Besides, the first and only complete set of postulations in the surviving texts is that for Leinster. Their choice of a "Lovanist" — George Fleming, prior of Louvain — as definitor general, heightens one's impression that the chapter was the work of a small Dublin-Meath faction encouraged from Louvain: a rehearsal, as it were, for the "schismatical chapter" of 1797.

At least this chapter made an honest effort to improve religious observance and to shore up the remaining convents of the province. The four "commissions" to the new provincial urged the appointment of conventual lectors, the common recitation of the divine office, the maintenance or introduction of meals in common, and even the reading of the Rule and Constitutions at table. Had the definitors themselves read the same constitutions, they would have discovered that they were not definitors at all! The first of their commissions repeated in slightly stronger terms what the chapter of 1769 had said about the collapse of convents, the dispersal of the brethren and the breakdown of religious discipline. The heart of the matter was that

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<sup>9</sup> See above, pp. 433-434, 436. The cassated acts, in three inter-related copies, survive only in TA. Each copy ends with the first postulation for Ulster.



so many friars, "culpably oblivious of their holy vocation", were straining every nerve to become parish priests or curates, to the total neglect of their own conventual chapels. One of the new touches to this old decree was that such friars very often died "with the horrid stain of private property" on their souls. While striking this religious note, the definitors must have been aware that many friars took on parish work to avoid destitution or to answer a real pastoral need. After all, two of them were parish priests. They also knew that when a friar-pastor died, his money was more likely to pass to his relatives than to his own convent.

The chapter also discussed the affairs of *Corpo Santo* in Lisbon, for we have a letter of complaint about it from the rector, William Lonergan. One of his subjects, Patrick Donnellan, syndic of Bom Sucesso, had accused him in a letter to a friend of removing Dominic MacDonnell from the nuns' monastery. And that calumnious letter was publicly read before the provincial chapter in Dublin<sup>10</sup>.

PATRICK BRAY, 1778-1781

The new provincial, appointed in March 1778 eight months after his "election", was a curious choice indeed, for he was confined by sickness, if not to bed, at least to his native Waterford. Bishop Burke of Ossory described him in 1775 as an "infirm gouty man" whose money would pass to some nephew or niece upon his death<sup>11</sup>. In the event, the bishop died first, two years before the "infirm gouty man" took charge of the province. The new provincial had to be from Munster, yet it is strange that both Cork and Limerick failed to offer a more acceptable candidate. Bray could not even carry out a visitation, leaving that duty to Denis O'Connor of Waterford, his vicar provincial.

Patrick Bray was born about 1710 but did not enter the order until he was twenty-five. Quite likely, he was one of the two novices ready to profess for the convent of Waterford in 1736 at a time when home-novitates were still permitted<sup>12</sup>. Where he studied does not appear, but he probably went to France. By 1742 he was back in Waterford and there he stayed for the rest of his life. The only certain detail of

<sup>10</sup> Lisbon, 24 May 1778. Lonergan, apparently to nuncio. Also a long draft of the nuncio's reply, praising Lonergan (10 June 1778). Both in ASV, Arch. Nunz. Lisbona, vol. 73, sez. 3.

<sup>11</sup> See above, p. 408.

<sup>12</sup> See above, pp. 154-155.

his early career is that he never taught in the schools. Consequently, when appointing him provincial, the master general ignored the decision of the recent general chapter. That meeting declared in 1777 that if the Irish province failed to find a provincial who had taught theology, the master general would find one himself<sup>13</sup>.

When the sheriffs of Waterford set out in 1744 on their half-hearted search for "reputed monks, friars and Jesuits", the subsequent report made little distinction between religious of different orders. The Dominican Peter Costelloe is easily recognized; two others, William Sexton and John Bray, are probably the Dominicans James Sexton and Patrick Bray in light disguise<sup>14</sup>. Before this episode, the order had no chapel in Waterford; after it, they had not even a house to call their own, certainly not before 1751<sup>15</sup>. This did not prevent Patrick Bray from being prior of the "convent" in 1749 when postulated as preacher general. For seven years, the chapter said, he had been preaching in Waterford; he was then forty years of age and thirteen years professed<sup>16</sup>. In 1761 he was definitor for Munster, in 1766 promoted bachelor, and in March 1777 became a master of theology *titulo missionis*<sup>17</sup>. Martin French named him prior of Rosbercon in 1774, but since Rosbercon was by then only a name, Father Bray remained in Waterford<sup>18</sup>. He and his fellow Dominicans served the parish chapels and were obliged, in virtue of some agreement with the bishop and corporation, to keep their numbers down to a fixed but unknown level<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> See above, pp. 434-435.

<sup>14</sup> W. P. Burke, *Irish Priests in the Penal Times*, Waterford, 1914, 369-70.

<sup>15</sup> See above, p. 229. The Dominicans took out a lease on premises in Thomas Street in 1784. H. Fenning, *The Dominicans in Waterford*, in *The Irish Rosary* (May 1960) 155. William Phelan OFM of Waterford mentioned the Dominican community there on 10 Jan. 1789 in a letter to archbishop Troy of Dublin. "Messrs Duan and Ryan live in Thomas St. house, the other gentleman in a private house", Dublin Diocesan Archives (hereafter DDA), 116/4, no. 122.

<sup>16</sup> The original chapter acts are in AGOP XIII 68095. The actual appointment as P.G. for Youghal, "*post obitum fr. Vincentii Kennedy*", came quickly on 4 Oct. 1749. AGOP IV 217, p. 116.

<sup>17</sup> AGOP IV 231, p. 43; 240, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> See above, p. 407.

<sup>19</sup> See above, p. 413. Even the date of this agreement, which may have been purely verbal, is unknown.

Although Patrick Bray never taught, he seems to have had a respectable library. Two of his books survive in the priory at Limerick, while the title-pages of two more (also from Limerick) are now in the provincial archives. About the year 1815, Joseph Harrigan brought the library of the Waterford community from Kilkenny to Limerick, putting his own name on such books as he liked best after erasing the names of earlier owners. The following bear the signature of Patrick Bray in a round and elegant hand. The fact that two were printed in Paris and the others at Venice and Cologne offers no clue to the country in which he studied. The books were so much older than he was himself that he most likely acquired them from friends<sup>20</sup>.

Sixtus Senensis O.P., *De Divinis Voluminibus Bibliothecae Sanctae*, Venice 1566.

Louis de Granade O.P., *La Vie de Dom Barthélemy des Martyrs, archevesque de Brague, par cinq auteurs, dont le premier est le Père Louis de Grenade*, nouvelle édition, Paris 1664.

Jacobus Gaitte, *Tractatus de Usura et Foenore*, Paris 1688.

Laurentius Neesen, *Theologia Moralis Christiana de Sacramentis*, Cologne 1682.

We know practically nothing of Bray's work as provincial. In June 1778, he sent six guineas as Mass stipends to the brethren at Esker. In the following December, he appointed Patrick Jennett prior of Drogheda. His vicar, Denis O'Connor, carried out only one visitation: in July and August 1779. At Esker and Drogheda, O'Connor signed the account-books as "vicar general", but this simply means that he was vicar of all four internal "provinces" rather than of one alone. John Daly of Newbridge put the matter more clearly. Writing about Bernard Coffey, recommended to the community in February 1779, Daly remarked that Coffey was later assigned to Newbridge by Denis O'Connor, "vicar provincial, in the course of his visitation", because ill-health prevented Patrick Bray from carrying out visitation in person<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> For these and other details of Bray's career, see T. Flynn, *The Dominicans of Rosbercon*, Tallaght 1981, 27-28, 31.

<sup>21</sup> Newbridge, College archives, *Liber Computuum ... complecta quaedam documenta ad posteros transmissa*, p. 12. John Daly, the author of these notes, was prior of the community and historian of the province. The details concerning Esker come from its account-books in TA. That concerning Drogheda comes also from an account-book (1771-86), now in TA.

The date of Father Bray's death is unknown, but he was still alive on 6 May 1780 when bishop Troy mentioned him in a long letter to Charles O'Kelly in Rome<sup>22</sup>. Though writing chiefly on business, Troy included some Dominican news worth printing here. Bishop Troy had been asked to find a suitable confessor for the nuns of Bom Successo:

After the strictest enquiry cou'd find but one ... His name is Thomas Denning, aged 28. He studied in Barcellona, from whence he returned about a year ago, and is now a curate in one of the country parishes of this diocese [Ossory], where he is well liked ... [William] Loneragan is shortly expected at Cork, where he is to remain. [James Thomas] Mulhall is arrived at Dublin, and an O'Brien [James Thomas] is shortly expected. [Michael] MacDermott has resigned the priorship [of Dublin]. I know not whom they intend for his successor. Poor John [Dominic] Magrath of Lorrha was lately killed on the spot by a fall from his horse. [Thomas] Carbery is in a fever at Mullingar. You have heard of West Indian [Patrick] Dalton's death ... Who is to be the next lector of philosophy [at San Clemente]? The provincial told me some time ago that some professed novices were to go from Louvain to Italy and Lisbon. Has the provincial been applied to from St Clement's for students of philosophy? He is in a very declining state of health, and not likely to survive his present station...

The provincial did not in fact survive his "station" or term of office, for he was already dead before the election of his successor on 7 July 1781<sup>23</sup>.

#### REGULAR AND SECULAR, 1779-1783

While Father Bray's provincialate was free from any dispute involving the Order, relations between secular and regular were less than cordial. The suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 and the numerical decline of the regular clergy gave new heart to some bishops who did not like them. In 1750, some 700, or about half the priests in the country, had been friars. By 1779 that figure had dropped to 400 at most. The Franciscans, by 1776, were reduced to 185, having buried sixty-six within the preceding three or four years. By 1784, the Augustinians had only forty-four<sup>24</sup>. Although there is no precise figure

<sup>22</sup> Kilkenny, 6 May 1780. SCAR, No. 14.

<sup>23</sup> TA, Acta cap. prov., 1781.

<sup>24</sup> H. Fennig, *The Undoing of the Friars of Ireland*, Louvain 1972, 339, 342.

for the Dominicans later than 1767, when they had 147 on the mission, it is reasonable to suppose that they too were in full decline. A total of 120 in 1779 would best suit the information available, especially since the chapter of 1781 was to name fifty friars who had died in Ireland since 1773. The failure of the four novitiates permitted in 1774 meant that the supply of new missionaries depended entirely on the three foreign colleges, with some help from the convents of continental provinces.

The Dominicans were capable, as at the chapter of 1777, of criticizing themselves for abandoning their convents in favour of parishes, or for the breakdown of conventual life even where it was still practicable. Their friend, archbishop Carpenter of Dublin, offered a few criticisms of his own. He first complained to Rome in 1779 that he was hounded by friars who wanted to become bishops and would stoop to any stratagem to wear a mitre, plaguing not only the archbishop but even Protestants to sign postulations in their favour<sup>25</sup>.

Dr Carpenter took up more serious questions in his diocesan report of 1780. The regular clergy of Dublin had six chapels, each served by about six or eight priests who neither led the common life nor ever sat at the one table. Obviously, some lived in lodgings while serving the chapels of their respective orders. This was, incidentally, the very year in which the Dominicans of Dublin left Bridge Street in favour of a new site in Denmark Street on the north side. The only rural convent in the archdiocese was at Athy where two Dominicans lived<sup>26</sup>. Dr Carpenter's chief complaint was about the profession of friars for convents which did not exist in fact.

However, the religious count other convents, which survive only in name, as though they really existed. Hence every chapter appoints nominal superiors, and subjects are given letters of obedience, by which title they are professed in convents abroad. After their studies they return to Ireland and come to the chapels of the friars in towns and cities. In these circumstances, the greatest evils menace the bishop. The superiors of the chapels admit these newly returned subjects, as pleases themselves, or send them to the convent for which they made profession, sometimes to a place where

<sup>25</sup> Dublin, 16 Jan. 1779. Carpenter to Castelli. APF, SC Irlanda 14, ff. 3, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Dublin, 31 Oct. 1780. Original in APF, SOCG 856, ff. 113-14. Edited from another copy by M.J. Curran, Archbishop Carpenter's *Epistolae* (1770-1780), in *Repertorium Novum*, vol. I, no. 2 (1956) 392-98.



no one lives at all. Friars rejected in this way come to me, explain their situation and ask permission to say Mass. I send for the local superior, who asserts that the alms they collect are not enough to support the members of another convent, and besides, that to increase the number of subjects would put an intolerable burden on their chapel. I warn them most seriously to take care of the behaviour of their subjects, and it is my custom to grant permission to say Mass provided that those who are forced to wander about are of good reputation. Gradually, whether worn out by need, or enticed by covetousness, some become apostates from the faith. Others, recoiling from this sink of iniquity, perform clandestine marriages, giving horrid scandal to Catholics and heretics alike.

Two years ago, a Dominican and a Capuchin abjured the Catholic faith. Earlier still, a Franciscan did the same<sup>27</sup>. These three remain in Dublin where they offer their services as the willing ministers of impious marriages. They go so far as openly to sell and publicise themselves in the newspapers. Other evils of the same kind begin to multiply; perhaps they will tend to the same result. There are three Dominican friars styled sons of the convent of Arklow in this diocese, while five more of the same Order and title are expected. The little town of Arklow, in the meantime, shows no vestige of a convent and can scarcely support its parish priest. The superiors general of the various orders would greatly benefit this mission were they to advise the provincials not to admit subjects to profession under empty titles which can merely bring opprobrium upon themselves and do unspeakable harm to religion. I earnestly entreat the Holy See to relieve me from this embarrassment, though I am still prepared to avail most freely of the services of good-living religious in the Lord's vineyard. I have always cherished them and continue to show them paternal love and affection.

In the same report, archbishop Carpenter asked that the decrees of 1751 and 1761 be observed, lest they should be forgotten, and suggested the promulgation of a new one which would permit the profession of novices only for "real" convents. No such decree was ever issued. The regular clergy, the Dominicans certainly, continued to profess novices for ghost-convents, being more concerned about their ancient rights to particular houses than the dangers to which their respective "sons" would be exposed. After ordination, many of these novices had to shift for themselves in troubled times, but remarkably few abandoned the faith or otherwise disgraced themselves. Most of them were destined to spend their lives as curates or parish priests.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Flanagan O.F.M., Barnabas O'Farrell O.F.M. Cap. and probably Charles O'Ferrall O.P. E. O'Byrne, *The Convert Rolls*, Dublin 1981, 299-300. Also J. Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism*, Maynooth 1965, 196-208 *passim*.

For evidence of more serious friction between regular and secular one must turn to Franciscan and Augustinian sources. The Franciscan provincial complained in 1776 of "tricks and frauds; they boast that they can do everything without our help." Few formal convents remained: "because the bishops take from them whom they please and send them to some place they deem incapable of providing food and clothing for any diocesan priest. Or if they are sent for a while to a good place, they often discover when they are dismissed that there is not a stone upon a stone where before they had a comfortable house." William Gahan, the Augustinian provincial, pointed to Propaganda's decrees of 1761 as "the principal cause of the troubles under which the regulars of this kingdom labour." His immediate concern was with John Butler, bishop of Cork, who was using this document in 1783: "to subvert religious discipline, to strike fear into the provincials of the religious orders and exercise despotic power over the friars within his diocese."<sup>28</sup> Gahan's complaint came towards the end of a long feud with the bishop of Cork who wanted the Augustinians to build a new chapel in the suburbs, whereas the Augustinians planned a new one in the city centre. They got some support in 1779 from the Dominicans of San Clemente who told Propaganda Fide that since the shadow of the penal laws had passed, the friars had every right to move out of the back streets into the light of day. If, they alleged, the bishop were permitted to prevent them, it would mean the birth of quite a new genus of persecution and the end of the regular clergy<sup>29</sup>.

#### THOMAS NETTERVILLE, 1781-1785

On 7 July 1781, the chapter elected Thomas Netterville to rule the province, twelve years after the end of his first term of office (1765-1769). He was thus the third and last provincial of the eighteenth century to achieve this feat<sup>30</sup>. The fact that he had presided over the illegal chapter of 1777 was not held against him, nor did it even affect the choice of definitors: two of them, Michael Fleming and Thomas

<sup>28</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 342-43. The "decrees of 1761" were no more than a simple statement by Propaganda confirming those of 1751.

<sup>29</sup> Undated copy, before Sept. 1779. Signed by Francis T. Levins S.T.P., prior and regent, John Connolly S.T.P., subprior, and Luke Concanen S.T.B. APF, SOCG 851, ff. 321-22.

<sup>30</sup> Elected by 29 out of 47 votes. AGOP IV. 240, p. 13.

McDonough, were returned again. The other two were William Longergan of Cork and Patrick Kirwan of Galway<sup>31</sup>.

The chapter acts largely repeated the abortive legislation of 1777. Even after four years, the acts of the general chapter had yet to reach Ireland. In point of fact, the Irish province was still waiting to see them in 1793! There must have been some conflict between convents with respect to their right to quest in particular parishes, for each prior was told (ord. 3) to submit a list of his "own" parishes to the provincial on visitation. No such list survives. Likewise, there is a strong hint of squabbles between friars of different "provinces" working in the one neighbourhood, for the provincial was told to send everyone back to their provinces of origin (comm. 4). Leinster suffered most from the kind of intrusion mentioned here. The unnamed offenders, leaving Connacht in search of a livelihood, tended to head for Dublin. Although the Franciscans and Capuchins of the capital suffered most from this, it was still a Dominican problem at Kilkenny in the 1830s. Three petitions accompanied the chapter acts to Rome. The first, concerning Louvain and Lisbon, is the only one worth quoting:

Quoniam conventus noster Lovaniensis, hactenus praeceptum nostrae provinciae pro recipiendis et alendis novitiis seminarium, ad talem reductus sit pauperiem ut consuetum novitiorum numerum amplius sustentare nequeat, quod in evidens huius nostrae provinciae detrimentum vergeret, cumque pariter justa habeamus suspicandi motiva praefatum seminarium ordinariis, quibus hucusque gaudebat mediis eos sustendendi (quaestuandi scilicet licentia), brevi esse privandum, quod si evenire contingat, paucos aut nullos intertenere valeret.

Huic igitur malo obviare volentes, opportunum duximus R. mam Paternitatem Vestram humillime deprecari, ut collegium nostrum Ulissiponense in conventum formalem et novitiatum pro provincia nostra erigere non dedignetur.

The definitors postulated twenty-two — about a fifth of the brethren in Ireland — for various degrees, and then for good measure postulated three of themselves in a letter appended to the acts. The list of the dead "since the last chapter" was ominously long: fifty in Ireland and fifteen abroad. Judging by some of those included, this list dated from the last legal chapter of summer 1773, so that the province

<sup>31</sup> *IA*, Acta cap. prov. For Netterville's career (1769-1781) see above, pp. 362-366.

had lost sixty-five in eight years. The nuns too had fared badly, with twenty dead in Ireland and four at Lisbon. The sun was setting not only for the friars, but for contemplative nuns as well.

CORPO SANTO, LISBON, 1773-1785

The capitular petition of 1781, asking that Corpo Santo be made a formal convent and novitiate, was not new. The province had made the same request to the general chapter of 1777. Unlike San Clemente or Holy Cross, Louvain, Corpo Santo was simply a college governed, not by an elected prior, but by a rector appointed by the master general. Bishop Burke mentions but does not explain the anomaly<sup>32</sup>. Corpo Santo eventually did become a novitiate, but not until the early 1800s<sup>33</sup>. The successive rectors at this period were Bernard Brullaghan (1772-1775), William Lonergan (1775-1779), Francis Thomas Levins (1779-1782) and Antonius Fleming (1782-1789). It is clear from the sacristy-books of the college, which survive from 1771, that the brethren were obliged to say far more Masses than they could discharge. Thus they were able to send hundreds to Rome and Louvain, and in 1779 sent 528 stipends to Dominicans in Ireland on the recommendation of Denis O'Connor, visitor and vicar general. Sometimes they gave stipends "as alms" to their own students en route to Ireland or to other Irish priests resident in Lisbon<sup>34</sup>. The annual account-books of the house, which date only from 1784, show that their largest source of fixed income was a royal grant of 460 milreis, paid every quarter and partly in wax for candles. This was fleshed out by their own stipends, gifts and legacies, rents from some old houses in the street of S. Boaventura, an annual charity of 30 milreis from the S. Casa de Misericordia and an equal sum for founded Masses from the Italian church nearby<sup>35</sup>.

There seem to have been about eight students in the new college at this time, with three professors to teach them. Two laybrothers — José Francisco and José Branco — appear regularly in the books during the 1770s. In 1773, two novices received the habit at Corpo

<sup>32</sup> Hib. Dom. 423. See also above, pp. 379, 434.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Coyne, rector, wished to establish a novitiate in 1800, but the vicar general deferred granting permission. Rome, 14 Sept. 1800. Pius J. Gaddi to Coyne. Lisbon, Corpo Santo, E 68. Letter mutilated and incomplete.

<sup>34</sup> Mass-book, 1771-1803. Lisbon, Corpo Santo, No. 31.

<sup>35</sup> Account-book, 1784-1803. Ibidem, No. 30.

Santo but left at once to spend the novitiate year at Batalha. This pair — Edmund Burke and William Fahy — later returned to Lisbon for their studies and ordination, which was probably the normal practice<sup>36</sup>. At least ten students were ordained at Lisbon between 1773 and 1785, while some of their printed "conclusions" or public scholastic debates show that a reasonable standard of study was maintained<sup>37</sup>.

Francis Thomas Levins, prior in Rome, became rector of the college and vicar of Bom Sucesso in 1779<sup>38</sup>. His early problems seem to have been with the nuns of Bom Sucesso rather than with his own subjects. In any case, the letter he wrote to the master general on 4 July 1780 largely concerned his long search for two priests to hear their confessions<sup>39</sup>. Those in Ireland to whom he had written ignored his appeals:

Ho scritto al P. Tommaso Connelly, procuratore della provincia d'Irlanda a Madrid intorno due padri di detta provincia che hanno finiti li studi nella Spagna da qualche tempo, e che presentemente stanno in detto regno. Il quale rispose consigliandomi di chiamarli, non potendo avere nisuno da Irlanda. Sono di diverse provincie dalle partite nel monastero. Ma prima di scrivere a V.P. Rma per le patenti, ho stimato bene d'avvisare il Visitatore, il quale mi rispose d'avere gia scritto a V.P. Rma di provederli uno capace. Onde se V.P. Rma stima bene puol mandare le patenti immediatamente... Uno di questi sta col vicario di Bilboa, e si chiama P. Giovanni Connell. L'altro sta nel convento di Lugo, e si chiama P. Giuseppe Ham. Ho buone informazioni di tutte due, Giudicarei dunque che sarebbe a proposito di chiamarli per vedere se si potesse introdur la pace in quel distratto ed abbandonato monastero.

Prevedo secondo la risposta del Visitatore datami, che desiderarebbe di continuare il P. Bradley, il quale non è certamente a proposito, come gia ho scritto a V.P. Rma. Presentemente non si trova nisuno per andare a confessare le monache, non volendo il P. Patrizio Donnellan attenderli piu,

<sup>36</sup> TA, Lisbon 6. Liber Conciliorum ... inceptus 21 Nov. 1772. Both took the habit for phantom-convents: Burke for Rosbercon, with the religious name Dominic; Fahy for Youghal with the name Vincent. They had been sent out by Martin French, provincial.

<sup>37</sup> The records of ordination are in Lisbon, Archives of the Patriarcado, Mss 282, 185 and 283, but the registers for 1776-78 and 1782-83 are missing. Hence surely more than ten were ordained. Five printed theses (1777-82) were recently found by Antonio do Rosario O.P. in Lisbon, Torre do Tombo, serie Preta, vols. 3562, 3563.

<sup>38</sup> On 16 May 1779. AGOP IV. 240, p. 11.

<sup>39</sup> AGOP XIII. 68095 (Additional).



dopo d'aver accettato di nuovo detto impiego nel mese d'Aprile passato. Non so che razze di teste hanno.

The "visitor" mentioned above was the Portuguese provincial, Fr Joseph Rocha, whose duty it was to visit the Irish nuns<sup>40</sup>. According to Levins, he showed no sign of doing so and would be far better employed attending to his own Portuguese friars:

Avrebbe piu che abbastanza di fare se riparasse alli abusi e disordini della sua provincia. Non ho veduto simili religiosi in vita mia, non solamente della nostra religione, ma li altri ancora sono peggiori. Ho inteso in Roma che questo era il paradiso de religiosi. Io dico che è l'inferno loro pe'l altro mondo. Hanno indosso l'abito, e del resto niente.

This extreme criticism of the friars of Lisbon ties in with the impressions of John T. Troy, bishop-elect, on his way through France in 1777. The Irish Protestant gentry could witness the same decadence as they made the "Grand Tour", or read about it in the books of English travellers on the continent. The fact did nothing to help the friars in Ireland who depended on Protestant opinion and a Protestant government to gain some relief from the penal laws. The poor behaviour of Portuguese friars also makes one wonder what sort of religious formation or example those two Irish novices got at Batalha in 1773.

Beginning in 1775, John Fottrell of Dublin, the former provincial, sent hundreds of pounds to Corpo Santo, partly in return for a life-annuity and partly to have Masses said for himself and others. He was no less generous to San Clemente in Rome. Daniel Albert O'Brien of Cork, another Dominican benefactor, sent £400 to Lisbon in 1776 to help pay the debt on the college. All he asked in return was a life-annuity of £16 Irish and £8 *per annum* to be paid after his death to Holy Cross, Louvain. Some difficulty about his own arrangements led Fottrell to write to the rector, Francis Levins, on 30 November 1781, a few months after the provincial chapter<sup>41</sup>.

I have been favoured with your letters of the 7th and 9th of last August, which I would have answered long since, were I not prevented by sickness, it being a paralitick stroke I got the beginning of last June, which I did not expect to survive so long, but through God's goodness, and the help

<sup>40</sup> Appointed on 23 Dec. 1779, six months before Levins wrote. AGOP IV. 240, p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> Original letter at the back of TA, Lisbon 6: a council-book which also provides details on the O'Brien and Fottrell benefactions.

of medicines which I have been taking ever since, I thank God I am now somewhat better. I received the contents of the bill you sent me on Cork, and that without a material loss, for which I am obliged to you. I presume you have long since heard that Mr Thomas Netterville was lately elected Provincial, at which I could not assist, I being then very ill. He is greatly troubled at the account you give of the misbehaviour of many of our brethren abroad, and is determined to receive but very few during his time, and to be very careful of not receiving any but such as are well-behaved and promising. Fr Vincent Coffey's conduct greatly surprised us, nor do I think him to be much pitied, as he could not but foresee the consequence of going to Spain without licence.

I am sorry to inform you of the death of Fr Francis Netterville, which happened in Drogheda on the 9th of last month of an inflammation in his bowels.

I am greatly concerned to find that the engagement for the numbers of perpetual Masses entered into by your rector and fathers of council so long since, is now thought to be too heavy.

Fottrell here refers to the obligation of saying sixty Masses a year for the intentions of the donor, Mrs Catherine Fottrell. Charles O'Kelly had assured him that that number would be no burden on Rome or Lisbon: "and as I looked upon Corpo Santo to be more distressed than St Clement's, I wrote to Messrs [Bernard] Bradley and [William] Lonergan about it, and they requested I might remit that sum to them".

I spoke to the present provincial about your situation in reference to the number of Masses which you are encumbered with, and requested he might procure you all the assistance he could, towards the discharge of them. He assured me that in his next visitation of the province, he would get as many as he possibly could discharged for your house. And I think it advisable that you should recommend that affair to himself as soon as you can. And as he is a most worthy gentleman, I am persuaded that he will render you all the service that will lye in his power.

Whether the provincial succeeded in having these Masses said in Ireland does not appear, but he did carry out the normal two visitations during his term. At Esker he signed the account-books in July 1782 and July 1784. His signature also appears on the account-books of the nuns of Dublin in May 1782 and November 1784, as "vicar general of Sienna convent, Drogheda, protonotary apostolic and provincial".

## THE RELIEF ACT OF 1782

The American Revolution and English fears of war with France made it a matter of sound policy for the British government to conciliate its Catholic subjects. The clergy of England were the first to benefit by the change when the Savile Act of 1778 freed them from the risk of imprisonment once they abjured the Pretender as well as the temporal jurisdiction and deposing power of the Pope. The Catholic Relief Act passed in Ireland in the same year, revolutionary though it was, concerned only landed property<sup>42</sup>. While clergy and laity in Ireland took a similar oath in 1778 and 1779, that was no more than a declaration of loyalty to the crown without corresponding relief. They looked for more, the government was anxious to give them more, yet Irish Catholics and their Protestant friends had to work for four years to obtain a second relief act only slightly more helpful to the clergy than that passed in England in 1778.

Late in August 1779, a member of the Irish parliament named Charles O'Hara drew up the heads of a Bill and gave the document to Luke Gardiner, to whose exertions the Irish act of 1778 had been largely due. Gardiner asked bishop Troy of Ossory for his comments on the text and Troy at once assumed the role of general-secretary for the entire hierarchy. His metropolitan, Carpenter of Dublin, agreed to write to the other archbishops and also accepted Troy's proposal that there should be "a sitting committee of the clergy next winter at Dublin, to be composed of at least two prelates of each province, and others, with full powers from the absentees to act as prudence may direct"<sup>43</sup>. Another of Troy's ideas, implemented in Cashel and Ossory at least, was the creation by public subscription of a "war-chest" to meet eventual expenses. Within a few weeks it became clear that several bishops liked O'Hara's proposals as little as did Troy himself. "They all dislike the intended bill and desire nothing more than be-

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<sup>42</sup> A.P. LeVack, Edmund Burke, His Friends and The Dawn of Irish Catholic Emancipation, in *Catholic Historical Review*, 37 (Jan. 1952) 385-414. R.E. Burns, The Catholic Relief Act in Ireland, 1778, in *Church History*, 32 (1963) 181-206. E. O'Flaherty, The Catholic Question in Ireland: 1774-1793, an unpublished thesis submitted to the N.U.I. (Dublin) in 1981.

<sup>43</sup> Kilkenny, 5 and 9 Sept. 1779. Troy to various bishops. Copies. DDA, 6/7, pp. 53-55.

ing put on the footing of the English clergy."<sup>44</sup> All they wanted was legal recognition and freedom to work in peace.

This agreement among the bishops was disturbed within a month when a Protestant peer informed Troy of a rumour that "a remonstrance had been made by the Roman Catholic prelates of Munster to the members of parliament from that province, for the purpose of banishing or secularizing the regulars of this kingdom, and recommending a prohibition of return to their brethren abroad"<sup>45</sup>. True or false, the rumour spurred the friars of Galway to immediate action:

At a meeting of the regular clergy of Galway held October 29th one thousand seven hundred and seventy nine, to consider of the dangers that the Regulars of this Kingdom are at this time threatened with, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

First resolved that Doctor Fallon [bishop of Elphin] be applied to, for a form to be subscribed by all the Bishops of this Kingdom setting forth the utility and necessity of continuing the regulars of Ireland in full possession of their privileges, and due subjection to their regular superiors.

Resolved that this commission should be intrusted to the Revd. Father Daniel Francis Carroll [O.F.M.] and personally to wait on Doctor Fallon to obtain said form.

Resolved that when said form is obtained, proper persons be deputed by the three Regular Orders<sup>46</sup> to wait on the bishops for their signature to said form.

Resolved also that a proper address be presented to Lord Clanrickard, Denis Daly and the other leading members of both Houses to request their interest in favour of Regulars.

Resolved likewise that application be made to the leading Roman Catholics of this kingdom for their signature, setting forth the utility and necessity of regulars in this kingdom.

Resolved that an abridgement of these resolutions in form of a letter be sent to Doctor [Peter] Killikelly, Doctor [John T.] Troy, Doctor [Denis] Maguire and Doctor [Michael] McMahon, the regular superiors and Doctor [Arthur] O Lary praying their advice and concurrence in this common cause<sup>47</sup>.

The friars of Galway had turned to a "secular", and so presumably impartial bishop of Connacht, James Fallon of Elphin, know-

<sup>44</sup> [Kilkenny], 2 Oct. 1779. Troy to Butler of Cashel. A copy. DDA, 116/2, no. 195.

<sup>45</sup> Kilkenny, 27 Oct. 1779. Troy to Butler of Cashel. A copy. DDA 6/7, p. 56.

<sup>46</sup> Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians: the only friars in Galway city.

<sup>47</sup> TA, Letters, under date.

ing that he would prove a friend, but the four bishops to whom an abridgement of the resolutions was to be sent were all of the regular clergy. And their chosen champion, Arthur O'Leary, was not only a Capuchin of Cork but practically the only priest in the country then defending the Catholic cause in print<sup>48</sup>.

The first meeting of Dr Troy's sitting committee took place at Dublin on 12 November 1779. The five bishops in attendance — Carpenter, Troy, Denis Maguire O.F.M. of Kilmore, Butler of Cashel and Patrick Plunkett of Meath — were assured that Mr O'Hara's bill would be laid aside "and another less complicated and more agreeable substituted in its place". Butler of Cashel, speaking as much for himself as for his suffragans in Munster, disclaimed "any unfavourable intentions" towards the regular clergy and "solemnly expressed disapprobation of any measure conducive to their extinction"<sup>49</sup>. The bishops of Connacht, of whom none had appeared at Dublin, signed a much more substantial tribute to the friars which was sent to Troy from Galway on 10 December 1779<sup>50</sup>.

We the undernamed do hereby certify and declare that the regular clergy of this kingdom are not only useful, but absolutely necessary for all ranks of R. Catholics, in the assistance they afford to promote the happiness and good government of our church. They are useful and highly convenient to lay gentlemen who live at a great distance from their respective chapels and have large families not easily equipped for two or three miles' journey. This difficulty is remov'd by the attendance of some one of the regular clergy who gives them prayers [i.e. says Mass] to the great satisfaction and comfort both of them and of the old and infirm of that neighbourhood. They are necessary for the secular clergy, most of whom are unable from the poverty of their parishes to employ curates. The regulars, for a trifling consideration, and often without any, assist them essentially in the administration of sacraments, particularly in case the incumbent should fall sick, or epidemical disorders make the calls too frequent and sudden for him to answer in time. They are also necessary for the prelates, who would be sometimes obliged to overlook the misconduct of some of their pastors, if

<sup>48</sup> The subject of two biographies: by Thomas England (London 1822) and M.B. Buckley (Dublin 1868). See also Fr. Paschal, Father Arthur O'Leary, in *The Capuchin Annual* (Dublin 1960) 263-275.

<sup>49</sup> Kilkenny, 27 Nov. 1779. Troy to McMahon of Killaloe. A copy. DDA 6/7, pp. 59-60.

<sup>50</sup> FLK J7. Other copies in SCAR, no. 14 and APF, SC Irlanda 14, ff. 349-50.



they had not a regular to substitute in their stead, while they may deem it advisable to keep them suspended. The opinion of their being a burthen to the people is equally injurious and groundless. It is the breath of low malice and envy that often blasts the purest flowers. It is notorious they never extort charity, which would no longer bear the name, but are content with what is freely and willingly offer'd.

In a word, if any merit is due to the secular clergy for keeping their flocks honest, answerable to the laws, and restraining their licentious irregularities, we may boldly affirm that the regular clergy claim a large portion of it, for they are indefatigable in preaching and instructing, and hold the same religious and political creed with them. We lament we have but too few of them, and apprehend that without any new efforts of Government to suppress them, a visible decay threatens the loss of their invaluable assistance. We therefore most humbly pray no steps may be taken against them.

Mark Skerrett of Tuam, James Fallon of Elphin, Philip Phillips of Achonry, Andrew Donnellan of Clonfert, Peter Killikelly [O.P.] of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, John Joyce, warden of Galway.

The regular clergy lost the good will of the prelates of Munster in December 1779 and did not recover it until the following April. The fault was that of Dominic Bellew, once parish priest of Dundalk but resident in Rome from 1777 as agent for the bishops of Ulster and Munster. In November 1779 he became bishop of Killala at the personal wish of the Pope — not of Propaganda Fide — and at much the same time wrote a mischievous letter to archbishop James Butler of Cashel. Bellew, a man with little love for bishop Troy and less for friars in general, reported that "it was industriously given out" in Rome that Butler "and the secular bishops of this kingdom have coincided in principles calculated to subvert religion out of a wanton pique to regulars"<sup>51</sup>. Not unnaturally, Butler demanded an explanation and this he duly got, for Bellew's story had no firmer basis than a stray and innocent remark made by a Dominican student at San Sisto. Troy wrote in all directions; the Franciscan and Dominican provincials, O'Donnell and Bray, wrote to Butler from Waterford; while the other Irish, English and Scottish agents thoroughly investigated the matter at Rome itself. Eventually, if with some reluctance, Butler of Cashel admitted to Troy that the affair was closed<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> Thurles, 24 Dec. 1779. Butler to Troy. A copy. DDA 116/2, no. 197.

<sup>52</sup> Thurles, 21 Apr. 1780. Butler to Troy. A copy. DDA 116/3, no. 24.

The testimonials which your lordship received from Rome ... whilst they remove every suspicion of the regulars in Rome having had any hand in promoting reports injurious to the secular bishops leave me still in some *embarras* how to account for what Dr Bellew mentions of his appearing at Propaganda and before cardinal Castelli, to vindicate the character of the several bishops who employed him as agent, from such odious imputations, if no such reports had been current in Rome. But, be that as it will, it seems evident from the testimonials you received, none of the regulars there were accessory to the spreading them; and your lordship will be more convinced that I really look upon them as entirely innocent of any such charge, when I inform you that I sent myself a certificate to Dublin certifying how useful I thought the regular clergy were on the mission, and how deserving of being protected; that by joining thus in concert with the other prelates who have signed in favour of the regulars, I may have the happiness of contributing to ward off the blow that was say'd to be intended against them.

In the meanwhile, apart from placating Butler of Cashel, bishop Troy kept a close eye on parliament. In January 1780, his friends in Dublin had been so optimistic as to hope for a total repeal of the penal laws by Easter<sup>53</sup>. During February, his close friend Luke Gardiner, with Hussey Burgh, Barry Yelverton and the Attorney General were preparing a bill to put Irish Catholics on the same footing as those in England. At that stage, even the king and his ministers were bringing favourable influence to bear on hostile members of parliament<sup>54</sup>. Unfortunately, the Presbyterians of Scotland and England, banded into "Protestant Associations" under Lord George Gordon, with Irish co-religionists already organised as groups of armed militia or Volunteers, brought the movement towards Catholic emancipation to a temporary halt. What annoyed them, apart from their innate hostility to Catholicism, was the concession to Catholics in England of what had long been denied to themselves. For fear of exasperating Presbyterian opinion, Troy's friends in parliament were recommending "indefinite postponement" by 23 February 1780<sup>55</sup>. By mid-March, not

<sup>53</sup> Kilkenny, 12 Jan. 1780. Troy to Butler of Cashel. A copy. DDA 6/7, p. 66.

<sup>54</sup> Kilkenny, 24 Jan. 1780. Troy to nuncio at Brussels. A copy. DDA 29/7, no. 3. Troy also describes his work at Dublin in a later letter of 10 Feb. 1780. DDA 6/7, p. 67.

<sup>55</sup> Kilkenny, 23 Feb. 1780. Troy to nuncio. A copy. DDA 29/7, no. 6. The advice was largely based on the false rumour that the Irish bill abolishing the

knowing what was to happen, Troy found himself "between hope and despair". On learning from Luke Gardiner that some Presbyterians were planning a "Gordonian Association" like those in England and Scotland, under the patronage of certain members of parliament, Troy approached three of these members — old friends of his — in a partly successful effort to undermine their support of the Presbyterians. The government, he was told, though well disposed to Catholics, would refuse toleration for fear of irritating Lord George Gordon and his followers<sup>56</sup>. Even his friends in parliament had the most peculiar and most varied ideas as to how they might "help" the clergy.

Gli stessi nostri amici in Parlamento sono stranamente divisi quanto al modo di favorire il clero. Molti vorrebbero diminuire e limitare in avvenire il numero già scarso de preti e frati. Altri minacciano l'esilio o la secolarizzazione ai regolari. Certuni parlano delle Propozioni Gallicane da adottarsi in questo regno. Ho fatto quanto ho potuto per rimuovere i pregiudizi di vari signori, e sono stato assicurato da molti, particolarmente dal Gardiner che sarò opportunamente avvisato di qualunque passo parlamentario riguardante i Cattolici.

Troy did not exaggerate. On 1 April 1780, two days after he wrote this letter to the nuncio at Brussels, Sir Lucius O'Brien called on Dr Carpenter of Dublin "with the joyous tidings that the regulars were to be expelled". Their elected champion, Arthur O'Leary the Capuchin who was in Dublin at the time, wrote at once to Laurence Callanan, a prominent Franciscan in Cork<sup>57</sup>.

The storm that is ready to burst over the heads of the regular clergy has been gathering these two years past; and let the blame lie at your own doors if you resemble a Jonas plunged in his slumbers, while the lot is casting to throw him overboard ... It reflects no honour [on the religion of Catholic gentlemen] nor on us to have the character of ecclesiastics lacerated and torn by virulent declarations in a Protestant Senate, and painted in the high colorings of rebels to the State, nuisances to the public, and

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sacramental test had been rejected in England, whereas it was approved in March. Lecky, *op. cit.*, II, 243.

<sup>56</sup> Kilkenny, 30 Mar. 1780. Troy to nuncio. A copy. DDA 116/3, no. 17.

<sup>57</sup> M.B. Buckley, *Life and Writings of Rev. Arthur O'Leary*, Dublin 1868, 208-213. The printed text lacks the date, supplied here from a copy made about 1829 by B.T. Russell O.P. TA, Russell Papers, "Education and Miscellaneous". In Russell's copy the important postscript is dated 3 April, two days later than the letter itself.

papal spies; which will be the language used when debates on the propriety or impropriety of banishing the regular clergy, or dissolving their institutions, by transferring their obedience from their own superiors to others, and decreeing that, after the decease of the present generation, no more of them shall be admitted into the kingdom, which is the purport of the bill ... The mine is already worked... the characters have it in rehearsal this long time past ...

Two of the members in whom I could repose an entire confidence were consulted as to the plan we should adopt. They advised, first, that immediate application be made to all the Catholic bishops for their signatures in favour of our usefulness to the public — the same application to be made to the most respectable of the Catholic laity wherever we have establishments. Secondly, that a short memorial be printed and copies of it given to every member in both houses, in order to prevent the bill from being introduced, if possible; or if it be introduced, to point out the ground on which our friends (if any should speak in our favour) may go. These resolutions have been adopted in a meeting of the regular superiors in Dublin, and I am ordered to forward them to you and the other superiors in your city, as they are forwarded to all other cities where we have convents. You are then, immediately, to convene the regular superiors of Cork, who are to send two, or as many as they think fit in their names, to Dr [John] Butler, [bishop of Cork], for his signature to the following attestation:

« We certify that the regular clergy are useful to the public by their instructions, and by instilling the principles of good morals: and therefore think them worthy of being protected in their own institutions ».

You are to transmit the same to the bishops of Cloyne and Kerry, and get two gentlemen to procure the signatures of the laity. Let the application be made to the bishops, whether they sign or not, for reasons too obvious to mention ... Tomorrow the superiors are to wait on Dr Carpenter [archbishop of Dublin].

Another of Troy's letters, written six days later at Kilkenny, corroborates O'Leary's views while adding some points of interest. It was addressed to James Fallon of Elphin, author of the testimonial letter from the prelates of Connacht printed above <sup>58</sup>.

As to the regulars, I am sorry to assure you that there is a design formed by many members of both Houses to suppress the religious orders

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<sup>58</sup> Kilkenny, 7 Apr. 1780. Troy to Fallon. A copy. DDA 6/7, pp. 71-72. In an earlier letter (Kilkenny, 29 Dec. 1779) Troy complimented Fallon on his authorship of the testimonial: "The regulars are much indebted to you on that account and ought never to forget so remarkable an instance of friendship and protection". Ibidem, pp. 63-64.



OF YOUR CHARITY

PRAY FOR THE SOUL OF

**Fr THOMAS EDWARD GARDE, O. P.**

**S. T. M.**

**ASSISTANT GENERAL**

who died in Rome on the Golden Jubilee  
of his Ordination to the Priesthood

21 May 1960

He was born in Castlemartyr, Ireland,  
on 21 April 1887,

and was ordained in Rome in 1910.

After studies at the Biblical School in Jerusalem  
he was successively Professor at the Angelicum,

Rome, Prior of San Clemente,

Rome, Prior of Tallaght, Dublin,

Assistant General ( 1929 - 1946 ),

Rector of Angelicum, Rome,

Provincial of Ireland ( 1949 - 1957 ),

and Assistant General ( 1957 - 1960 )



*When he went up to the holy altar he honoured  
the vesture of holiness.*





ADM. R. P. THOMAS GARDE, O. P.

in this kingdom entirely, and I make no doubt but a bill may be brought into parliament for that purpose during the present session, if time will permit it. The regulars are doing what they can to preserve themselves. At their last meeting in Dublin it was determined that Mr O'Leary now there, should draw up an address to Parliament in their favour, which together with the certificates of your provincial prelates, when printed, is to be delivered to each member. He is likewise to prepare certificates for the signatures of the Catholic Committee, of the prelates and Catholics of Dublin. The names of such prelates as shall refuse to sign are to be sent to Rome. My attendance in Dublin is requested when the ugly business shall come on. I have agreed to go there and in the interim am plagued with letters on the subject.

I shall be extremely obliged to you for sending a copy of the enclosed [Charles O'Kelly's justification of the regulars at Rome] and my letter to Dr Butler [of Cashel], as soon as convenient, to the regulars of Galway with my compliments. It must give them pleasure to find that one seemingly great obstacle to the signature of prelates is effectually removed.

Troy ended with the wry comment: "There is not a fox-hunting member of either House more earnestly wishes for the rising of parliament than I do." And yet one great obstacle in the path of Catholic emancipation had been removed in March by the abolition of the "sacramental test for Irish Dissenters": an act of parliament, in force since 1704, excluding Presbyterians from civil and military office unless they received Communion in an Anglican church. English Presbyterians were to wait another forty-eight years for the same concession, but they did not wait in peace. During the first week of June 1780, a mob of about 50,000 incited by Lord George Gordon practically imprisoned both houses of parliament and burned several Catholic chapels in London to the cry of "No Popery". Having spent seven months as a prisoner in the Tower, Gordon was acquitted of treason on 6 February 1781<sup>59</sup>. Before the verdict, bishop Troy was pessimistic. "Any further attempt in favour of Roman Catholics during the next session will be ineffectual. Lord George Gordon's fate (whatever it now is) will cause a ferment and revive an intolerant spirit in the minds of many. This circumstance must intimidate our friends and encourage our enemies."<sup>60</sup> The trial over, his spirits rose. Lord

<sup>59</sup> J.P. de Castro, *The Gordon Riots*, London 1926. C. Hibbert, *King Mob: the Story of Lord G. Gordon and the Riots of 1780*, London 1958.

<sup>60</sup> Kilkenny, 11 Feb. 1781. Troy to Fallon of Elphin. A copy, DDA 6/7, pp. 98-99.

Gordon's acquittal was "most certainly a favourable circumstance for the Roman Catholics of these kingdoms. His condemnation and death would increase that spirit of bigotry and persecution which so conspicuously characterises the disciples and followers of Calvin"<sup>61</sup>.

In the meantime, bishop Troy was free to attend to his own diocese and other business, because parliament, prorogued in September 1780, was not to sit again until October 1781 nor turn its attention to Roman Catholics until February 1782. Three closely-related questions occupied his mind: the appointment of a bishop in Armagh, the calumny that he (as a friar) was *persona non grata* to the government, and the proposal of some bishops to limit the Pope's role in filling vacant sees. Without going into detail it is enough to say that Troy's candidate, Richard O'Reilly, became archbishop of Armagh, that Troy could protest in December 1781 that the government regarded him as "the Catholic primate", while his calumniators were trying (through him) to vilify the regular clergy in general, and finally that Troy himself was largely responsible for thwarting those anti-regular "Gallican" bishops who wanted one of their own party in Armagh and would have changed the old system of nominating bishops, even by act of parliament<sup>62</sup>.

At the urgent insistence of Luke Gardiner and other members of parliament, Troy was again at Dublin by 23 January 1782 to be at hand for the intended revocation of some penal laws due for discussion in the following week. Arthur O'Leary's printed defence of the regular clergy appeared about the same time as a broadside of two pages, rather too long and too general to reproduce here<sup>63</sup>. It was addressed in immense capitals: "to the wisdom of the right honourable and honourable Members of the Irish Senate". Since the regulars had been told "that an honourable member is to move for a clause tending to their suppression", their spokesman set out in seven numbered paragraphs the various reasons why they should be left in peace. After all, even the Turks and Prussians protected them!

<sup>61</sup> Kilkenny, 9 Mar. 1781. Same to same. Ibidem, pp. 102-103.

<sup>62</sup> DDA 116/3, nos. 75, 77-79, 84, 85. Troy's "Gallicans" were Butler of Cashel, Egan of Waterford, Plunkett of Meath (their candidate for Armagh) and Lord Gormanston.

<sup>63</sup> It bears only the date "1782". There is a copy in Cashel diocesan archives, Butler Papers, under date.

They could neither foresee, by the Heads of the Bill, nor conjecture from the happy spirit of the times, that they would be precluded from that liberty which is extended to those of their communion. There were some silent menaces this long time past, and at the first alarm they applied to the bishops of their communion, who all unanimously signed the following certificate:

*We certify that the regular clergy of this kingdom are a respectable body of men, useful to the public, by instilling the principles of good morals, and therefore worthy of being protected under their own institutions.*

The original certificates can be produced. The laity of the province of Connaught, who have been applied to, have subscribed. The storm ceased, and delicacy, as well as an assurance, that no steps inimical to the regular clergy would be taken, lulled them into a kind of security; a sudden surprize deprives them now of every means of defence, by making application to every town and city of the kingdom, and laying a petition, supported with the signatures of millions, before the august Senate of the Nation. Their only resource is an humble expectation, that the reasons alleged ... may procure at least a respite for inoffensive men who, if better known, would be thought less obnoxious, and who startle by anticipation at the thoughts of being painted as objects unworthy the protection of Rulers, whose authority they respect and enforce <sup>64</sup>.

By 5 March 1782, all was over. For the first time the Catholic laity were placed on the same footing as Protestants with respect to property, landed or not, though still excluded from the army, parliament, civil office and legal practice, and still deprived of the franchise <sup>65</sup>. So far as the clergy were concerned, it is best to quote the act of parliament itself <sup>66</sup>.

No. III. Popish ecclesiastics who have taken the oath of allegiance ... and who shall register their christian and sir-names, place of abode, age and parish ... shall after passing of this Act be no longer subject to the act of banishment or act of registration.

<sup>64</sup> The regulars were also supported on 24 Feb. 1782 by a resolution of the Catholic Committee, a body of laymen, who lobbied members of parliament in their favour. R. Dudley Edwards, *The Minute-Book of the Catholic Committee 1773-92*, in Arch. Hib. 9 (1942) 65. Curiously, the final phrase of this resolution would have been unacceptable to friars: "They will inform such members of parliament that the regular clergy of Ireland declare themselves willing to be immediately subjected to the authority and direction of their several bishops in this kingdom".

<sup>65</sup> Dublin, 5 Mar. 1782. Troy to Busca at Brussels. A copy. DDA 116/3, no. 79.

<sup>66</sup> There is a printed copy in ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.

No. IV. Provided always that no benefits in this Act contained shall extend to any regular of the Popish clergy, who shall not be in this kingdom at the time of passing this Act, or to any regular of the said clergy then in this kingdom, who shall not have taken and subscribed the said oath and registered ... six months after the passing of this Act.

No. VI. [Exclusion from the benefits of this Act for] any Popish ecclesiastic who shall officiate in any church or chapel with a steeple or bell, or at any funeral in any church or church-yard, or who shall exercise any of the rites and ceremonies of the Popish religion, or wear the habits of their order, save within their usual places of worship or in private houses.

Luke Gardiner and many other members of parliament assured Troy that the bad treatment Joseph II and other Catholic princes meted out to the regular clergy had proved a powerful obstacle to those who tried to help them in Dublin. Even some Catholics, Lord Gormanston among them, had spoken against the regulars, while Troy suspected the bishops of Cashel, Waterford and Meath of using their influence to prevent a more generous concession. Troy found it strange that Irish friars actually on the continent should have been excluded, even though some members had actually praised the regular clergy in parliament. To his mind, their work on the mission was absolutely necessary, for the continental seminaries could not provide enough secular priests<sup>67</sup>. The clause limiting the benefits of the Act to regulars actually in the country, or soon to return to it, seems to have been "the clause tending to their suppression" mentioned in Arthur O'Leary's broadside. The nuncio at Brussels wrote to the British minister there, hoping it might be omitted. But such bills received the royal assent, as this one did on 4 May 1782, either as they stood or not at all. The king might reject but never amend them. So there was nothing to be done<sup>68</sup>.

Among the regulars in Ireland who showed apprehension about the possible consequences of this Act, there was a Dominican named Dolphin at Esker — probably John Dolphin, provincial from 1789 to 1793 — who wrote to Arthur O'Leary and received the following letter in reply. O'Leary wrote from Dublin on 8 May 1782<sup>69</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> As in note 65 above.

<sup>68</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 15, ff. 147, 152-55, 193-96, 213-14, 239, 296.

<sup>69</sup> TA, Esker Letters, under date.



My Dear Sir,

I humbly expect that you will accept as an apology for my long silence the plea of inevitable hurry succeeded by a fit of sickness from which I now begin to recover. I wrote you already my sentiments about the lady in question, and as to the regulars, besides want of time, I thought it more expedient to differ writing my sentiments until the entire scene was closed.

There has been a settled plan these many years past to banish the regulars from this kingdom. It has been attempted in the year fifty-six but defeated through the interest of Lord Tremblestown. It has been renewed five years ago, and concerted between a Protestant bishop and a leading member of the House of Commons who thought it more advisable to defer it until something would have been done for the Catholics at large, the better to soften and deprive it of the air of persecution, and yet the impatience of putting it into execution was so great that two years ago the heads of a bill were drawn up for that purpose, and ready to be brought into the house, had it not been that I came to Dublin and had interest enough to prevail on the gentleman who was to introduce it, not to embark on the business. People who consider their own clergy as useless, or rather a burden, could not be presumed favourable to the clergy of a different persuasion especially the regulars who received the first overthrow by the dissolution of the Jesuits, and whose diminution was daily announced in the papers from Germany and Naples, etc., in a word a body of men obnoxious to the very Catholic powers, or at least represented as such.

Add to this that our extinction was represented to the members as agreeable to the Catholics of this kingdom, as if we were useless on the one hand, and an encumbrance on the other. An obstacle to the subsistence of the secular clergy, who were sufficient for the ministry without us. Such was the situation of affairs when Mr Gardiner framed the heads of his bill, in which the protection of the laws was extended only to bishops and priests. I prevailed on him to change these words into ecclesiastics professing the popish religion. The bill was altered several times afterwards from dread of a violent opposition, the prejudices of the times were to be humoured, and one part was to be sacrificed for the good of the whole. In a word all that I could obtain was protection for the present generation and this is more than was originally intended. Our successors will not be worse off than we have been hitherto, without [i.e. unless] the secular clergy take up the sword of persecution which the Protestants have dropped. And this few will be inclined to do. So that in fact this clause relating to posterity will remain as a dead letter on the face of the statutes.

The Church has been persecuted from the beginning in some part or other, and will be to the end of time, and it is in trials that the Christian is to show his constancy. Any young man then that has a vocation for

the religious state should be encouraged in it. If after his studies he is persecuted here there are other places where he can work in the Lord's vineyard. America will soon be open for the whole world. Thousands of Catholic families will want chaplains, and if one formed an establishment there he could soon invite some of his brethren to his assistance. Thus we can gain ground in one place when we lose it in another. Hence I would not despond, nor damp the vocation of youth, nor lose our establishments abroad for want of subjects.

After Mr [Denis] Daly's promises to Mr French, to others, and to myself who waited on him the day that our affairs were to come on, he never opened his lips in our favour though he spoke favourably to me of the regulars of Connaught.

Another misfortune. The property of the laity and the toleration of the clergy were blended together in the same bill so that in obstructing it in any stage, as could have been done if the least alteration had been made in it, the whole would have fallen to the ground. It was not our inclination to deprive the laity of the indulgence they so richly deserved, convinced that Providence has other means to provide for us.

With my regards to the gentlemen of your community, I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

Your affectionate, humble servant, A. O'Leary.

Clearly Father Dolphin was concerned about the exclusion from the Act of prospective novices in Ireland and of religious abroad who could not return within six months. Would the Dominican colleges at Louvain, Lisbon and Rome serve any purpose whatever, if their students were to have no legal standing on their return to Ireland after ordination? Arthur O'Leary had done his best "for the present generation", meaning those already in the country, but the general impression was that those abroad would have to return in a hurry or not return at all. Vincent Gibbons, still at Lucca five years after bishop Troy had met him there, prepared for departure as soon as he heard the news:<sup>70</sup>

I received a letter a few days ago from my brother wherein he informed me that, May next, they intend to pass an Act to call home all religious who in the space of six months will be obliged to register their names, otherwise they'll be looked upon as strangers, and will receive no benefit by the Acts passed in favour of the Catholics, so that I have determined to go home next winter.

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<sup>70</sup> Lucca, 5 Aug. 1782. Gibbons to Luke Concanen, prior of S. Clemente. SCAR, no. 33.

That Father Dolphin's fears about novices had some foundation appears from a surprising letter to Propaganda written by the Honourable Jenico Preston, a priest and brother of Lord Gormanston, some weeks after the Act of 1782 became law<sup>71</sup>. The government, Preston announced, had recognized the clergy but did not want any friar to enter the kingdom, nor any novice received to the habit in Ireland. Those already in the country might do as they wished. Why then, he continued, encourage anyone to join the friars? Why keep religious in Ireland when the government did not want them and they were not in the least necessary to the church? Preston asked that Irish novitiates be suppressed as a conciliatory gesture to a friendly government, claiming that this was not simply his own opinion but "that of the most prudent persons in the kingdom" to whom he had spoken. He could even speak with certainty, "because no one knows all this better than I and my brother, the most intimate friend of the Viceroy and a great friend of the ministers". Jenico Preston was a canon of Liège, to which he soon returned. His opinions, even if representative of a small party, had little influence in Ireland and less at Propaganda<sup>72</sup>. Cardinal Antonelli advised him to read Thomas Aquinas and John Chrysostom on the value of the religious life! In any event, the failure of so many novitiates established after 1774 cannot be directly linked to the Act of 1782. Some had already failed before that date, while others flourished after it<sup>73</sup>.

James Fallon of Elphin, patron of the friars of Connacht from 1779, still had their welfare at heart in the autumn of 1782. He wrote twice about them to bishop Troy of Ossory, but unfortunately his letters are lost and we are left with only Troy's replies. The main drift of the lost letters seems to have been the unlikelihood, verified in the event, that regulars would be promoted to Irish bishoprics in the future. Troy wrote in answer to the first:<sup>74</sup>

Cardinal Antonelli's words transcribed in your last ... allude to the remonstrances of some prelates who have most unjustly and uncharitably

<sup>71</sup> Dublin, 29 May 1782. Preston to cardinal prefect. Italian original. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117. Cardinal Antonelli's reply (a copy) is in the same packet.

<sup>72</sup> Preston wrote in 1783 to bishop Plunkett of Meath in favour of the "Hierarchical Bill of Rights" which would have led to the royal nomination of bishops: a project successfully opposed by Troy the year before. A. Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, III, 98-100.

<sup>73</sup> H. Fennig, *The Undoing of the Friars*, Louvain 1972, 321-53.

<sup>74</sup> Kilkenny, 23 Sept. 1782. Troy to Fallon. A copy. DDA 6/7, pp. 110-11.

represented that as regulars are excluded from the benefits of the late Act, their appointment to bishoprics in this kingdom would be highly disagreeable to government and hurtful to religion. His Eminence ought to be fully informed and assured of the contrary. It does not become me to take an active part in this business.

Troy's answer to the second letter suggests a more basic reason for the evident decline of the regular clergy: most priests and laymen of substance did not seem to care whether they survived or not<sup>75</sup>.

Your observations on the present state of regulars in this kingdom, and the impossibility of giving authentic security that their promotion would not give umbrage to government, are very just. Their fate must depend on the reception those now abroad shall meet with at their return. As to a repeal of the clause prohibiting it, or excluding them from the benefits of the late Act, I do not expect it while the generality of our laity of property and the majority of our clergy continue their apparent indifference about the existence of regulars.

While the Act of 1782 gave legal recognition to the clergy, this was accepted at best as a two-edged sword, for if the clergy registered to benefit by it, they had to tell the government exactly who and where they were. Most of the Connacht clergy did not bother to register at all. Old priests tended to abstain, leaving their juniors to register if they wished. When priests did register, according to Fr Andrew O'Toole of Dublin, the laity reproached and lost respect for them<sup>76</sup>. The original roll of registered priests perished in 1922, but not before parts of it had been copied or published<sup>77</sup>. They provide details on forty-eight Dominicans, among them the provincial, Thomas Netterville, who gave his address as Marley, Co. Meath. This was the name of a small estate at Cruicerath in the parish of Donore, a mile or two south-west of Drogheda, where he lived with his Dominican brother John Francis (who died on 9 October 1781), attended by two servants. The undated account-book they used for the house is now kept by the Dominican nuns of Drogheda.

<sup>75</sup> Kilkenny, 9 Nov. 1782. Same to same. *Loc. cit.*, pp. 112-13.

<sup>76</sup> There is an unsigned Roman commentary on the Act in ASV, Fondo Missioni 117. O'Toole's letter of 1786 is in the same packet.

<sup>77</sup> R. Walsh, *A List of Ecclesiastics*, in *Arch. Hib.* I (1912) 46-76. J. Brady, *Documents concerning the Diocese of Meath*, in *Arch. Hib.* 8 (1941) 216-222. See also the Index to the Catholic Qualification Rolls in PRO, Dublin, IE/15/93, and NLI, Ms. 2486.

## THE CONVENT OF MULLINGAR, 1783-1787

Mullingar was, as it still is, the principal town in county Westmeath and therefore the most important parish in the western half of the immense diocese of Meath. The Dominicans founded a convent there in 1237 and were still about the place in 1733. In that fatal year they left their "house of refuge" eight miles south of the town to accept the care of the parish of Mullingar from the Dominican bishop Stephen MacEgan. Matthew Casey, a generous layman, provided them with a decent house, while Robert, first Earl of Belvedere, later donated one hundred guineas for a new chapel, "the only slated one between Dublin and Galway"<sup>78</sup>. The bishop could not legally unite convent and parish, so Laurence Fitzgerald O.P. obtained a papal bull to make his own provision to the parish doubly sure. When exactly does not appear, but it was in 1756 (the year of bishop MacEgan's death) or soon afterwards<sup>79</sup>. Since another regular bishop, Augustine Cheevers O.S.A., succeeded bishop MacEgan, the day of reckoning was long postponed. All this while the Dominicans were quite aware that they might lose the parish, and lose the convent with it, perhaps within a few days of Fitzgerald's death. So much is evident from the letter they procured in 1774 from the benevolent bishop Cheevers<sup>80</sup>.

Bishop Cheevers' letter authorized the friars to quest within the diocese, while warmly recommending them to the pastors and people of Meath. Yet the letter opened with the potentially harmful admission that the Dominicans of Mullingar, "hitherto prevented by lack of numbers from living together", were now sufficiently numerous to establish a community but would have to rely on the alms of the faithful for their support. When bishop Cheevers died, quite senile, towards the end of 1778, he was succeeded by Patrick Plunkett of Paris. And bishop Plunkett, as should be clear by now, was not simply of the diocesan clergy but most definitely "Gallican" and little disposed to worry about the problems of the regular clergy. Even more to the

<sup>78</sup> Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, II, 475. Cogan is unreliable here on the succession of Dominican pastors.

<sup>79</sup> The evidence is conflicting. Jas. Barnewall O.P. died in Feb. 1765. And yet it was stated in 1786-87 that Fitzgerald had obtained this papal bull more than thirty years before. The newspaper report of his death (1797) said he had been pastor of Mullingar for 47 years. J. Brady, *Catholics ... in the 18th-century Press*, Maynooth 1965, 304.

<sup>80</sup> See above, pp. 151, 418.



point, he was poor or thought himself poor, although holding the parish of Navan *in commendam*. One cannot blame him for wishing to have the parish of Mullingar, rather than any other, *in commendam* too.

Not wishing to challenge a papal bull, bishop Plunkett could only bide his time until Father Fitzgerald's death in 1797. It was not he but the Dominicans who took the first step towards the total loss of the convent. In December 1783, the provincial, Thomas Netterville, wrote to Laurence Fitzgerald: "expressing his regret and concern that the quest of the district of Mullingar was so long neglected and discontinued, and signifying that he was resolved to reestablish it"<sup>81</sup>. Fitzgerald, as prior, was told to write to the bishop "in order that the rights of the Order might be upheld and perpetuated". In March 1784, bishop Plunkett replied, asking for "proofs relative to the *right*" of Fr. Fitzgerald's claim, before he would proceed to "take the sense of the diocese" on the subject. Apart from the fact that "the sense of the diocese" should have had no bearing on the case, that reply included an ominous prayer for an increase in the number of "true religious":

men who give to God and to religion that precious time which others squander away in idle visits, in rambling from place to place, in doing nothing, or nothing to the purpose, in playing at cards, in propagating slander, in seeking « *quae sua sunt, non quae Jesu Christi* » — men, in a word, who are truly religious, because *truly humble*. You cannot forget that you acknowledged to me a great decline in the religious education of Louvain since your own time. Draw the consequences yourself.

The provincial later met Dr. Plunkett at Navan to discuss the situation, and on 28 August 1784 wrote to the bishop from Marley.

My Lord,

Pursuant to our agreement at Navan, I have the honour of enclosing to your Lordship the annexed proofs of our legal and uninterrupted establishment in Mullingar since ye early foundation of that convent, which I hope will appear convincing and satisfactory to your Lordship and to your clergy, and consequently meet your and their approbation, and finally make us partake of that singular justice and benevolence with which you so happily govern your diocese. I hope you will honour me with a favourable answer, and believe me to be, with the greatest respect and esteem, my Lord.

Your Lordship's most devoted humble servant,  
B. Thos Netterville.

<sup>81</sup> The early documents on the case are to be found only in Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, II, 461-67.

The text of these "annexed proofs", entitled the "Case of the Dominicans" is to be found with those already mentioned in Dean Cogan's history of the diocese. Some of the details it provided on the foundation and medieval history of the priory, with a list of the community as it stood in 1756, were taken bodily from Burke's *Hibernia Dominicana*. The statement that "this convent remained until the year 1691 or '92, when it was demolished", did not come from Burke, nor even from the visitation-register known as the *Liber Provinciae* which in fact lists two or three members of the community for 1696. The provincial, curiously, did not even give the names of the community from the "Netterville list" of 1767 which is his own best claim to remembrance<sup>82</sup>. Quite likely, he had no copy of it. And there is something abject about the short covering letter attached to his "proofs"; an unnecessary admission that the future existence of the priory depended on the approval of the diocesan clergy. He also seemed to feel that, even in law, the maintenance of the quest was a condition *sine qua non* for the right of a priory to exist.

After the demolition of said convent, the brethren were dispersed, and after some time built a house for themselves at Killenough, in the county of Westmeath, where they continued till the year 1733, when Dr Stephen Egan, then bishop of Meath, appointed one of them (Br Thomas Heyland) to serve in the parish of Mullingar. Mathew Casey, an inhabitant of said town, who remembered to have seen the brethren in their habits in their convent of Molingar, encouraged them to return to their former place, and at his own expense built a convent for them, where they still remain in the care of the parish. The paucity of the brethren, and their being constantly employed [as parish priest and curates] by succeeding bishops, have prevented them from continuing to quest their limits regularly; though from time to time they have quested several parishes of their district, particularly in the year 1747, the Rev. Thomas Geraughty, sent by the Rev. Michael Hoare, then provincial of this province. In the year 1766, the Rev. Dominic Quirke, and in the year 1777, the Rev. Vincent Coffey, have at these periods, and at other different times, preached and collected in the said limits, in the name and for the use of the convent of Molingar. The brethren of Trim convent and those of Longford even now quest a part of these districts in the name of said Molingar convent.

A few weeks later, Dr Plunkett submitted Netterville's letter and "Case" to four "commissioners", parish priests of Westmeath, whose

<sup>82</sup> See above, pp. 352-356.

respective districts would be the most closely affected by the proposed quest. They were "to take the sense" of the local clergy on the subject, study the two documents without prejudice or partiality, and remit their observations to the bishop. They promptly obeyed, signing a long series of comments of which we have the text but not the date. The commissioners found it a "novel and troublesome business ... an intricate and obscure affair". One might well question their impartiality, their strange logic, or their misuse of the few historical facts they had to hand. It is hard to sift even a little grain from so much tendentious chaff. They found Fr Netterville's "proofs for the legal and uninterrupted establishment of a Dominican convent in Mullingar" insufficiently conclusive, and rather insultingly refused "to take his unsupported assertions for granted truths". The Dominicans were blamed for accepting so many parishes in the diocese, to the detriment of the secular clergy. And since they worked so much in parishes, they could hardly have carried out the quest, because parochial duties would have prevented them from preaching, saying Mass and hearing confessions in the various parishes within their traditional "limits". Consequently, the friars had been unable to quest since 1733 and had therefore lost "by prescription" their right to do so. The commissioners wanted to know in which parishes Fathers Geraughty and Quirke had quested "and from whom they received permission". As to Vincent Coffey, who quested in 1777, it was certain that Dr Geoghegan, then coadjutor bishop, and Fr Nolan a leading member of the clergy, stopped him from questing in the district of Ballymore:

«and declared that, tho' old men at that time, they never knew the right which he claimed in the name of Mullingar convent to have been exercised by any subject thereof ... Add to this that the convent of Longford, these sixty years past, quested in the barony of Kilkenny West for their own support, which is another proof that Mullingar convent at least forfeited a part of their right».

For these four pastors, the heart of the matter was that the "convent" of Mullingar did not in fact exist. The question, therefore, was not primarily the right to quest, but the intention to establish a convent in Mullingar which would be a burden on the laity, impoverish the parish clergy, irritate Protestant landlords and greatly displease the government, "to the no small danger of religion in the diocese".

We consider a convent to be a society of persons living in common, observing the rules of their institute, subject to the immediate inspection and controul of a superior. Let the supposed convent of Mullingar be examined according to this description, even in the year 1756, or at any other period from 1733, and we apprehend it will not stand the test.

Since Dr Plunkett agreed with the commissioners and forbade the Dominicans to quest, Father Netterville appealed to Rome shortly before he ceased to be provincial in 1785. The archives of Propaganda contain, in consequence, many other papers on the dispute which were quite unknown to Dean Cogan. Perhaps it was better so, for he printed "the letter of the four commissioners" with evident distaste and held in high regard the innumerable Dominicans who served so many parishes in Meath during the lean years of the eighteenth century, for little personal reward and at a time when diocesan priests were too few to staff those parishes themselves. Among these Propaganda papers are two declarations in English, signed at Mullingar on 2 February 1785: one by the Protestant gentry of Westmeath, the other by Catholic gentlemen of the parish<sup>83</sup>. Thirty-two gentlemen, led by the sheriff and Protestant minister at Mullingar, simply testified to the good conduct of the "Roman Catholic clergy" of the town and asserted that no member of the Established Church would interfere with them. The second document, signed by twice as many Catholic gentlemen, comes so much closer to the point that it is worth printing in full. Among the signatories were Count Oliver D'Alton, Count James Nugent, Francis Casey (perhaps a descendant of Matthew, the "founder" of 1733) with quite a few Coffeys and Fagans.

We the undernamed Roman Catholic gentlemen of the parish of Mullingar and its neighbourhood declare, that it has been handed down to us from our ancestors, that a convent was formerly founded for the Dominican friars in said town, where and in its vicinity, they uninterruptedly resided to the present time, that they have led a religious exemplary life, useful to the public, and edifying to Catholics; that the Fathers of that Order have lived in said town and administered the parish these fifty years past and upwards, and therefore would be exceedingly sorry that Holy Order should be extinct in this country.

Bishop Plunkett was quite annoyed with Father Fitzgerald for procuring these documents behind his back. It was the act of a "schem-

<sup>83</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 16, ff. 60-61, 64-65.

ing politician" which brought the laity into what should have been a dignified and purely clerical dispute. Besides, it was already a commonplace to say that any priest, good or bad, could find hundreds to sign anything whatsoever in his favour. Nonetheless, the two documents showed that the local Protestants were well disposed, that the parishoners thought well of their Dominican pastors, and that Laurence Fitzgerald knew by February 1785 that his priory was facing extinction. Neither document says one word about the quest.

The provincial's appeal to Rome, made about March 1785, took the form of a long undated petition, accompanied by a *Sommario* containing copies of five relevant but not very enlightening documents<sup>81</sup>. Taking his stand on canon law, Netterville pointed out some illogicalities in bishop Plunkett's position. If Mullingar could not claim "legitimate foundation", neither could any Dominican priory in the country. Prohibition of the quest was merely the first step towards closing the convent. On the question of regular observance, one would have expected the provincial to defend Mullingar by showing that, if nothing else, the brethren lodged, ate and prayed together. On this crucial point, all he could offer was an argument *ad hominem*. Did the priests of Meath wear clerical dress? Had the bishop a seminary? Did his canons have benefices or recite the office in choir? Obviously not, and yet the bishop was still bishop, no matter what canon law required. According to law, a "house of refuge" established nearby after the suppression of a convent was not a "new" foundation; prescription could not be invoked against an established convent; and bishop Geoghegan, if he forbade Vincent Coffey to quest, had unwittingly incurred excommunication. There was another and more telling argument. Bishop MacEgan and Cheevers may have been regulars, but they were bishops of Meath for all that. The present bishop should not therefore overthrow the settlement at Mullingar approved by the first, and fully recognised as a convent by the second.

Propaganda wrote to Dr Plunkett on 7 May 1785 to know on what grounds he had forbidden the quest, and since the bishop delayed, wrote to him again in September. At that point the Dominicans got a knife in the back, not from Dr Plunkett but from their own friends

<sup>81</sup> Copies of the petition survive in APF, SOCG 877, ff. 396-405; SC Irlanda 10, ff. 486-96; SC Irlanda 16, ff. 40-49. There is a draft of it in SCAR, Codex V, doc. 93 bis. The *Sommario* is in APF, SOCG 877, ff. 411-14; SC Irlanda 10, ff. 493-96; SC Irlanda 16, ff. 51-59, 66; and in SCAR, Codex IV, doc. 11.



the Franciscans of Multyfarnham who signed a formal objection to the "establishment" of a Dominican convent in Mullingar. As it was, they "could scarcely subsist" on alms and the establishment of any other convent within their limits "would be highly prejudicial" to themselves<sup>85</sup>. At last, on 16 December 1785, Dr Plunkett wrote a very long letter in French to cardinal Antonelli, giving his own opinion on the case<sup>86</sup>. The Dominican agents at Rome thought it "most artful and insinuating", but at least it shed useful light on the whole question.

"I deny", wrote the bishop, "that I ever forbade them to quest. They did not even attempt to do so during my episcopate. When Father Fitzgerald, parish priest of Mullingar, who styles himself superior of a convent of Mullingar which exists only in name, wrote to tell me he had the right to quest and awaited only my agreement to do so, I told him the object of his request was new to me". The clergy, whom Plunkett consulted, unanimously opposed the idea and said that there had not been a *real* convent at Mullingar for a century. Vincent Coffey's "quest" met with such opposition from bishop Geoghegan that he had to abandon it. "This was the very religious who, from the start of my episcopate [1779], I was obliged to deprive of the faculties of this diocese because of his drunkenness and scandalous acts of violence". Was it credible, he asked, that this right to quest should have remained doubtful and never been established under two regular bishops who ruled the diocese for fifty years and aroused complaint by bestowing so many parishes on religious?

Dr Plunkett then denied that the friars of Mullingar found it hard to subsist. "This pretended convent is nothing but the Rev. Fr. Fitzgerald, parish priest of the town, and two religious [James Hope and Hyacinth Serry] who help him to run the parish". Meanwhile, several sons of the diocese were unemployed and lacked bread, although the decrees of Propaganda itself stipulated that parishes should be given to regulars only when diocesan priests were not available:

Or, la paroisse de Mullingar est un des meilleurs bénéfices du diocèse de Meath ... Aussi est il constant que le Rev. père Fitzgerald et les deux religieux ses vicaires sont mieux logés et vivent plus commodément que l'évêque de Meath et ses deux assistants. Le père Fitzgerald avec ses deux confrères tient une maison fort honnête; l'évêque et ses deux substituts se trouvent heureux de pouvoir subsister séparément en deux chambres louées.

<sup>85</sup> Text in Cogan, II, 467.

<sup>86</sup> APF, SOCG 877, ff. 406-09.

So, the Dominicans were at fault for being better lodged and better fed, after fifty years' work, than the bishop himself. Certainly it was a good argument against their need to quest, but the bishop pressed on to explain their inability to do so. Not that parochial duties prevented them from catechising and preaching elsewhere, even though theirs was "the most populous parish in the diocese". Not at all. They simply could not preach, not even at Mullingar itself. The bishop began with Laurence Fitzgerald:

C'est un homme de soixante ans, infirme et presque aveugle<sup>87</sup>, qui ne prêche que rarement et n'est guère capable de tous les efforts que demande sa place. Un des religieux qui sont ses coopérateurs n'a jamais prêché et ne peut pas prêcher. L'autre, après un silence de plusieurs années, n'a été que depuis peu déterminé par mes reproches à commencer à parler en public. '*Parvuli petierunt panem, et non erat qui frangeret eis*'. Pasteurs muets et peu zélés à l'égard de leurs propres ouailles, quel secours pourroient-ils fournir aux brebis des troupeaux éloignés?

The bishop was particularly annoyed because Father Fitzgerald, without a word to him, had shown himself a politician and "unnatural son" by soliciting the signatures of Protestants and Catholics alike: gentlemen who did not even suspect the meaning of what they signed. Their eyes had been opened since. Sir Benjamin Chapman, recently member of parliament for Westmeath, had written to tell bishop Plunkett that Fitzgerald's "project" had excited general distaste among the Protestants of the country. It was, in Chapman's view, an extraordinary enterprise, "the institution [of a priory] in direct opposition to the laws of the kingdom" which, as the bishop took care to add, would expose the Catholics of Ireland to untold danger.

In short, no three clergymen in the entire diocese led as comfortable a life as the Dominicans of Mullingar. Theirs was a fictitious convent without common life, religious exercises or conventual discipline. They had neither right nor need to quest. The bishop had helped the *real* convents of Meath. "But how hard it is now to find worthy sons of St Dominic!". In the meantime, since many secular priests had no work whatever, he had been forced to permit several to go to the diocese of Dublin, "condemned to exile". The Dominican agents in Rome laboured to offset this damning letter with the feeble help

<sup>87</sup> Because of failing sight, Fitzgerald obtained the commutation of Mass and divine office in 1782. APF, Udienze 20, ff. 127-28.

of history, law and logic. Their counter-arguments add nothing to our knowledge of the case, apart from the surprising comment that in 1785 the Dominicans "occupied" only two parishes in Meath: Mullingar and Trim [i.e. Killyon]<sup>88</sup>. One has only to look at Dr Plunkett's visitation-diary for 1786 to find at least six Dominican parish priests in the diocese<sup>89</sup>. The bishop could quite easily have removed and replaced five of them, but it was Mullingar and Mullingar alone that he wanted.

After another long delay, Propaganda Fide finally judged the case on 10 September 1787 and issued its decree five days later. The question of the Dominicans' right to quest was postponed indefinitely: "*dilata*". But they were not to quest at all so long as they had charge of the parish of Mullingar<sup>90</sup>. As Dean Cogan says: "this decision was virtually and practically against the Dominicans". On its promulgation, Charles O'Kelly pointed out to Propaganda that the parish was not annexed to the convent and that if they were to lose the privilege of questing, they would lose their convent too on the death of the parish priest. Which, he added, was the principal object Dr Plunkett had in mind when writing to the Congregation<sup>91</sup>. O'Kelly got no reply, but on the other hand Propaganda never took away their right to quest. When Laurence Fitzgerald died in 1797, Dr Plunkett obtained the parish of Mullingar *in commendam*, while retaining that of Navan<sup>92</sup>. The Roman agent who obtained this concession for the bishop, and got it with the greatest difficulty (since the Pope was just on the point of abandoning Rome to the French army) was none other than John Connolly O.P. Connolly's long, obsequious letter to Dr Plunkett did not even hint at the fact that as soon as this long-awaited document reached Navan, the Dominican priory of Mullingar, having survived for five hundred and fifty years, would exist no more<sup>93</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> APF, SOCG 877, ff. 403-04. The friars of Trim lived at Donore in the parish of Killyon.

<sup>89</sup> Cogan, II, 192-96.

<sup>90</sup> APF, Acta 157, ff. 472-91; SOCG 877, ff. 352-415. The Latin text of the decree is in Cogan, II, 468.

<sup>91</sup> APF, SOCG 877, ff. 410, 415.

<sup>92</sup> APF, Udienze 37, ff. 124-25.

<sup>93</sup> Rome, 10 Feb. 1798. Connolly to Plunkett. Full text in Cogan, II, 468-71.

Dr Plunkett did not suppress the convent. It automatically ceased to exist once he obtained the parish on which it depended, with the chapel and house the friars had used. He retained two Dominicans — James Hope and Joseph Ham — as curates, but the latter soon left for Wicklow. Father Hope remained at Mullingar until his death in 1819. The cathedral of the diocese of Meath was built there in 1836, which proves that Dr Patrick Plunkett had considerable foresight. Had the Dominicans the same gift at any date between 1733 and 1778, they would have vacated the parish of Mullingar (though not necessarily the town) and made some more durable arrangement either with bishop MacEgan or bishop Cheevers, both of whom would have been glad to help. Instead, they ignored the problem for forty-five years, held fast to their parish and lost their priory in consequence.

#### DUNDALK, DROGHEDA AND DUBLIN: 1777-1783

On his first return to Ireland from Rome in 1777, bishop Troy bore a commission to investigate the affairs of Armagh where the primate, Anthony Blake, was suspended and the archdiocese torn by bitter feuds. This troublesome business, which brought Troy to Drogheda in July 1777, was to occupy him until 1782<sup>94</sup>. Naturally enough, some details about the Dominicans of Dundalk and Drogheda — the two centres of greatest controversy — come to light in his correspondence. John O'Connor O.P. of Dublin, already author of *An Essay on the Rosary*, accompanied Troy to Drogheda as his secretary. A less respectable but more colourful son of St. Dominic appeared on the scene in the person of Stephen Carney, parish priest of Dysart (Dunleer) and a strong partizan of archbishop Blake. This Carney, at a public meeting in Dunleer, attacked the dean of Armagh as: "a traitor, a liar, a cut-throat, a treacherous rogue, a wicked bird and a villan"<sup>95</sup>. Whatever the effect of this outburst, "Friar Carney" died three years later, "suddenly, without any warning"<sup>96</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> P. Whelan, Anthony Blake, Archbishop of Armagh: 1758-1787, in *Seanchas Ardmhaca* (1970) 289-323.

<sup>95</sup> Statement signed by five priests on 3 Oct. 1777. DDA 29/6, no. 33.

<sup>96</sup> Dundalk, 9 Nov. 1780. John Markey to Troy. "Friar Carney is dead fifteen days agoe". DDA 29/7, no. 61. The same priest wrote to Troy, again from Dundalk, on 5 Feb. 1782. 'There is a child sworn upon [Thomas ?] Martin the Dominican fryar; he is certainly a great drunkard and a bad priest and ought to be hindered from treading upon Armagh soil'. DDA 29/7, no. 179.

At Dundalk, to which community Stephen Carney belonged, there was a long-standing argument as to who the legitimate parish priest might be. Dr. Blake reappointed Dominic Bellew to that position about June 1779, but Bellew left for Rome soon after, eventually to return as bishop of Killala. We have already met him as the Roman agent who calumniated the regular clergy in a letter to archbishop Butler of Cashel <sup>97</sup>. In Bellew's absence, the Dominican prior seems to have been given temporary administration of the parish, much to the annoyance of the previous administrator, John Markey <sup>98</sup>.

Dr Blake takes every opportunity of wounding me ... Mr Bayle, his vicar, encourages the Dominicans of this town to erect themselves into administrators of this parish, and haply there is a Mr [Dominic] Thomas of that Order ... who performs pastoral functions and openly receives the parochial emoluments due to me alone. I would have long since complained of him to his provincial Mr Bray, were I not in daily expectation to see an end to the contest. I write by this post to Waterford ... to induce Mr Bray to do me justice.

A month later, with the approach of Easter 1780, Markey complained to bishop Troy again. "Mr Thomas the Dominican friar is again dividing the empire with me and gives the paschal communion without my leave or knowledge. I think it vain to apply for justice against him" <sup>99</sup>. Since Markey himself was a trouble-maker of the first water, it is more than likely that Fr Thomas (also called Mac-Thomas) was simply acting on the archbishop's instructions.

There are more frequent references to the Dominicans of Drogheda. No less than six, as well as Stephen Carney of Dysart, appear on a clergy-list of 29 July 1777, the day after Troy's first arrival in the town<sup>1</sup>. Two of them — Vincent Talbot and Patrick Jennett — were curates in the parish: a detail which appears from no other source. The other four were Thomas McDonagh, then prior, James Connelly

<sup>97</sup> B. Hoban, Dominic Bellew, Parish Priest of Dundalk and Bishop of Killala, in *Seanchas Ardmhaca* (1972) 333-71.

<sup>98</sup> 17 Jan. 1780. Markey to Troy. DDA 29/7, no. 1.

<sup>99</sup> Dundalk, 13 Apr. 1780. DDA 29/7, no. 15.

<sup>1</sup> DDA 29/6, no. 15. Another document of 12 Mar. 1779 was signed by three Dominicans of Dundalk — Dom. Thomas, prior, Wm. Crawley, subprior, and Pat. MacGourke, ex-prior — and four of Drogheda: Pat. Jennett, prior, Laur. McConnin, subprior, Th. McDonagh, ex-prior, and Jas. Connelly, bursar. APF, SOCG 856, f. 315.



(wrongly named "Donnelly" in the list), Daniel Kelly P.G. and George [Hyacinth] Berrill S.T.M. Both McDonagh and Jennett, who succeeded McDonagh as prior in 1778, wrote often to bishop Troy, but their letters describe parochial problems rather than community affairs. All went well up to Christmas 1777: "we are here, just as you left us, in peace and harmony: no changes of any kind made by His Grace [archbishop Blake] as yet", wrote McDonagh to Troy. "I told ye ladies [nuns] of Dyers St you were mindful of them in your prayers and they promised to make you a proper return in ye same coyne"<sup>2</sup>. This peaceful lull ended at the beginning of March 1778 when primate Blake arrived to collect his Easter dues. He enlivened the occasion by suspending George Dowd, administrator of Drogheda, while offering to settle him in a distant country parish. On the 6th of March, he called a meeting of all the regular clergy to ask whether he was legally entitled to remove Dowd, but they unanimously declared he had no such right at all and that his suspension of Dowd was invalid. There is a document to that effect signed only by Dominicans: John F. Netterville, Thomas McDonagh, James Connolly, Vincent Talbot and the subprior of St Magdalen's, Patrick Jennett<sup>3</sup>. George Dowd was no less convinced that his suspension was invalid, and so stood his ground, with the result that both primate and administrator were collecting dues and distributing Easter communion in the parish chapel of St Peter. Father McDonagh described one particular incident<sup>4</sup>.

It went so high last Sunday that a common piper in ye presence of ye entire flock got on to the steps of the alter to harangue and preach peace to ye congregation and reconciliation to ye contending parties ... Both [Blake and Dowd] were by; one durst not stop his career, t'other would not.

The fact that the Dominicans took Dowd's part may explain why Patrick Jennett, a curate in the parish, fell foul of Dr Blake who, without assigning any particular reason, greatly limited Jennett's faculties within the diocese<sup>5</sup>.

He has ordered me to say Mass nowhere in his diocese, our convent and the parish chapple excepted, and forbid me to hear confessions except in the parish chapple alone, but on my representing that I was confessor

<sup>2</sup> DDA 29/6, no. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Drogheda, 7 Mar. 1778. DDA 29/6, no. 98a.

<sup>4</sup> Drogheda, 30 Mar. 1778. McDonagh to Troy. DDA 29/6, no. 65.

<sup>5</sup> Westgate, Drogheda, 20 Apr. 1778. Jennett to Troy. DDA 29/6, no. 81.

to our nunnery, tho' he seemed much incensed at my reply, yet he excepted the nunnery. Now, as I am not conscious of the slightest offence I ever gave Dr Blake, I was more surprised at this conduct, and dreading that his Grace would shortly proceed to censures against me, intended to resign the curacy of this parish as the only best means to avoid all future troubles ... But my prior, Mr McDonagh, requested I would not resign, as it would verge to the prejudice of this community, which enjoys half the emoluments I acquire by the curacy ... There is nothing to be seen now daily but disputes and altercations, the people divided, uncertain how to comply with their Easter duty, some of them forcibly dragged from Communion. In a word, I believe so much confusion, disorder and disedification were never known to exist in Drogheda before ... We had another dreadful dispute yesterday about the Easter offerings, Dr Blake and Mr Dowd collecting each for himself.

After three years' acquaintance with the diocese of Armagh, bishop Troy was to remark: "Extraordinary occurrences are so common there that they cannot be called singularities"<sup>6</sup>. He advised Jennett to submit to Blake, "as any opposition may be attended with an increase of scandal ... Continue to act as curate. You'll have the merit of patience and obedience to your superior". Troy dated his reply on the: "anniversary of my profession in our holy Order"<sup>7</sup>. Jennett did in fact recover his full faculties in the diocese twelve days after losing them. His many later letters to Troy refer only to the "Armagh dispute" and give the impression that he felt obliged to inform Troy of local developments.

James Connolly, who first appears as bursar at Drogheda in 1777, became subprior there in 1781. A year later, the community elected him prior, but since he was elected *ex corpore* by only four vocals, Father Netterville declared the election null *ex radice*. When Connolly refused to call a second election, he was deposed from office as subprior, and at this stage the master general supported the provincial's decision. Connolly then appealed to cardinal Salviati, protector of Ireland, whom he asked to submit the matter to Propaganda Fide. A whole year passed before peace returned to St Magdalen's, and even then only with some help from the new coadjutor bishop of Armagh, Richard O'Reilly. Father Netterville's original decision was upheld, and on 13 October

<sup>6</sup> Kilkenny, 12 Nov. 1780. Troy to Markey. DDA 29/7, no. 63.

<sup>7</sup> Kilkenny, 25 Apr. 1778. DDA 29/6, no. 85.

1783 he appointed Laurence McConnin as prior. Connolly remained on as bursar, and indeed stayed at Drogheda until his death in 1826<sup>8</sup>.

After this peculiar episode, the provincial wrote the following letter to the master general. It is particularly interesting because of his comment on the sad state of the nuns of Dublin and his suggestion that some sisters be brought from Galway to help them<sup>9</sup>.

Litteras paternitatis vestrae Reverendissimae, die octava Junii datas nuper accepi, unaque cum decreto quo electionem R.P.F. Jacobi Conolly in priorem Pontanensem nullam esse declaratur, et quaecumque ego, ante litem et in lite fecissem, recta et ex lege esse probatur. Decretum coram cunctis familiae patribus legendum curavi, et tribus post diebus dictus P.F. Jacobus Conolly ab eodem ad Sanctam Sedem appellavit. Interim tamen Ill.mo Coadjutore Armachano interveniente, pacem, appellatione revocata, conventui reddidit.

Gratias ago maximas paternitati vre. reverendissimae quod promoveris ad magisterii gradum R.P.F. Lucam Concannen et RR. PP. Lectores Antoninum Fleming et Patritium Donnellan ad Praesentaturam.

Gratissimumque animum in paternitatem vrm. reverendissimam habeo, semperque sum habiturus pro litteris patentibus vicarii generalis monasterii Pontanensis mihi quamvis indigno iterato collatis. Nunc quam humillime rogo, ut omnibus, qui postulati fuerunt in capitulo ultimo provinciali huius provinciae, gradus conferre et mittere dignetur.

Cum fere extinctum est monasterium nostrarum monialium Dublinii, sororibus nunc ad quinque numerum redactis, quarum vix una sit, quae aliqua corporis infirmitate non laborat, enixe peto, ut, ne omnino pereat haec sancta domus, tres quattuorve moniales simul cum dotibus a monasterio nostro Galviensi isthuc transferendi mihi potestatem concedat. Interim maneo, reverendissime pater,

Paternitatis Vrae. Rev.mae humillimus et obedientissimus filius,

Dublinii die 1 Oct. 1783.

Fr Thomas L. Netterville

#### THOMAS L. NETTERVILLE'S LAST YEARS: 1785-1799

On ceasing to be provincial in 1785, Father Netterville continued to be vicar-general of the nuns in Drogheda. His signature appears on their account-books in 1786, 1789 and 1793. His practical concern for the nuns appears much more clearly from a set of accounts, kept by Fr James Connolly, entitled "Building of our Present Convent".

<sup>8</sup> TA, Drogheda a/c book (1771-86). APF, SC Irlanda 15, ff. 177, 182, 263-66, 294-95, 327-29.

<sup>9</sup> Original in AGOP XIII. 68095.

The building of this new convent began on 4 June 1792 and the nuns left Dyer Street to live in it on 12 August 1796. Apart from giving the nuns an acre and a half outside St Laurence's Gate, which may perhaps have included the site of the new house, Father Netterville contributed no less than £550 to the building fund. There were very few other contributors and only one, a Mrs Fagan, who gave more than Thomas Netterville did. This Mrs Fagan was the prioress who wrote the following letter to the master general<sup>10</sup>.

Drogheda, 9th March 1795.

Most Rev. Paternity,

I had the honour to write to you in the name and signed by this community of St Catherine of Sienna, Drogheda, last November, intreating you[r] usual condescendence to continue to us our vicar the Rev. Fr. Master Thomas Netterville whose three years in said office terminated last November, and fearing from these troublesome times that you did not receive our petition, having had no answer, I again intreat you united with the community to grant us this favour as we have had experience of his religious and peacefull conduct for many years. We hope for your Rd. Paternities speedy answer and we shall always pray the Almighty for your long life, health and preservation to His honour and glory and the benefit of our holy Order.

I have the honour to subscribe myself your most dutiful obedient subject.

Anastace Fagan.

The deeds and indentures belonging to Fr Netterville — documents still kept in a "deposit-chest" by his religious daughters at Sienna — throw some light, if not as much as one would wish, on his family and property. Among them is an indenture of 1757 by which William Netterville of Donecarney, Co. Dublin, made provision for his children: Mary, Thomas, Francis and William. Thomas and Francis, our Dominicans, were each to have the interest on £150 during their natural lives. After this date, William may have had another child, for Catherine Netterville of Dublin city, a spinster, left all she had in 1791 to "her dearly beloved brother Thomas Netterville". The Dominican Nettervilles are said in other sources to have had an elder brother Robert who, like Catherine, is not mentioned in this indenture at all.

<sup>10</sup> Original in AGOP XIII. 68095. The account-books mentioned are still at Sienna convent, Drogheda. Her request was granted. Rome, 16 Jan. 1796. Concanen to Troy. "I wrote to the prioress of Drogheda the 7th Nov. [1795] with an attestation of Mr Netterville's appointment to the office of vicar and confessor of that nunnery". DDA 116/6, no. 116.

Both, of course, may have been provided for in other ways. Likewise, the exact relationship of the family to Viscount Netterville remains obscure. When the latter decided to sell his lands in 1795, the following notice appeared in the *Dublin Evening Post*<sup>11</sup>.

Sale of lands of Viscount Netterville. Proposals to be made to him at Dowth or to the Rev. Dr Netterville, no. 71 Dorset Street, Dublin.

Since Fr Netterville retained his estate at Marley, Cruiserath, until his death, this Dublin address, in the same street as the present priory of St Saviour's, was probably one of convenience: a house in which he lodged in old age during the winter months while serving the chapel in Denmark St nearby. A spy's report of 15 October 1796 lists him with ten other Dominicans belonging to the "friary", putting him down as a man "of moderate principles". Half the community were "democrats" or, as we would say "republicans", favourable to the United Irishmen and their French revolutionary supporters<sup>12</sup>. Clearly, Father Netterville was not.

The old priest, a member of the Order for sixty years and more, made his will at Drogheda on 2 July 1798 in the presence of three Dominican witnesses: John O'Connor, Thomas McDonagh and Patrick Kieran<sup>13</sup>. He left substantial sums to three grand-nieces — Elizabeth, Margaret and Celia Netterville — and his "little estate of Marley" to his grand-nephew Robert Netterville.

I, Thomas Netterville of Marley, county Meath, do make my last will and testament. I bequeath my body to the earth to be interred in Dowth in my family burying place ... I order all my furniture and cattle at Marley to be sold and what they will produce to be distributed and given to the poor of the parish of Donover and that of Dowth ... I bequeath to the R.R. Thomas McDonagh and James Connolly [O.P.] one hundred pounds to be distributed as I shall direct ... I also bequeath to the R.R. Francis Lynch and James Murreahall [O.P.] one hundred pounds to be disposed of as I shall direct.

The nuns of Drogheda faithfully noted the date of his death, 26 July 1799, on the flyleaf of an old almanack still in their library<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> J. Brady, *Catholics ... in the 18th-century Press*, Maynooth 1965, 297.

<sup>12</sup> M.V. Ronan, *Priests in the Independence Movement*, in *Irish Eccles. Record* (Aug. 1946) 96.

<sup>13</sup> Drogheda, Sienna convent, deposit-box. This will mentions the acre and a half outside St Laurence's Gate bequeathed to the nuns. The will was proved and registered in the Court of Prerogative on 21 Sept. 1799.

<sup>14</sup> *The Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack*, Dublin 1807.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

# The Closing of Colleges Abroad 1785 - 1797

Towards the end of the century, archbishop John Thomas Troy O.P. of Dublin, though not directly concerned in matters Dominican, overshadowed the successive provincials of the time. As the province slowly declined in numbers and effectiveness, the Catholics achieved in 1793 almost every civil right save that of sitting in parliament. The diocesan clergy obtained a national seminary at government expense, thanks largely to archbishop Troy, in 1795. The Dominicans, having lost their finest college at Louvain in 1794 and the use of another at Rome in 1798, could then rely for the training of recruits only on Corpo Santo, Lisbon, until that too was closed during the Peninsular War.

These years mark also some new departures, for in 1785 Irish Dominicans began to work both in Newfoundland and the United States. New legislation in Ireland permitted the clergy to purchase property and to open schools. Only two minor problems arose between secular and regular: a dispute at Galway over funeral dues and some resistance to the bishop of Cork who expected friars to preach at his cathedral. The year 1797 offers a suitable point at which to end this story, for it witnessed the holding of an illegal provincial chapter and the illegal election of a provincial: events which left the province not merely weak but bitterly divided on the threshold of the nineteenth century.

### THOMAS DALTON, 1785-1789

The election of Thomas Dalton as provincial came as a surprise to Luke Concanen, prior and bursar of San Clemente. Almost a year before, he wrote to a friend, James Egan of Lisbon: "I am to write next week to our future provincial, who I doubt not will be the worthy F. [John] O'Connor, if the intriguing Flemmings don't embroil affairs, and shall pray and caution him to present your reverence for the vacant *praesentatura* of Leinster"<sup>1</sup>. The "intriguing Flemmings", also called

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<sup>1</sup> Rome, 25 Aug. 1784. Concanen to James Egan, lector at Corpo Santo. TA, Letters, under date. This "James", almost certainly, is identical with Michael Vincent Egan.

"Louvainists", were those who had studied at Holy Cross, Louvain, in Flanders, homeland of the Flemings. And they did in fact "embroil affairs" at the chapter in June 1785, by electing one of their own, Thomas Dalton, as provincial. John O'Connor, friend and secretary of bishop Troy, had to wait his turn until 1801.

Like the Nettervilles, Dalton was of Norman descent and noble birth, though the family lost their Westmeath estates in the 1690s. He was related to the Daltons of Milltown, once barons of Rathconrath, about ten miles west of Mullingar where a "Mount Dalton House" is marked even on modern maps. Thomas Dalton, born about 1725, had two brothers who became prominent soldiers in Austria and a brother-in-law, General Plunkett, also in the Austrian service, who became governor of Antwerp. He took the habit about 1740 and by May 1745 was already "a good second-year student of theology" at Holy Cross, Louvain<sup>2</sup>. After 1747, having received all sacred orders from tonsure to priesthood within one year at Malines, he stayed on as bursar of the college until his return to Ireland in 1752<sup>3</sup>. Like a good religious, he then went at once to his "native convent" of Mullingar and remained there until 1758 when he moved to Dublin as chaplain to the nuns of Channel Row<sup>4</sup>. When Hyacinth Kennedy of St Croix sought reinforcements for that West Indian mission in 1760, Father Dalton was one of those he would have liked to recruit: "Dalton attends Channel Row and likely if I wrote to him. Though he is fit for this place, he would not come" <sup>5</sup>. This early judgement was correct. Though a good priest, Dalton lacked the spirit of adventure.

Thomas Dalton continued to be chaplain and confessor to the nuns for at least twenty years, so it comes as a surprise to find that he was prior of Mullingar in 1767 and twice prior of Mullingar before 1778<sup>6</sup>. He became preacher general for Longford in 1766 and definitor for Leinster at the chapter of 1769<sup>7</sup>. Whether his priorship of Mullingar

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> A. M. Boghaerts, *De Dominkanen in de Wijdingsregisters van het Aartsbisdom Mechelen*, Brussels 1965, 244-46. Dalton was dispensed for priesthood because 13 months under age. For his appointment as bursar, etc., see AGOP IV, 217, pp 109, 124. See above, p. 262 and below, p. 613.

<sup>4</sup> Hib. Dom. 219. Dalton's name is also on the list of subscribers to this book.

<sup>5</sup> H. F e n n i n g, *The Mission to St Croix*, in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 90.

<sup>6</sup> Dublin, 12 Jan. 1778. Th. Netterville and other Dominicans recommend him for a bishopric. APF, SOCG 848, f. 206.

<sup>7</sup> AGOP IV, 231, p. 42. See above, p. 369.

was nominal, or his long residence in Dublin interrupted, one cannot say. The nuns of Dublin gave him an annual salary of six pounds, but that payment is noted in their account-books only for 1758-1759 and 1761-1763. By 1776 he was their vicar provincial. One finds his name on the list of those who took the oath of allegiance in December 1782. At that time he was living in King's Street, Oxmantown, Dublin, at the age of fifty-seven<sup>8</sup>. So he was just about sixty on becoming provincial in 1785.

#### THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1785

The acts of the chapter which elected Thomas Dalton by twenty-eight votes to twelve are as colourless as the man himself, even though the definitors as a group were more representative than usual. They were Denis Magrath for Munster, Dominic McDonnell, prior of Burrishoole, for Connacht, Patrick McGuirk for Ulster and Michael White for Leinster. White lived in Dublin, McGuirke (alias McGourke) in or near Dundalk, and Magrath at Limerick. While two came from the frontier areas of Burrishoole on the Atlantic and Carlingford in the north, Magrath knew the problems of rural Munster where convents such as Kilmallock, Lorrha, Cashel and Youghal were facing extinction, if not already lost. On the other hand, White and McGuirke were products of Louvain. So too was the elected provincial. Consequently, three of the five legislators were "Louvainists" and might carry any vote they wished.

The ordinations and commissions of 1785 simply transcribed those of 1781, word for slavish word. Michael Brennan replaced John Daly as historian of the province: a detail of little interest, since there is no reason to believe he ever put pen to paper. One can see that the problems of Louvain continued to cause anxiety, for it was decided that Rome, rather than Louvain, should house "the common archive of the province". This intended removal of the archives from Flanders to Italy can hardly have been put into effect, for while San Clemente in Rome still preserves its own records from the 17th century, there is nothing of obviously Louvain provenance among them. The same concern about the future of Holy Cross appears in the renewal of the request, already made in 1781, that the college at Lisbon be declared a formal convent and novitiate (petition 1). The chapter made only

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<sup>8</sup> Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 54.

sixteen postulations, but the provincial and three definitors signed two separate letters in favour of McGuirk and Magrath. Since both were definitors, the chapter itself could not lawfully postulate them. So, McGuirk signed one document in favour of Magrath, and then Magrath another in favour of McGuirk. Surprisingly, both were soon promoted. There was also a petition asking the master general to promote Thomas Connelly of Madrid, for several years procurator of the Irish province in Spain. This Connelly was chaplain of the Ulster Regiment in Spain and later compiled two fine books, a Spanish-English dictionary and grammar. The list of the dead appended to the acts named twenty who had died in Ireland since 1781 and two who died abroad.

The choice of those to be postulated must have rested with the entire chapter rather than with the definitory for Michael White, although a "Louvainist" and definitor, was outvoted in this matter by the "intriguing Flemmings", the very party to which he belonged. So much appears from a second letter Luke Concanen wrote from Rome to his friend "Lector Egan" at Lisbon<sup>9</sup>.

I must trouble you again, not to acquaint you with the manoeuvres of our late provincial congress, which I'm sure you're informed of, but to remedy if possible the wrong they have offered your merit. I wrote to my friends [John] O'Connor and [Michael] White of Dublin, as I had promised, and punctually received their answer, wherein they assure me their voice was in your favour. But as the Louvain faction was in the ascendant, they, the Louvainists, to their shame, presented George Flemming for the vacant *praesentatura* and [Peter] Daly here *pro primo loco vacaturo*. When O'Connor and White spoke for you, they were answered that Daly stood better with the General. This, I venture to say, is false. Now, as Mr [George] Flemming, (whose name has been already blotted out of the lists by the General), will not, surely, be promoted, the matter stands between you and Daly. I therefore would advise you to write immediately to Quiñones in Spanish or Portuguese, in a becoming manner, "complaining to his R.mo of the Louvain Conjuración (a complaint he'll easily listen to), whereby they have postponed you to Flemming, already known to his R.mo (without saying more of him) and to Daly, because a Louvainist, tho' younger than you in the order; that as you can expect no justice from the leading men of the province, and have no protection or protector, you recur to his paternal bounty and justice"...

Let nothing of what I said above transpire to any person; there's no depending on friar's secrecy. Cousin Charley [O'Kelly], let me tell you, would

<sup>9</sup> Rome, 3 Aug. 1785. TA, Letters, under date. The chapter acts survive only in Tallaght. The result of the scrutiny is in AGOP IV. 240, p. 16.

rather favour Daly than you. He's become a devilish Louvanist. As he disgusted his good friends in Lisbon some time ago, so does he his true ones here in blindly being led by them gentlemen. I have a dog's life from them and swear to escape as soon as possible. I detest embroils, and tho' certain of the victory, would rather shun the contest.

Concanen appears in this letter as a Machiavelli in embryo, but in this case at least he was not successful. True, the master general did not promote George Flemming, but Peter O'Daly got his *praesentatura* in 1786, while Egan of Lisbon got nothing at all. Thomas Connelly too was promoted to the *praesentatura* in 1787, but the master general refused the chapter's most serious request: Lisbon was not made a formal convent or novitiate.

#### DALTON: CANDIDATE FOR SEVEN DIOCESES

Many Irish friars suffered gravely from what a contemporary called episcopal itch: "*pruritus episcopandi*". For many good reasons, even the regular clergy as a whole wished to see some of their own on the episcopal bench, whether to guarantee protection, to maintain a desirable balance between regular and secular, or even to attract recruits of "noble" blood who would not enter religious orders as simple friars without the prospect of leaving them later on as bishops. Some of the more ambitious persuaded Protestant friends to sign their "postulations", to the great annoyance of archbishop Carpenter of Dublin<sup>10</sup>.

Variis undequaque petor insidiis, ut nomen meum subscribam postulatio-nibus quas fratres religiosi, emendicare summopere student, dignitatibus inhiantes, auxilium etiam haereticorum evocantes...

Thomas Dalton was not quite at home in this category, since the long-sustained pressure for his promotion to a diocese, any diocese, came not from him but from his brothers at the Austrian court. The story is a good example of 18th-century patronage, tells us a great deal about Dalton himself and his family, and gets off to a good start with an amusing case of mistaken identity. His brothers' ultimately unsuccessful campaign opened in December 1771 when the nuncio at Vienna wrote to Propaganda in Dalton's favour. His two brothers, the one a major-general, the other a lieutenant-colonel, guaranteed to support him — an important consideration — were he to be made a bishop. Count

<sup>10</sup> Dublin, 16 Jan. 1779. Carpenter to Castelli. APF, SC Irlanda 14, ff. 3, 10.



Mahon, the Spanish ambassador at Vienna, lent his name and status to the good cause. The case was put to the Pope himself, who turned for information to the master general, and Dalton might very well have been made a bishop, out of deference to Austria, but for an ironical error<sup>11</sup>.

Pressed by the reluctant officials of Propaganda Fide, the nuncio at Brussels cast about in summer 1772 for some fresh information about this noble Dominican named Dalton. Whoever he asked, probably someone at Holy Cross, Louvain, knew very little about Thomas Dalton to start with, and spoiled his chances forever by confusing Thomas with his confrère Patrick Dalton, then at work in the West Indies. The nuncio, on 23 June 1772, sent to Rome the fatal results of his enquiry<sup>12</sup>.

Il padre Dalton è poco conosciuto ed esercita le funzioni di missionario nelle remote isole dell'America ... Per altro io so che non ha molto dacché vi sono state delle vive discordie e differenze tra esso ed il P. Fallon francescano e furono altresì scritte dall'una e dall'altra parte delle lettere molto offensive della modestia e carità religiosa. Per il che non osarei di proporre un tal soggetto come idoneo in tali dette circostanze per l'episcopato.

All later applications in Dalton's favour were led by cardinal Alessandro Albani, who certainly spared no effort to please the Austrian court. In 1775, the cardinal proposed Dalton for the see of Ardfert, but when the time came to discuss the qualities of various candidates, the nuncio's unfortunate letter was quoted *in extenso*, almost with relish, by the officials of Propaganda<sup>13</sup>. This was more than a little unfair, for the Congregation already had to hand a later letter from Brussels expressly stating that Dalton was a confessor to nuns in Dublin<sup>14</sup>.

Inoltre il religioso Tommaso D'Alton, confessore d'un convento di dame religiose in Dublino, della famiglia di D'Alton de Milton [Milltown], non avendo io potuto rifiutare ai signori li Generali Plunkett governatore d'Anversa, e Conte Dalton, ciambelano, e proprietario d'un regimento al servizio di S.M. l'Imperatrice Regina, cognato e fratello rispettivamente del sodetto religioso, di farne menzione all'Eminenza V.a affine che degnisi di far avere poi a suo tempo la preferenza à chi fra i molti aspiranti sarà riputato degno d'esservi promosso.

<sup>11</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 612, 615, 618-20; Lettere 220 (1772), ff. 35-36. AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>12</sup> APF, SOCG 841, ff. 329, 331.

<sup>13</sup> Loc. cit. ff. 353, 356, 370-71.

<sup>14</sup> Brussels, 21 Dec. 1774. Nuncio to Castelli. APF, SOCG 841, ff. 349, 352.

The empress herself, Maria Teresa, and even Kaunitz her famous chancellor, applied to Rome in Dalton's favour, but Propaganda carefully preserved that unfortunate "West Indian" letter of 1772 to sink the strongest recommendations. In 1776, Dalton was proposed for Achonry — Edmund Fitzgerald OP was also a candidate — but once again in vain<sup>15</sup>. On that occasion his brother was referred to as General Dalton, "*consigliere di stato intimo attuale*". It is interesting to note that Charles O'Kelly, the Dominican agent in Rome, made no move to support either Dominican candidate, even though Fitzgerald at least had recommendations from many in Ireland. Killala, another western diocese, fell vacant in 1776, but Dalton was passed over for that too<sup>16</sup>. Just two weeks before his death, Thomas Burke of Ossory also recommended Dalton for a mitre, but without specifying any particular diocese. "He is a preacher-general, ex-definitor, vicar provincial of the nuns in Dublin, and for the past twenty-four years a missionary in Ireland". Burke declared that Dalton was a powerful preacher and belonged to the noble family of the barons of Rathconrath<sup>17</sup>. After Burke's death, cardinal Albani made a half-hearted attempt to install Dalton as his successor in Ossory, but Propaganda did not so much as list him among the three candidates for that see<sup>18</sup>.

Undiscouraged and maybe undeceived by the promises and sweet excuses of Propaganda Fidei, cardinal Albani kept up the good fight on behalf of Austria, but the fatal ghost of Patrick Dalton was still alive and well in the cupboards of the Congregation, despite all the correct and more recent information which should have laid it to rest. And yet, what really put an end to Dalton's chances was a letter of 25 April 1777 from archbishop Carpenter of Dublin. Propaganda, having asked Carpenter for his considered opinion of Thomas Dalton, got exactly what it wanted: a detailed and unflattering description. The letter offers, perhaps, a better pen-picture of Father Dalton than we have for any other provincial of the century<sup>19</sup>.

His tribus et viginti jam elapsis annis mihi optime notus est Rev. P. Dalton, nam toto hoc ferme tempore munere capellani et confessorii apud conventum

<sup>15</sup> APF, SOCG 844, ff. 267-68, 276, 280.

<sup>16</sup> 8 and 18 June 1776. Secretary to cardinal Albani. APF, Lettere 229, ff. 80, 82.

<sup>17</sup> 13 Sept. 1776. APF, SOCG 848, f. 205. Eugene Geoghegan, coadjutor bishop of Meath, and Philip Philipps, bishop of Achonry, also signed the document.

<sup>18</sup> APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 558, 594.

<sup>19</sup> APF, SOCG 850, ff. 343, 364.

sui ordinis monialium in hac civitate functus est. Piget vero dicere zelum eius ad salvandas animas, ac in vinea Domini laborandum, e clausura istius conventus nunquam eripuisse: et licet ex familia sit eximii ordinis praedicatorum, nec Dei verbum populo unquam annunciavit, nec ullam quidem conciunculam ad moniales, quarum ei cura incumbit, habuit. De doctrina eius, seu eruditione, nemo est qui gloriatur. Hoc autem certum est, eum studiis incumbendo, aut libros evolvendo, parum aut nullum tempus contere: eundemque non magnae aestimationis apud suos esse constat, quod nullam dignitatem in Ordine sit adeptus. Fandi eius praeterea facultas minime expedita est, nec aures demulcet. Silentio denique praetereundum non esse ducō, quod cum nuper Ill. mus Ossoriensis [Thomas Burke OP] animam Deo reddidit, a quodam nobili orthodoxo huius regni enixe fuerim rogatus ut Em. tiae V. rae Patrem Dalton commendarem tanquam virum omnino dignum qui vacantem sedem adimpleret: ob rationes vero allatas, idem de eo iudicium ferre non potui, ideoque amici votis obsecundare mihi nefas erat. Hoc est quod occurrit de R. do isto Domino, quodque apud Em. V. m secretum, ut ipsa promittere dignata est, non dubito permansurum...

So, Father Dalton never wrote a book, never preached, never gave so much as a short homily to the nuns of Dublin in the space of twenty years. If we are to credit the archbishop, Dalton had spent most of his time in Dublin from 1754. The letter also confirms one's suspicion that Dalton's two terms as prior of Mullingar were practically nominal. One is left with the impression of a shy, retiring man unable to face a congregation, much less to manage a religious community. Carpenter's letter was used in March 1778 to exclude Dalton from the see of Limerick<sup>20</sup>, and again in the following December to prevent him becoming bishop of his native diocese of Meath.

Dalton's candidacy for Meath in 1778 is more interesting than the five attempts which preceded it<sup>21</sup>. For the first time, he had wide support from the clergy and laity of the diocese. Two other Dominicans of Meath — Michael Fleming and Thomas Netterville — were also can-

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<sup>20</sup> APF, Acta 148, ff. 61-62; SOCG 848, ff. 186-235. Among these papers is the first recommendation (Dublin, 12 Jan. 1778) from his own brethren in Dalton's favour; signed by Th. Netterville, prior of Dublin, J. F. Netterville, John Fottrell and Laur. Fitzgerald, prior of Mullingar. APF, SOCG 848, f. 206.

<sup>21</sup> APF, Acta 148, f. 369; SOCG 850, ff. 308-61. Some Propaganda documents on this vacancy have been published by J. Brady, Documents concerning the Diocese of Meath, in Arch. Hib. 8 (1941) 202-211. They concern Th. Netterville and Ml. Fleming, but not Dalton.

didates. Forty-three priests of Meath signed a postulation in Dalton's favour, wishing to keep out "ravening wolves", a term Burke of Ossory loved to apply to Gallicans of all colours. Many, certainly six, of the signatories were Dominicans, but they took care not to mention the Order to which they belonged<sup>22</sup>. The archdeacon of Meath, with two vicars forane, assured cardinal Albani that "they knew no one better suited for the bishopric than Thomas Dalton"<sup>23</sup>. Among the thirty-six "gentlemen" of Meath who lent Dalton their support, one finds two outstanding men who had nothing to do with Meath at all: Charles O'Connor and John Curry M.D., the lay leaders of the Catholic cause<sup>24</sup>. Incredibly, Propaganda exhumed again that old letter of 1772 wrongly describing Thomas Dalton as an insignificant but quarrelsome missionary in the West Indies. Once again, for the sixth time, Thomas Dalton was disappointed. A "Gallican", Patrick Plunkett, became bishop of Meath with the powerful support of the archbishop of Paris, the nuncio at Paris and the French ambassador at Rome, cardinal de Bernis.

Perhaps it was just as well that Dalton never became a bishop. He would not, on the evidence, have proved at all as good a one as Patrick Plunkett. In a second ironical twist, it was a fellow-Dominican who put the last nail into Dalton's episcopal coffin. John Thomas Troy told Propaganda in 1778 that Thomas Dalton would not be a suitable choice as coadjutor bishop of Meath, no matter how highly recommended by the Austrian court out of deference to General Dalton, his brother<sup>25</sup>. It is hard to credit, but the Austrians tried again in 1788 to have Dalton made bishop of Ardagh. They were told it was out of the question: "since representations have recently been made to His Holiness that the appointment of friars to bishoprics does not please the British court"<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Undated original. APF, SOCG 850, f. 323. The identifiable Dominicans were Laur. Fitzgerald, vicar forane and P. P. Mullingar, Nich. Travers, curate of Clara, Eugene Coffey, curate of Fertullagh, Jas. Hope, vice-pastor of Mullingar, Ml. Fleming, vicar forane and P. P. Killyon, Pat. O'Hart, P. P. Rathmolyon.

<sup>23</sup> Loc. cit., f. 323.

<sup>24</sup> Loc. cit., ff. 324-25.

<sup>25</sup> Kilkenny, 13 June 1778. Troy to Castelli. APF, SC Irlanda 13, ff. 341-42. Troy thought Th. Netterville the best candidate: "Quanto al Dalton non è al caso, quantunque raccomandato".

<sup>26</sup> 8 Mar. 1788. Prefect to nuncio at Vienna. APF, Lettere 252, ff. 96-97.



## TWO ARCHBISHOPS OF TUAM, 1785-1787

Just three months after Father Dalton's election as provincial, the friars of Connacht lost a powerful friend by the death in September 1785 of Mark Skerrett, archbishop of Tuam, who had been their protector for thirty-six years. Naturally, they took an anxious interest in the choice of his successor. In normal circumstances, since an archbishopric was at stake, they would have stood aside. No friar had been made an archbishop in Ireland since the previous century, nor was there any reason to believe that Propaganda would change this well-established policy. But in this case, knowing that one of the candidates, Dominic Bellew of Killala, was no friend of theirs they took the extreme step of signing a veto against him. When the religious superiors successfully vetoed four candidates for the archdiocese of Dublin in 1769 it had been a novel experiment<sup>27</sup>. Now they took up the same weapon again.

Whatever one may think of bishop Bellew, he cannot be accused of false modesty, for he recommended himself for Tuam in a letter to Propaganda, recounting his achievements in Killala since 1779 and warding off likely objections by quoting the Irish maxim: "*calumniare fortiter et aliquid adhaerebit*"<sup>28</sup>. People accused him, he said, of being anti-regular. Yet while there were only two religious in Killala when he reached his diocese, he had always cherished them. "I still treat them with affection, and sent three fine youths [abroad] to study in order to succeed them. *Potens est veritas et praevalerebit!*". This reference may be to the Dominicans of Rathfrán, but whatever Dr Bellew did for them they were all dead by 1789 and the "convent" itself extinct<sup>29</sup>.

The letter of the regular superiors, which Thomas Dalton signed in a large unsteady hand, is as follows<sup>30</sup>.

Eminentissime ac Reverendissime Princeps,

Sub ipsum funus Illustrissimi Domini Archiepiscopi de Tuam, parentis ac patroni nostri specialis, prodit haec superiorum regularium Eminentiae

<sup>27</sup> See above, pp. 373-374.

<sup>28</sup> 29 Aug. 1785. Bellew to card. Antonelli. Italian original. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.

<sup>29</sup> The last known members of this community were John Barrett (dead by summer 1785), Denis Meagher and John Blake (both dead by summer 1789). Blake seems to have lived at Strade, so Barrett and Meagher were probably the two Dr Bellew found in Killala in 1779. However, there were one or two Franciscans at Moyne in the same diocese until 1800.

<sup>30</sup> ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.



Vestrae humilis expositio, lugubri facie, sicut decet filios optimo parente orbatos: hoc vero habemus solatii, quod sub tutela talis ac tanti protectoris, non modica spes effulgeat successoris, in archidiaecesi omni exceptione maioris. Neque enim nos latet affectus vester paternus, nec quo flagras ardor, pro divini cultus propagatione et fausto gregis regimine.

De candidatis jam agitur magno partium studio. Primus inter illos est Illustrissimus Dominus [Philippus] Phillips, episcopus de Achonry, integerrimae vitae vir, qui labore indefesso via virtutis grassatur, pacis amans, aequus, moderatus, cleri utriusque communis parens.

Secundus est Illustrissimus D. [Dominicus] Bellew episcopus de Killala, fretus gratia episcopi cuiusdam acatholici. Huic si sedes archiepiscopalis contigerit, regulares exulent necesse est. Antimonachus enim acerrimus est. Hunc, Eminentissime Princeps, enixius deprecamur, quem arcu tenso et gladio evibrato, acie in nos desaeviturum jure timemus. Hic unicus et solus est in tota Conaciae provincia episcopus, qui religiosos sinu non foveat. De ipso propter characterem episcopalem parcius decet disserere. Quum vero incassum deploratur, quando nimis sero obsistitur; non possumus Eminentissimum Principem, quem parentem, tutorem ac protectorem clementissimum veneramur, non certiozem reddere, quod si ad archiepiscopatum Tuamensem promoveatur praefatus episcopus de Killala, uberem Regularibus Ordinibus anxietatis et afflictionis sementem subministrabit.

Tertius candidatus est Dominus Boetius Egan in archidiaecesi parochus, in universitate Burdigallensi SS. ae Theologiae Doctor, vir sine dolo, pietate insignis, qua fervet ipse, et doctrina qua alios erudit: qui tanti a clero aestimatur, quod quando non ita pridem de Coadjutore actum esset, et tres a Sede Apostolica pro optione Illustrissimi Archiepiscopi essent oblatis, inter quos dictus Boetius Egan fuerat secundo loco designatus, Archiepiscopus non dubitaverit respondere, se praefatum Boetium Egan electurum, si ipsi inter tres illos esset necessario optandum, utpote toti Archidiaeceseos clero gratissimum.

Ex protectione Eminentiae Vestrae non possumus plenam non habere fiduciam et exitum faelicem praestolari, ad cuius pedes provoluti, effusis Numini Supremo precibus, ut te die incolumem et vegetum pro communi ecclesiae bono conservet. Purpuram deosculamur, et sub omni clientelari observantia in humilitate profundissima perennamus.

Dublinii die 5<sup>a</sup> Septembris a.d. 1785. Eminentissime ac Reverendissime Princeps, Eminentiae Vestrae subjectissimi et obsequiosissimi clientes,

fr. Thomas Dalton, praed. gen. ac prior prov. lis ord. praed.  
pro provinciali ord. S. Francisci, fr. Bernardus Brady ex-provincialis.  
fr. Guilelmus Gahan ord. S. Augustini S.T.M. ac per Hiberniam provincialis.

fr. Petrus Bermingham S.T.M. et Doctor, necnon provincialis Carmelitarum Calc.m. per Hyberniam.

It is interesting to note that Dominic Bellew, "the one and only bishop in Connacht" who did not encourage the regular clergy, was an outsider from Dundalk on the far side of the country. One would prefer to know what precisely Bellew had done to make the regulars fear that his promotion would force them into exile. At all events the two candidates for Tuam acceptable to the friars were at once promoted: Philip Phillips was translated from Achonry to Tuam, while Boethius Egan became bishop of Achonry. To tell the truth, the document from the four provincials may not even have reached Rome in time to influence these happy decisions. Only two weeks after they signed it, Propaganda chose Phillips for Tuam at the request of the diocesan chapter. An earlier and "clear report" solicited from Troy of Ossory on the good qualities of Phillips and Egan contributed to the promotion of both. This quick decision illustrates the policy of cardinal Antonelli, prefect of Propaganda, who collected as much information as possible on episcopal candidates before dioceses fell vacant so that Propaganda might act at once on a bishop's death before the usual flood of postulations reached Rome.

This search for information, inspired perhaps by jealous curiosity about Bellew — a bishop appointed by the Pope himself without prior consultation with Propaganda Fide — evoked the following unfavourable remarks on Bellew from Troy of Ossory<sup>31</sup>.

Mons. Bellew non smentisce la poco favorevole opinione che di lui concepisce il publico. La sua notoria ambizione, la sua vanità, e gran dispotismo nel governare la chiesa Alladense, recano gran scandalo e pregiudizio alla religione. Quanto ai suoi protettori a Roma, si sa benissimo che siano per la maggior parte procurati dai maneggi poco canonici del Conte di Bristol, pseudovescovo di Derry. Non occorre qui dipingere quel rinomato fanatico, essendo già abbastanza noto a tutta l'Europa quanto ha procurato di imbrogliare le cose di questo regno. Quantunque senza religione, fa pompa alla moderna d'un tolerantismo generale a tutte le sette Cristiani, ma particolarmente ai Cattolici, volendo per altro, che questi fossero governati secondo gli capricci di Febronio. Questo faccendone è odiato da questo nostro governo, e per questo motivo va presentemente viaggiando, per allontanarsi. Sento che voglia incamminarsi un'altra volta a Roma. Ci vorrà costì un prudentissimo maneggio nel trattare con questo volpone.

Whatever about Bellew's work in Killala, his association with Frederick Augustus Hervey fourth Earl of Bristol and Protestant bishop

<sup>31</sup> Kilkenny, 7 Jan. 1786. An unsigned copy. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.

of Derry, was enough to damn him in Troy's eyes. On the one hand, Hervey was a disciple of Febronius, hostile to the temporal power of the Pope; on the other, he endangered the Catholic cause, if only by irritating an Irish government which the bishops deemed it necessary to please<sup>32</sup>.

Archbishop Phillips of Tuam died on 26 September 1787, almost exactly two years after his nomination. This time, the chapter postulated Boethius Egan of Achonry and Propaganda endorsed their choice. Egan was again supported by the religious superiors who for the second time feared Dominic Bellew's promotion<sup>33</sup>.

Iamque dato signo carceribus exilient candidati ex quibus duorum tantum mentionem faciemus: Ill.mi D. Bellew de Killala et Ill.mi D. Egan episcopi de Achonry quorum indoles et merita videntur in lance valde inequali posita. Hic, si palmam assequatur blandi agni balatus aures gregis demulcebit. Ille si ipsi laurea obtingat, leonis rugitus territabit armenta. Ne in verbis multi simus, Ill.mus de Bellew religiosi instituti viris graviter extimescendus. Equidem donec umbra Emin.ae Vrae. nos tenuis census viros inumbret, tenti sarti sumus, alias videmur nobis casu quo dictus Ill.mus succedat arcui tenso sagittarii expositi jam jam extrema subituri. Ill.mum D. Egan iudicio nostro longe citra aemulum, quotus enim quisque reperietur? Occasione eiusdem archidioceseos olim orbatae pridem laudavimus, et pro religioni Catholica studium tantum ut nihil supra possit. Hunc iterum oculis perspicacibus Emin.ae Vrae. non veremur observari quippe quem indies plus plusque admiramur...

Dublinii 2 Oct. 1787. fr. Thomas Dalton, P.G., provincialis ord. praed.  
fr. Gulielmus Gahan OSA, ex-provincialis.  
fr. Bernardus Brady, ex-provincialis Franciscanorum.  
fr. Thomas O'Mahony, provincialis Carm. Calceatorum.

This second warning about bishop Bellew was reinforced by a petition from Charles O'Kelly OP telling Propaganda that Bellew was feared by his own clergy, but might well be postulated for Tuam by the Protestant bishop of Derry. O'Kelly's message was quite simple — "beware of Bellew" — and Propaganda took him at his word<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> For a sympathetic account of the earl-bishop see John R. Walsh, Frederick Augustus Hervey, 1730-1803, Maynooth 1972, especially pp. 33, 57.

<sup>33</sup> APF, SOCG 877, ff. 522, 525.

<sup>34</sup> Loc. cit., ff. 519-20.

## A DOMINICAN ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN, 1786

The primatial see of Dublin fell unexpectedly vacant on 29 October 1786 by the sudden death of the venerable archbishop John Carpenter. In this case the choice of a successor was no merely diocesan concern but a matter of national importance. The chapter of Dublin, bishops of every province, even the religious superiors, spent November preparing postulations for dispatch to Rome. And yet, Propaganda translated John Thomas Troy from Ossory to Dublin before that month was out. The cardinals, duly convened on 27 November, were simply told that Dr Carpenter was dead, that various unnamed candidates had been proposed, but that most of the bishops wanted Troy in Dublin. Stefano Borgia, secretary of the congregation, was entirely in Troy's favour. With so much other business on the agenda, the cardinals saw no reason to disagree with the officials of Propaganda and so gave Troy their vote<sup>35</sup>. Letters from Ireland about the vacancy were duly filed, as though discussed on 27 November, but since the dates of the documents run from 4 November into January 1787, one may well believe that Propaganda opted for Troy before it received many or even any of them.

The usual postulations, whether received in time or not, show that Troy had very wide support. Everyone seemed to favour him, except the chapter of Dublin, the Irish in Paris and bishops of the "Gallican" party: the Butler bishops of Cashel and Cork, Egan of Waterford, Plunkett of Meath and Bellew of Killala. The canons of Dublin wanted either their archdeacon, Robert Bethel, or their dean, Bartholomew Sherlock. Troy himself, two days before his appointment, felt it a matter of conscience to discourage the promotion of the bishops of Cashel, Cork, Meath or Waterford because of their unfavourable attitude towards the Holy See and their plans to change the ancient method of electing bishops. In the same letter he referred to something of which cardinal Antonelli was already aware: the factions which divided the clergy of Dublin and scandalized the faithful. "I will leave the unpleasant duty of describing Dean Sherlock to those with the closest experience of his ferocious nature" <sup>36</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> APF, Acta 156, f. 360; SOCG 874, ff. 285-310; SC Irlanda 16, ff. 157-209 *passim*. See also H. Peel, 'The Appointment of Dr Troy to the See of Dublin, in *Reportorium Novum*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1971) 5-16.

<sup>36</sup> Kilkenny, 25 Nov. 1786. Troy to Antonelli. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.



Thomas Dalton, the Dominican provincial, with five other major religious superiors, also thought it necessary to intervene. Dr Carpenter, they said, had calmed those differences between regular and secular which cankered the clergy of Dublin under his predecessors. This new-found harmony would last only if the new archbishop proved to be meek, a lover of peace, balanced, moderate, attached to the Holy See and capable of settling disputes. Otherwise there would be an end, not only to peace but to the religious orders themselves. They would denigrate no candidate, even though they feared that some of them, if elected, would fall "with drawn sword" on the regular clergy. "We are afraid of prelates whose principles and merits are as yet uncertain". Hence they proposed Richard O'Reilly, coadjutor of Armagh, Troy of Ossory, Caulfield of Ferns and John Murphy, a parish priest of Dublin. Essentially, they wanted a "proven man", as Troy was *par excellence*, and, like everyone else who favoured Troy, they went to some trouble to explain that the fact that he was a regular was no obstacle to his promotion<sup>37</sup>.

The letters concerning this vacancy are full of praise for Troy himself, for the man as much as for his achievements in Ossory or Armagh. Great emphasis was laid on the fact that he was on good terms with the government and had received a letter of thanks from the Viceroy, the Duke of Rutland, for his efforts to curb agrarian violence. Similarly, the fact that he was a friar, a card which the "followers of Febronius" would surely play, was dismissed out of hand. Recent laws recognized the regular clergy and the government could not care less whether a bishop was a friar or not. It was enough that he should be sensible, prudent and a faithful subject of his King.

Propaganda's decision to make Troy an archbishop went against a policy almost a century old. No regular had been an archbishop in Ireland since the death of Dominic Maguire OP, archbishop of Armagh, in 1707. The reversal was purely temporary, for no other religious was so promoted again until Dr McQuaid CSSp became archbishop of Dublin in 1940. Troy's appointment, therefore, was quite extraordinary, but none the less foreseen. Bishop Caulfield of Ferns, writing before word of the appointment reached Ireland, tells us that Troy was even then regarded and acclaimed as archbishop of Dublin<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> Dublin, 11 Nov. 1786. Latin original. APF, SOCG 874, ff. 298, 303.

<sup>38</sup> Ross, 20 Dec. 1786. Caulfield to Antonelli, ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.



De praestantissimo episcopo Ossoriensi apud nos conclamatum est. Episcopi provinciales alique quam plurimi, clerus, populusque Dublinensis universus, omnes per totum regnum ipsum iam veluti archiepiscopum Dublinensem constitutum respiciunt. Faxit Deus, ut communibus votis et religionis bono omnia cedant.

Soon after, when news of his appointment finally came, Troy received a compliment from his own priests of Ossory led by Patrick Mulloy, the priest with whom Thomas Burke of Ossory struggled for so long and who had been in 1776 the candidate of the "Gallicans" to succeed Burke in Ossory itself. This compliment from Ossory is not therefore just a character-sketch but strong evidence of Troy's ability to win over those who least liked his views<sup>39</sup>.

Niveus animi candor et morum suavitas, pietas non ficta, labor indefessus, miraque in sedandis tumultibus et stabilienda pace prudentia, omnium etiam exterorum fidei animos ipsi conciliavit et devinxit. Ipsum totis cordibus dileximus, ipsumque dum vivimus ferventissimis votis prosequemur.

On the early death of bishop John Dunne of Ossory in 1789, the chapter unanimously decided not to postulate a successor at all, but to ask John Thomas Troy OP to choose and recommend a worthy prelate for them!

Troy recommended two — James Lanigan and John O'Connor OP — though both refused promotion and Troy feared that were Lanigan to succeed it would damage the academy at Kilkenny over which he presided. That infant college, founded by Troy himself, had fifty boarders and many day-boys in 1789. On becoming bishop of Ossory in the same year, James Lanigan maintained his support of the school, so that it gained rather than lost by his promotion. Our more limited interest must centre on John O'Connor the Dominican candidate who, though enjoying greater episcopal support than Lanigan, was in the end unsuccessful. O'Connor had been the author in 1772 of *An Essay on the Rosary* and in the late 1770s was bishop Troy's secretary, certainly while Troy was grappling with the problems of Armagh. One unkind correspondent referred to him as Troy's "darling", and there is little doubt that whereas Troy put Lanigan's name first, he would have pre-

<sup>39</sup> Before June 1787. APF, SOCG 876, f. 258. One of the signatories was Th. Shaw OP, prior of Kilkenny. Two other Dominicans, Michael Vincent Meade and Th. Carbry, joined Shaw at Kilkenny on 26 Dec. 1786 as signatories of a postulation for John Dunne as bishop of Ossory. Loc. cit., f. 263.

ferred to see O'Connor installed in Ossory. The recommendations tell us that O'Connor had a legacy from a paternal uncle, that he was "of mature age, expert in the handling of affairs, eloquent in speech and of high moral character". The archbishops of Armagh and Tuam judged him "altogether worthy of promotion" for his outstanding prudence, learning and virtue. Richard O'Reilly of Armagh later went so far as to say that O'Connor was not only the more worthy and suitable candidate of the two, but was "uniquely worthy" of the post. Another supporter, James Caulfield of Ferns, claimed long friendship and business acquaintance with O'Connor whom he said was "well found" in Ossory. Archbishop Troy himself quickly denied proposing O'Connor simply from partiality or on his own recommendation alone. "I deem it expedient to promote some worthy religious from time to time as a reward for merit and to arouse a praiseworthy rivalry among the clergy"<sup>40</sup>. To balance matters, James Butler of Cashel warned Propaganda against putting a regular bishop into Ossory<sup>41</sup>. His letter of 1789 recalls the emancipation bill of 1782, while throwing fresh light on the restoration of the Black Abbey, as the medieval Dominican church in Kilkenny is still popularly called.

Notre gouvernement commence à songer bien sérieusement à un rappel total des loix pénales qui sont encore en force ... et comme dans ces occasions, nos ennemis qui sont encore en très grand nombre sont sur le qui-vive pour se prévaloir de tout ce que pourrait indisposer les différents membres du Parlement contre nous; il seroit fort à craindre que, comme les réguliers sont de tout le clergé Catholique les plus suspects aux Protestants, tellement que dans l'année 1782, quand on passa le dernier Bill en faveur des Catholiques, on parloit de les bannir tous du royaume, si dans l'intervalle qu'on délibère sur la propriété de nous accorder des nouveaux faveurs on venoit d'entendre que la Cour de Rome avoit nommé un Régulier pour remplir l'évêché d'Ossory, après avoir élevé un de même ordre [Troy] à l'archevêché de Dublin, on ne représente cette nouvelle nomination comme un sujet d'alarme et qu'on indispose par là les esprits contre nous.

Et ceci est autant plus à appréhender que les impressions que le Docteur Woodward, évêque Protestant de Cloyne a causés au sujet de l'*Hibernia Dominicana* et son *Supplément* écrits par le Docteur [Thomas] Burke de l'ordre

<sup>40</sup> Dublin, 3 April 1789. Troy to the prefect of Propaganda. Italian original. APF, SOCG 883, ff. 11, 20. The other papers of recommendation are on ff. 4-30. Another Dominican, Antoninus Fleming, rector of Corpo Santo, was also recommended for Ossory by the confessor of the Queen of Portugal (ff. 25-26).

<sup>41</sup> Thurles, 3 June 1789. Butler to Antonelli. French original. APF, SOCG 883, ff. 21-22.

de S. Dominique et ci-devant évêque d'Ossory, ne sont pas encore effacés; et qu'un du même ordre vient tout récemment d'exciter un cri général, en entreprenant de réparer un ancien couvent de Dominicains situé dans la ville de Kilkenny contre l'avis de Protestants et Catholiques de la dite ville, et en opposition directe à un acte de Parlement qui défend expressément de réparer les anciens couvents ou monastères démolis.

Writing to Rome at much the same time, bishop Caulfield of Ferns struck a more balanced note by praising archbishop Troy for calming the differences between the regular and secular clergy<sup>42</sup>.

*Praejudicia enim et odiosas distinctiones clerum secularem inter et regularem, in hac provincia, acquitate, moderatione et prudentia nostri illustrissimi et reverendissimi Metropolitanī penitus medio feliciter sublata esse gratulamur.*

#### PROPERTY AND EDUCATION, 1782-1789

Father Dalton made his first visitation of the province in 1786, travelling on horseback accompanied by a servant; one finds traces of his passage at Newbridge in June, at Cork in July, at Esker in August and with the nuns of Dublin early in December. Contrary to the usual practice of visitation every two years, he went to Cork again "on visitation" in 1787, but to Cork alone. In 1788, whether from weariness or infirmity, he appointed James D. Langan visitor of Connacht and in the same year personally visited only the nuns of Dublin.

Apart from his signature on account-books, the sole evidence for these visitations comes from "the house of the Cluin" at Newbridge to which the friars of Naas had long since withdrawn. John Daly, appointed prior on 14 April 1784, was discussing with his predecessor, Bernard Coffey, how and by whom a debt of about thirty pounds on the house was to be paid. That sum, which seems so little now, represented then almost a year's salary for a poor priest. Two distinguished Dominicans of Meath, Laurence Fitzgerald and Michael Fleming, came as arbitrators to Newbridge on 20 June 1786 and concluded that each party should pay half the debt. Thomas Dalton, present for the occasion, ratified their decision and framed the following ordinations for the community<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> Ross, 13 April 1789. Caulfield to cardinal Antonelli. APF, SOCG 883, ff. 27, 30.

<sup>43</sup> Newbridge College archives, *Liber Computuum* (1786-1818) 27-28.

Exhortamur vos, fratres charissimi, ut diligatis invicem, studeatisque in omnibus vos exhibere ministros Dei, dispensatoresque Verbi Divini, tam opere quam doctrina et exemplo, et ut lux vestra luceat coram hominibus. Vos quamplurimum in Domino exhortamur ut religiose, modeste et pacifice unusquisque vestrum se conducat tam intra quam extra monasterium, patientiam cum infirmitatibus alterutrius habentes, in tribulationibus et angustiis se mutuo consolantes, et juxta Apostolum invicem honore praevenientes.

1. Ordinamus ut habeatur liber in quo nomina domesticorum regulariter inserantur, in quo pariter notetur dies mensis et anni et stipendium pro quo conducti sunt, et quod in fine cuiuslibet anni cuilibet domestico plene et ad integrum stipulatum stipendium solvatur, et hoc quoque in praefato libro inseratur.

2. Ordinamus ut quamprimum ematur liber computus in quo omnia quae quocunque modo sive ex praedio vel terris ad conventum pertinentibus, sive ex quaestibus, sive ex donationibus vel benefactionibus, in folio receptorum clare inseratur, et in folio expositorum omnes pariter expensae, hunc conventum quomodolibet concernentes, de die in diem accurate notentur, ut inde status hujus domicilii superiori pro tempore semper patefiat. Huius libri curam procuratori conventus specialiter committimus.

3. Ordinamus ut in posterum habeantur in hoc conventu tres patres a conciliis, viz. Prior pro tempore cum duobus aliis religiosis ad hoc munus a patre provinciali instituendis, sine quorum omnium consensu, vel saltem maioris numeri eorum, nihil notabile ad hunc conventum spectans, vel pertinens, vel ematur vel vendatur vel aedificetur vel alienetur.

4. Ordinamus ut nullus religiosus hujus conventus sub quocunque praetextu debitum excedens quinque libras sterlingas contrahere praesumat sine nostra expressa vel Prioris pro tempore licentia.

5. Ordinamus ut Rosarium in hoc conventu singulis noctibus recitetur, ad quod omnes in conventu existentes ad sonum campanulae compareant, et ne nostris benefactoribus ingrati inveniamur ordinamus ut singulis mensibus missa pro omnibus hujus conventus benefactoribus celebretur.

Datum in conventu nostro Nazensi Sancti Eustachii hac vigesima die Junii anno 1786.

fr. Thomas Dalton, praedicator generalis ac prior provincialis.

Legal recognition of the clergy and their "usual places of worship" in 1782 encouraged them to improve priories and chapels in the towns. This was hardly a signal for which they had been waiting, for chapels had been built and repaired over most of the country for at least half a century before, but it did enable them to purchase property in their own names if they so wished. Two Dominicans of Newbridge itself, Bernard Coffey and Thomas Dinnin, took out a thirty-one-year lease

on twenty acres beside their convent as early as 7 June 1782, and did so expressly as "members of the Order or Society of Dominicans... in trust and solely for the use of ourselves as well as of our brethren of the aforementioned Society or Order"<sup>44</sup>. Even after 1782, the friars sometimes maintained the old practice of using third parties to take out leases on their behalf. There is an interesting example from Cork where the Dominicans began to move home in 1783 from "old Friary Lane" off Shandon Street to part of the site of Shandon Castle just a few hundred yards to the east. The new site, owned by Garret Barry Parker, was sublet in 1783 to a certain Patrick Goolde<sup>45</sup>:

by indenture dated the 18th day of January 1783 for the term of 500 years at the yearly rent of eighteen pounds and four shillings. The name of him the said Patrick Goolde was made use of therein respectively in trust and to and for the sole use and benefit of the Revd. Richard Roche, the Revd. Anthony Conway, the Revd. Denis Lane, the Revd. Eugene McCrohan, the Revd. Patrick Lonergan and the Revd. John Ryan, Roman Catholic clergymen, their executors, administrators and assigns...

In 1784, the Dominicans of Waterford also leased new premises in Thomas Street, but the evidence comes to us at second-hand. For Drogheda we have the full text of an agreement made, not to acquire new property but to sublet a house and chapel the community was about to leave. Although this document of 1786 was a legal one, duly stamped, the prior made no attempt to cloak his identity<sup>46</sup>.

Memorandum of a contract or agreement made between Samuel Austin of the town of Drogheda, linen manufacturer, and the Revd. Thomas McDonagh of the said town on Monday, 19th June 1786.

That for and in consideration of the sum of twenty-two pounds fifteen shillings to be paid yearly by the said Samuel Austin to the said Thomas McDonagh, the said Thomas McDonagh has set and to farm let during his term under John Orson Esq. unto the said Samuel Austin, all that concern known by the name of the Friery out of West Gate in Drogheda, as described in the map to the lease held by the said Thomas MacDonagh from the said

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<sup>44</sup> V. Leahy, *The Dominicans of Newbridge*, in *Newbridge Quarterly* (Christmas 1946) 8, quoting almost the full text from the college archives.

<sup>45</sup> The corresponding deed was rehearsed in another of 15 Nov. 1852 which the late Fr. Bernard Curran OP obtained in a typed copy from a friend in Cork.

<sup>46</sup> A copy, unsigned by the principals, inserted towards the back of TA, Drogheda a/c book (1771-1786).



John Orson Esq., with all the fixtures and appurtenances as thereunto belonging except the following, viz.

The altar in the chappell.

The grate, chimney-piece and hearth-stone in Mr. McDonagh's room.

The grate, covestone and hearthstone in Mr. [James] Connolly's room,

And the chimney-piece in the parlour,

All which are to be taken at a valuation by the said Samuel Austin at his own option.

Possession to be given on the 25th March 1787 and the rent to commence on that day.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals the day and year above written. Witnesses present: Thomas Norman, Patrick Jennett [OP].

These Drogheda Dominicans may have quitted one house before getting another. At all events, their departure from West Gate had an amusing sequel, as appears from a letter written from Lisbon by Francis Levins two months after Samuel Austin was to have taken over the old friary <sup>47</sup>.

The gentlemen of Drogheda forwarded me a patent from the provincial as prior of their convent, of which I accepted and sent them advice last January, and that I wou'd set out from hence after Easter. In the interim, I received a letter from my friend John Markey [a diocesan priest] of Dundalk, advising me not to return home, if I cou'd in any manner remain abroad, and if I shou'd, I wou'd repent it, for they had neither house or home. This news perplex'd me very much; at last I resolved not to move untill I shou'd know more about it.

Another relief act of 1782 enabled even friars to engage openly in education <sup>48</sup>. In earlier decades it was not unusual for a rural priory to have a few student "pensioners" living in community while engaged in ecclesiastical or even secular studies. The earliest Dominican boarding-school of any note, with the exception of three conducted by nuns, was at Donore near Killyon in Meath: a house approved as a novitiate in 1774 although only one novice is known to have taken the habit there <sup>49</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> Lisbon, 23 May 1787. To Dr. Troy, congratulating him on his translation to Dublin. DDA 29/7, no. 220.

<sup>48</sup> M. Quane, Aspects of Education in Ireland, 1695-1795, in JCHAS (July-Dec. 1968) 132.

<sup>49</sup> H. Fennig, The Undoing of the Friars, Louvain 1972, pp. 320, 324.

After the failure of the novitiate came the emergence of the school as openly advertised in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 1 January 1789<sup>50</sup>.

The Academy of Donore in the County of Meath.

The Gentlemen of Donore, who for upwards thirty years past have been engaged in the education of youth, beg leave to inform their friends and the public that on the 12th of January next they intend to open their Academy on a new and enlarged plan. The English, Latin, Greek, French and Italian languages, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Mathematics, Geography, History and the use of globes, will be taught in a manner which, they flatter themselves, cannot but meet with universal approbation.

Two gentlemen of the house, assisted by two ushers of approved abilities will constantly attend. Every endeavour shall be exerted to form the minds of their pupils to the practice of virtue, and expedite their progress in the languages and sciences; also the strictest attention paid to their diet, health and cleanliness. The very moderate terms on which this plan is proposed must convince the public that their advantage is the principal object which the Gentlemen of Donore have in view.

Terms: — Twenty guineas a year for board and tuition, with washing included, and one guinea entrance. Music and dancing to be paid for apart. For further particulars application may be made to the Rev. Geo. Fleming, Donore near Clonard; and in Dublin, to the Rev. Andrew Dunn [a diocesan priest], Meath Street, or to Surgeon Rivers, Ushers Quay. December 8, 1788.

The same newspaper carried a second advertisement on 16 April 1789, announcing that the Academy would "again open after Easter". This time the handbills explaining terms and subjects were to be had in Dublin, "at Mr. John Boyce's, bookseller, Merchants Quay; in Drogheda at the Revd. Mr. Thomas McDonogh's; in Mullingar at the Revd. Mr. Laurence Fitzgerald's or at the academy"<sup>51</sup>. The academy may not have survived a year, but at least it anticipated the present Newbridge College which first began to receive boarders only in 1792.

#### FUNERALS IN GALWAY: 1779-1790

Whatever the reasons for the collapse of so many rural convents, such as Donore, about this time, those in the cities and larger towns were destined to survive. Galway, with no less than eight friars in residence in 1777, provides a good example. We even know their names

<sup>50</sup> From J. Brady (ed.), *Catholics and Catholicism*, Maynooth 1965, p. 264.

<sup>51</sup> V. Leahy, Dominicans of Newbridge, in *Newbridge Quarterly* (Christmas 1947) 10.

thanks to Mr. Martin Blake of Ballyglunin who left each of them three shillings and threepence in that year to say Masses for his soul. They were James French, prior, Robert Browne, Hubert Murphy, Patrick Kirwan, Walter and Thomas Burke, James Langan and Dominic Connor<sup>52</sup>. They were not directly subject to any bishop, but to a Warden who was superior of a college of parish priests, styled vicars, and was himself elected for a fixed term by the Corporation. The archbishop of Tuam, while entitled to hold visitation in the area, had otherwise no effective control over the Wardenship. Since priests were numerous in Galway — one to about every six hundred Catholics — their income tended to be low and frequent disputes arose between regular and secular which were carried to the archbishop of Tuam and sometimes to Rome itself. Each religious order had a cemetery attached to its church, so these disputes largely concerned funeral offerings, very much a source of contention between 1714 and 1720, but not thereafter until about 1779<sup>53</sup>.

We would know almost nothing of this "renewal of hostilities" but for an extremely long letter of 1788 from the prior, Patrick Kirwan, to Charles O'Kelly in Rome<sup>54</sup>. The writer spoke for the Dominicans and Franciscans but not expressly for the Augustinians who shared the same problem. There was no difficulty about the burial of the wealthy, faithful to ancient tradition, whom no pastor could induce to change their ways. As Fr. Kirwan put it:

The custom of the place has been that on the day of burial with us, or the following day after Office and High Mass, the representative of the deceased made his oblations on our altars, and was afterwards followed by such of their relations as attended. But this mode was only practiced by the more affluent and by a few of the less affluent.

The heart of the matter lay with the burial of the poor: those who had less to offer but whose funerals were more frequent. For "the

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<sup>52</sup> From "a list of money distributed to the clergy of Galway", dated 5 Aug. 1777. Galway diocesan archives (hereafter GDA), folder "John Joyce (1771-1783)".

<sup>53</sup> M. Coen, *The Wardenship of Galway*, Galway 1984, 24. This excellent book has no footnotes. *Hib. Dom.*, 86. See above, pp. 126-127, 131. Copies and even originals of some of the oldest documents in this dispute (for 1551, 1714, 1718, 1719) were filed by Propaganda under the year 1823 when the matter surfaced again. APF, SOCG 923, ff. 560-98. I am indebted to Fr. Martin Coen for gaining me access to GDA and for guiding my researches there.

<sup>54</sup> Galway, 20 June 1788. Found only in a copy in DDA, 116/4, no. 54.

lower class of people " there was neither office of the dead nor high Mass. Their custom was:

to hold remembrance Mass the first Sunday after the interment of their friend in the chapel annexed to the place of interment where, after Mass, the representative lays a shilling on the altar, and the friends they assemble on the occasion their pence and halfpence.

In some parts of Ireland this form of collection was standard practice even within living memory, though the offerings were not actually placed on the altar. The parish priest sat at a table in front of the altar to receive the offerings, write down the name of each mourner with the sum he gave, and then or later read out the whole list in public. At Galway, the secular clergy were still entitled to their mortuary dues no matter where the actual Mass or burial took place, and with this gentle lever in hand began to upset the prevailing custom.

About nine years ago [in 1779], some private encroachments were privately made on us [Dominicans and Franciscans] by some or other of the pastors and their coadjutors, by prevailing on the representatives of a few very poor people, buried in our cemeteries, to hold the first Sunday remembrance, contrary to custom, in the parish chapel, on pretext of their having no other means of being paid their mortuary dues. These encroachments were so insignificant that we chose rather not to see them than run any chance of breaking peace by complaints which we apprehended would prove ineffectual, till about five years ago [in 1783] the present pastors, namely the Revd. John Joyes [Joyce] and Walter Blake, enlarged their encroachments by using all the power of their influence to bring all the first Sunday remembrances, indiscriminately without exception, to the parish chapel (save only the more affluent ... who could not be laid [led] by them into such an error).

And to succeed the better in this innovation, they told and do continue to tell the survivors of the deceased, that said first Sunday Mass is their right, and that provided they get it, they will ask no mortuary dues of them, which consist in half a guinea for some, and the lowest a crown. By which means, for a shilling and a pound of candles expended on said Mass, they get rid of all mortuary dues, and we are left to seek for sustenance from Divine Providence elsewhere.

Although the Warden, Augustine Kirwan, had " at all times made openly and privately the warmest professions of friendship " for the friars, he declined to take their part against the pastors of the city. When the friars, in December 1787, wrote a " very polite and respectful letter " asking him for a private discussion with his vicars, he not only refused the offer but declared he would abide by whatever decision a

future provincial synod or Propaganda itself would make. This did not suit the friars, for no date had been set for any provincial synod and Rome might take years to settle the question, so they turned to the laity and "procured the signatures of almost all the respectable characters of the town and its vicinity" to a formal complaint addressed to the Warden against some of his vicars for "breaching in on the rights of the regulars". Nothing daunted, the Warden gave as good as he got, even to the extent of obtaining a testimonial in favour of his vicars signed by the very laymen who had earlier signed the protest of the friars! Adding a pinch of salt to the wound, Augustine Kirwan informed them:

that the synod was to be held in the remotest part of the county of Mayo, in Tirawly, about 70 miles distant from this town, whither there appeared a moral impossibility for us to bring all our necessary witnesses (who are very numerous) at our own expence, together with our own expence and a number of books, and the improbability that the prelates assembled there to consult other matters would remain in such a poor place three weeks, which it would take them to examine witnesses and books, together with the great bustle such an event would make in the whole kingdom.

Frustrated now of every hope of accommodation, and our bread growing daily more and more scanty ... on the 2nd day of June [1788] we juridically demanded of the Wardian redress and restitution for the grievances done us by his vicars; and on being refused, we lodged an appeal from him to Dr Egan archbishop of Tuam ... What renders this breach more extraordinary is that until we seriously insisted on redress of the wrongs done us, the most cordial union existed amongst us. The Wardian and his vicars loved us and we loved them. Nay more, in the late Wardian Joye's time [1770-1783], we all both secular and regular clergy of the town mutually bound ourselves (and our successors) ... that we should all say three Masses for the soul of any one of us that should die, which has been religiously performed ever since.

We live *conventualiter*, we preach, teach and catechise. In all the great solemnities of the year we have High Mass and Benediction, we administer the sacraments, we carefully assist the sick and dying, we answer all calls by day and night<sup>56</sup>. In a word, we are considered by the laity not only a comfort but to be also absolutely necessary. And yet with all this we are not without our fears that should the College appeal from the archbishop to the S. Congregation ... they may represent our number too great for this town,

<sup>56</sup> Not to administer the last rites but, as Fr Martin Coen tells me, to impart the traditional "friar's blessing" at the hour of death.



as we are in number six, the Franciscans seven and the Augustinians five: in all eighteen, and that in consequence the S. Congregation might lessen our number, which would be less eligible to us than to be reduced to potatoes and milk, and would be a deep wound to the divine worship where we have about 15,000 of our communion, and would be the means of sending adrift to perish for want some old fathers that spent their days with great success, in toil and labour, in this town. Besides, such an attempt would cause such alarm and discontent in town and country, I am bold to say, as has not been seen since the revolution.

Thus far Father Kirwan, setting the entire case before Charles O'Kelly, the experienced Dominican agent in Rome, with an appeal for his considered opinion of what they had already done, for better or for worse, and how they should proceed. What O'Kelly's answer was, or how exactly the incident ended, we may never know, since the only other document to hand is an earlier letter from the warden himself, Augustine Kirwan, addressed on 31 March 1788 "to such of the gentlemen, citizens and inhabitants of the town of Galway and its environs as have addressed a late letter to the Warden". Kirwan put these citizens quite firmly in their place <sup>56</sup>.

When you, gentlemen, have any differences between you, you do not call upon us as being inexperienced in those affairs, as you have your own courts to decide on which side the property lies. I beg leave then to observe that in the ecclesiastical line we have our own tribunals to adjust any differences that may arise between us ... I cannot suppose it would be your wish that the secular clergy, being the clergy of your own choice ... should be treated with slight and indifference, that they should be stinted in their resources, that their number should be lessened, or that the collegiate church of St Nicholas, so much respected and so powerfully protected by your ancestors, should dwindle away ...

I must confess I do not conceive it an injustice done even to them [the regular clergy] when the poor pay the first compliment to the pastor who attends their deceased friends. It would however have my warm concurrence that an eye should be had immediately after to the place of interment. It was not I who introduced this mode; it has been practiced for years before I came into the charge. But then, I consider it just and reasonable, and I can by no means comprehend how any other body can claim a right to the voluntary contributions of any individual.

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<sup>56</sup> GDA, folder "Augustine Kirwan, 1783-91". Summarized in *Analecta Hibernica* 14 (1944) 119.

The Augustinians of Galway came to terms with the secular clergy with respect to mortuary dues on 22 May 1790<sup>57</sup>. So too, apparently, did the Franciscans and Dominicans. When they took their case to a provincial synod at Ballina, two bishops who were asked to intervene declined to do so and the dispute was referred to Rome. Before any decision was reached there, the secular clergy proposed an amicable settlement in 1790 which led to some decades of peace<sup>58</sup>.

There is other evidence of the poverty of the Galway community in a request they made to Rome in 1790. It concerned a founded Mass, daily and perpetual, accepted in 1745 at the request of Nicholas French in return for a capital sum of £ 300. By 1790, the interest on that sum had fallen so low as to bring in only fifteen pounds a year and therefore rather less per day than the ordinary manual stipend of one English shilling. In their view, the stipend for a founded Mass should have been twice as much as for a manual one, so they asked the Pope to halve the number of founded Masses they were obliged to say. Propaganda took counsel with the Warden of Galway, who was looking for similar reductions himself, and the Dominican request was partially granted. In future they would say as many Masses for Nicholas French, at the normal rate established for manual stipends, as the interest on the capital fund permitted<sup>59</sup>.

#### HOLY CROSS, LOUVAIN, 1771-1789

While we know so little of events at Holy Cross, due to the total loss of the college archives, it is consoling to find that no less than fifty-three of its students were ordained priests during this period, despite all the efforts of the Austrian government to stifle religious life<sup>60</sup>. The first of these attempts was an edict of 13 May 1771 forbidding religious

<sup>57</sup> There is a printed broadside to this effect, with copies in TA, Letters, under date; in DDA 116/5, no. 27; and presumably in GDA, since it is listed also in *Analecta Hibernica* 14 (1944) 61. The text, from another source, is most readily available in J. O'CONNOR, *The Galway Augustinians*, vol. 1, Ballyboden 1980, 146-47.

<sup>58</sup> M. COEN, *The Wardenship of Galway*, Galway 1984, 31. No source indicated.

<sup>59</sup> APF, Udienze 28, ff. 278-79. My thanks are due to Fr Vincent Leahy OP for copies of the Roman documents. Also GDA, folder 'Augustine Kirwan, 1783-91'.

<sup>60</sup> Their names and dates of ordination are in A. M. BOGAERTS, *De Dominicanen in de Wijdingsregisters van het Aartsbisdom Mechelen*, Brussels 1965.

superiors to accept money on the admission of novices, even if intended to pay for their studies<sup>61</sup>. Soon after, on 18 April 1772, a more serious edict forbade religious profession before the age of twenty-five. One way around this law was for a younger man to receive the habit at Holy Cross, make his novitiate there and then leave the Austrian dominions to make his profession somewhere else. Daniel Kennedy, for instance, walked all the way from Louvain to Italy in 1775 and then got leave from the Pope to make his profession at Viterbo. Nor did the edict prevent the acceptance at Holy Cross of students under twenty-five already professed on arrival. The new novitiates in Ireland, already authorized by Rome in December 1774, provided some professed students, from Esker and Roscommon at least, while convents such as Cork, though not approved novitiates, could still examine postulants over twenty-four and send them to Louvain to take the habit.

The next turn of the screw was an edict of 28 November 1781 removing the religious orders in the Austrian Low Countries from foreign jurisdiction, thus putting an end to their official links with Rome. While that edict concerned religious in general, it was soon followed by another from the emperor himself, Joseph "the sacristan", making special arrangements for both English and Irish Franciscans and Dominicans of the Low Countries. A printed copy of the document survives among the papers of archbishop Troy<sup>62</sup>.

#### DÉCLARATION DE L'EMPEREUR

*Concernant les Récollets & Dominicains Anglois & Irlandois aux Pays-Bas*  
Du 4. Mai 1782.

Sa Majesté s'étant fait rendre compte de l'état & de la situation particulières de quelques communautés Angloises & Irlandoises aux Pays-Bas, destinées à former aux fonctions du st. ministère de jeunes ecclésiastiques des Isles Britanniques, telles que celles des Récollets & Dominicains Irlandois à Louvain, & des Dominicains Anglois, l'une à Louvain & l'autre à Bornhem en Flandre, & voulant réconcilier l'existence des ces communautés & séminaires religieux avec la loi du 28 Novembre 1781, en bornant les liaisons & relations de tous ceux qui les composent avec les chefs des missions en An-

<sup>61</sup> St Trond, 10 Dec. 1787. P. Truyt OP, provincial, to the States of Brabant at their general assembly, on behalf of the four mendicant orders. French copy in AGOP XIII. 35954. Truyt reviews all unfavourable edicts between 1771 and 1786. See also H. Fennig, *The Undoing of the Friars*, pp. 311, 358-59, 370-72.

<sup>62</sup> DDA, 116/3, no. 121.

gleterre / en Irlande au seul envoi des sujets aux Pais-Bas & à leur rappel dans ces royaumes selon les besoins pour l'exercice du st. ministère, sans que la qualité & l'état de ces chefs de missions puissent leur donner quelque influence sur le régime de ces communautés ni quelque lieu à l'exercice d'actes quelconques de superiorité sur les individus qui les composent; a déclaré & déclare, à la délibération des Sérénissimes Gouverneurs Généraux, que les maisons des Dominicains Anglois à Louvain & à Bornhem en Flandre devront se réunir en Congrégation en conformité de ce qui est établi par l'édit du 28 Novembre dernier, & se diriger selon l'esprit & les vuës de cette loi; à quel effet les prieurs & religieux en emploi avec un député de chacune de ces communautés devront s'assembler dans le terme d'un mois au couvent de Bornhem, & ainsi de quatre en quatre ans, pour y faire choix d'un visiteur & de deux consultants, lequel visiteur sera revêtu de toute la juridiction du provincial / l'exercera dans l'ordre / selon la marche prescrite par l'édit susmentionné, le tout sous la surveillance des évêques, en conformité des articles 25, 26, 27, 28, & autres de cet édit, & de la déclaration du 8 Mars de la présente année; dans laquelle assemblée seront élus & choisis les prieurs & autres employés de ces maisons pour le terme & intervalle de quatre années d'une assemblée à l'autre, tellement qu'il ne pourra y avoir de liaison & de rapport de ces communautés avec le chef des missions en Angleterre que pour ce qui concernera uniquement l'envoi des sujets Anglois pour y être élevés & formés dans ces maisons à l'état de missionnaires & leur rappel pour passer dans les missions à l'effet d'y être employés au st. ministère; tout autre pouvoir & juridiction de la part du chef de cette mission venant à cesser; le tout sous les peines portées par l'édit du 28 Novembre 1781.

Déclare Sa Majesté que la présente disposition opérera de même à l'égard de la communauté des Dominicains & de celle des Récollets Irlandois à Louvain; de manière que d'après ces mêmes règles & principes, l'une & l'autre de ces communautés respectivement devront tenir une assemblée capitulaire dans le terme d'un mois, & y procéder à l'élection d'un visiteur de chacune d'elles, auquel toute la communauté sera subordonnée comme au supérieur majeur religieux, y faire choix d'un vice visiteur qui sera en même tems consultant, ce qui devra se renouveler de quatre en quatre années; & y élire le prieur ou gardien & autres employés pour cet intervalle d'une assemblée à l'autre; Sa Majesté leur défendant sous les peines statuées par l'édit du 28 Novembre 1781 toute liaison & rapport avec le chef des missions en Irlande, sauf & excepté pour ce qui concerne l'envoi & le rappel des missionnaires, comme il est déclaré ci-dessus.

Mande & ordonne Sa Majesté à tous ceux qu'il peut appartenir de se régler & conformer selon ce. Fait à Bruxelles le 4 Mai 1782. Etoit paraphé, NE. *et*. Plus bas étoit, par l'Empereur & Roi, signé *De Reul*.

This edict limited the role of the Irish provincial in the affairs of Holy Cross to sending out young men as students and recalling them

to Ireland on the completion of their studies. In the meanwhile, the community at Louvain was to hold a chapter meeting within a month to elect a visitor, a vice-visitor and a prior. For the following four years, the visitor would be their major religious superior. There is abundant evidence that such arrangements caused turmoil at St. Anthony's, the Irish Franciscan college at Louvain. "Despite the presence in the house of an armed police force, a fatal confrontation between friars could barely be prevented" <sup>63</sup>. As for the Dominicans, all one can say at the moment is that they did have a "visitor general", Pius Mullanny, in 1788 <sup>64</sup>. A more ambitious decree, signed by the emperor on 16 October 1786, envisaged a "general seminary" at Louvain, which would have closed the private *studia* of the religious orders. After some months of fear and loud debate, the projected seminary collapsed in the face of widespread opposition. Despite adverse conditions, the Irish Franciscans at Louvain continued to prosper, if only because students still came over from Ireland and the local bishops still permitted the quest. One can safely assume that the Dominicans of Holy Cross continued their work. Belgian archives may yet throw some light on their affairs, but the only document found so far is a detailed list of the land, buildings, goods and finances of Holy Cross submitted to the civil authorities by the prior, John Weever, on 18 April 1787 <sup>65</sup>.

#### BOM SUCESSO AND CORPO SANTO, 1785-1789

What little we know about the friars and nuns of Lisbon during these years comes mostly from Francis Thomas Levins, procurator general of Bom Sucesso, who wrote twice to Dr Troy on the subject. In his first letter, written in 1786, Levins declared <sup>66</sup>:

The affairs of this house [Bom Sucesso] are growing worse every day, and no possible remedy for it. Matters are not much better at Corpo Santo. The bearer of this, Fr Lector [Michael V.] Egan, can inform you of all if you happen to see him. I am sorry he leaves us, but it was not possible to persuade him to remain. I suppose Fr [Patrick V.] Donnellan will also soon

<sup>63</sup> A. A. Wijffels, Calendar of Documents relating to St Anthony's College, 1782-85, in Coll. Hib. 24 (1982) 82.

<sup>64</sup> Mullanny to Hyac. Keely, sending him from Holy Cross to Reims on 10 Apr. 1788. TA, Letters, under date.

<sup>65</sup> Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume, 14976. On 14 folio pages.

<sup>66</sup> Bom Success, 2 May 1786. Levins to Troy. DDA, 29/7, no. 219.



go away; if so, they [at Corpo Santo] may act without controul. I judge that they think that they do well, and as I cannot hinder their proceedings or apply any possible remedy, I act as one blind, deaf and dumb, and only wish to be rid of them and return to serve the mission, whilst I have health and strength. Mr [Thomas] Nettervill anxiously desires I would go home. I often wrote to the General for leave, but never received an answer.

Levins' complaint was substantially against the rector of Corpo Santo, Antoninus Fleming, who was also the general's vicar for the nuns, but not sufficiently "impartial" in dealing with them. The nuns themselves were quite content with Levins, while he in fact stayed in Lisbon only to look after them. In 1787, while he was wondering whether or not to accept the priorship of Drogheda, the nuns took matters into their own hands<sup>67</sup>.

The ladies of Bon Success as soon as they had notice of my resolution, wrote to the General, as I cou'd understand from the provincial of this [Portuguese] province, their nominal visitator, who told me that his Rmo the General wrote to him to persuade me to remain, thereby to satisfy the nuns. These motives induced me to determin on remaining for 2 or 3 years more, untill a proper person can be found to fill my place. Indeed to be plain, compassion for the miserable state of this house, and the much worse state to which it wou'd be reduced by my departure, moved me more to remain than the above motive, or request of the General. I clearly see that those [of Corpo Santo] who have the superintendency of this house, care not what becomes of it, so that they govern unmolested, and persuade the publick they are right and proceed with the greatest impartiality.

But this will not excuse them in the sight of God, no, not even if they imagin'd so, whereas they are voluntarily blind, and will foam if even advised, because whatever is not according to their idea is not right. This house is going to ruin, both in spirituals and temporals, and superiors will not take the trouble to know it, not even to hear it, thereby not to be obliged to change their partial opinion. But I say, woe to human respects, woe to flatterers. After I had resolved on going home, I understood that the rector of Corpo Santo intended to send one [Thomas] Coghlan in my place, a boy indeed, who finish'd his studies only last September, of no prudence, little sense, as great a babbler as any who wou'd be his companion. This is the care that is taken to preserve peace among women. Seeing this, I sincerely commiserated their state, which moved me to remain more than any other cause. However, my desire to go on the mission is very great, and I cannot conquer it, but shall remain some time longer, as I said.

<sup>67</sup> Bom Success, 23 May 1787. Levins to Troy. DDA, 29/7, no. 220.

[Patrick V.] Donnellan is preparing, for what port I don't know. He is at Corpo Sancto only as a guest. They have at Corpo Santo two lectors of philosophy and only one of divinity, and two students of divinity; no master of students or second lector.

Fr Levins' final complaint, about the staffing of Corpo Santo, was heeded early in the following year, 1788. The following curious document, without date, signature or address, is to be found in the archives of the master general<sup>68</sup>.

Lo Stato Presente dello Studio Generale del Collegio Ibernese di Lisbona.

Vi sono tre lettori, cioè un regente e due giovani lettori: Fr Giuseppe Ham, il quale ha terminato il suo corso di filosofia, e Fr Pietro Magennis che fra poco avrà anche esso terminato il suo. Manca un bacciliere e un maestro di studio. Vi sono quattro studenti di teologia, e tre di filosofia i quali presto passeranno allo studio di teologia. Tra i sudetti quattro v'è ne uno capace di cominciare un nuovo corso di filosofia con cinque novizi professi, alcuni nella provincia di Portogallo, ed altri arrivati dall'Ibernia. Onde per mantenere lo studio con vigore, sembra convenire che il sudetto Fr Giuseppe Ham venga fatto maestro di studio ingiungendoli di supplire fratanto alla mancanza di bacciliere, e che s'ordini al lettore Pietro Magennis di spiegare Melchior Cano quando avrà terminato il suo corso di filosofia, mentre il sudetto studente fra Francesco [Andrea] Fitzgerald fatto lettore di filosofia, lo studio sarà continuato con vigore in questa conformità se piace al Rmo Pre Mro Generale che Iddio conservi per molti anni.

Someone must have told Propaganda Fide that all was not well in Lisbon, for the master general felt obliged to write a note to cardinal Antonelli on 26 March 1788 expressing his anxiety to help Corpo Santo and stating that he had *already* appointed a master of students there. He had indeed, just a few moments before writing to the cardinal<sup>69</sup>! On the very same day, Joseph Ham was named master of students, Francis Levins was continued as procurator of Bom Sucesso for another three years, and James Bradley appointed confessor to the nuns. Patrick Donnellan, whom Levins would have preferred to remain in Lisbon, sailed for London in April 1788. Thomas Coghlan, the "babbler"

<sup>68</sup> AGOP XIII. 68098. The document shows that there were seven students in the house for the scholastic year 1787-88. It is interesting that some of the five professed novices expected for the year 1788-89 were to come from Ireland, and therefore from Irish novitiates.

<sup>69</sup> Loc. cit. for the general's biglietto. The three appointments of the same date are in AGOP IV. 240, p. 20.

destined to replace Levins at Bom Sucesso, returned to Ireland in May <sup>70</sup>. Levins himself, for all his anxiety to return to the mission, was still at Lisbon in 1805.

#### NEWFOUNDLAND AND NOVA SCOTIA, 1785-1800

The great cod-fishing banks off Newfoundland were visited seasonally by fleets from many nations almost from the time of their rediscovery by Cabot in 1497. Even Irish ships were making such expeditions as early as 1530. France long ruled the island until yielding up most of it to the British by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and conceding the remainder by the Treaty of Paris (1763) after the Seven Years' War. In 1740, midway between those two momentous treaties, a Galway Dominican with the highly appropriate name of Nicholas Banks wrote twice for help from La Rochelle to the Stuart exile, James III, at Rome. For good measure he had also written to the Pope, and to the same effect: after suffering so much, first in Newfoundland where he had been "robbed and frozen", then in Ireland and now in France, he urgently needed assignation to a French convent <sup>71</sup>. The opposition of the British authorities to colonization, violent bigotry towards even the Catholic laity, combined with the lack of a permanent governor or stable judiciary, delayed not only the establishment of the church but even the development of the country. In the meanwhile, "strolling priests" from Ireland occasionally ministered to thousands of poor Catholics whose cabins were liable to be burnt down if Mass had been celebrated inside them.

All this changed for the better in 1783 when the Roman Catholics of St John's, the principal town on the island, "at last got full liberty and permission to build a chapel there and full exercise of religion from the governor" <sup>72</sup>. They invited James O Donel OFM of Waterford to come out as superior of the mission with two other priests of the same diocese. Seven-eighths of the Catholics came from Waterford;

<sup>70</sup> Lisbon, 9 May 1788. Michael Daly, rector of St Patrick's college, to Troy. DDA, 117/7, under date.

<sup>71</sup> La Rochelle, 1 and 28 Sept. 1740. Banks to James III. Windsor, Stuart Papers 226, nos. 139, 154.

<sup>72</sup> C. J. Byrne (ed.), *Gentlemen-Bishops and Faction-Fighters: the Letters of Bishops O Donel, Lambert, Scallan and other Irish Missionaries, St John's 1984*, 37. Cited hereafter simply as Byrne. His translations from Latin or Italian are not to be trusted.

they needed priests who could preach in Irish, and they needed an authorized superior to deal with two disgraceful priests already on the island. James O Donel reached St John's on 4 July 1784, accompanied by Patrick Phelan OFM, and soon nudged back to Ireland the two secular priests who, he said, "for the past seven years wandered the whole island, leading a drunken and truly disgraceful life". Fr O Donel's first report, from which these details come, gives a fair idea of his problems <sup>73</sup>.

It is truly difficult to minister to the Catholics of this island, which has been settled only in coastal regions scattered in the hollows of hills and forests and therefore unable to be reached save with the greatest danger in open fishing boats. The political regime here holds back agricultural development and charges strictly that only a sufficient number may winter over as are necessary to preserve from ruin the buildings and other store-houses ... Many inhabitants are scattered here and there in various ports through a laxity who, living like animals, scarcely have any knowledge of the Deity, with the exception of the children of the Irish who have retained some glimmer of religion from the tradition of their ancestors ... Up to this point I have not been able to obtain an exact idea of the number of Catholics, but I believe there to be at least ten thousand on the whole island of whom the greater part is engaged as servants scarcely setting foot on land except when ships unload fish. Here [at St John's] I have seventy communicants who live here all the time.

The superior's first companion, Patrick Phelan, was sent off to Harbour Grace where he soon built a fine chapel and made monthly visitation, "even setting out on foot during the winter across seas filled with ice for distances of seven leagues". The second approved missionary, Edmund Bourke OP, came out, as O Donel tells us, during the summer of 1785 <sup>74</sup>.

15 Junii hocce anno huc pervenit quidem Pater Edmundus de Burgo ordinis praedicatorum, juvenis mihi probe notus et enixe mihi commendatus ab episcopo Waterfordiensi, cui assignavi districtum de Placentia ubi fuit bene receptus a principali mercatore loci. Hic mihi scribit quod praefatus mercator licet acatholicus curebit ipsi aedificare duas capellas per subscriptionem famulorum praefati districtus et quod cum nimis procul, viz. 70 leucis abhinc distet, tuto possit gallicanum parochum S. Petri ut confiteatur recedere.

<sup>73</sup> Byrne, 52-57.

<sup>74</sup> Byrne, 56, Quoted here from the original.



Tradition has it that this Edmund Bourke was a native of Co. Tipperary and a nephew of the famous priest, Fr Nicholas Sheehy of Clogheen, executed in 1766 for his alleged part in agrarian disturbances<sup>75</sup>. Be that as it may, he was young, well known to James O Donel and warmly recommended by William Egan, bishop of Waterford. The "terms of contract" for new missionaries stipulated a knowledge of Irish and residence in the diocese of Waterford which took in part of Co. Tipperary, including the parish of Clogheen. All these elements identify our Edmund Bourke with the young man of that name who took the habit at Corpo Santo on 12 December 1773 as a son of the convent of Rosbercon beside New Ross. After his novitiate in Batalha, Bourke returned to Lisbon where he received all sacred orders from tonsure to diaconate within two weeks<sup>76</sup>. Most likely, he became a priest at Lisbon in 1776 or 1777, although he had yet to finish his studies. We find him publicly defending theological theses there in 1778 and 1780<sup>77</sup>. Meanwhile, his native convent of Rosbercon ceased to exist, leaving its funds and goods to the Dominicans of Waterford, and it is precisely at Waterford that Edmund Bourke appears again. Anthony Duane of that community leased a house in Thomas Street in 1784 and in October of the same year assigned that lease to Edmund Bourke and Denis O'Connor, the former vicar-provincial<sup>78</sup>. In the following summer, Bourke sailed for Newfoundland.

As we have seen, he was sent to Placentia, found a patron in Saunders and Company, the chief Protestant merchants of the town, who undertook to build two chapels with the alms of Catholic servants, and likewise found a confessor for himself in the French colony of St Pierre. This island lies off the Burin peninsula, part of Fr Bourke's district, at least as far westward from Placentia as St John's is to the east. The important difference was that he could reach Burin and St Pierre much more easily by sea. Even in 1785, the year of his arrival,

<sup>75</sup> Both statements seem to depend solely on M. F. H o w l e y, *Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland*, Boston 1888, 183. All one can say is that Fr Sheehy's sister Catherine did in fact marry a Burke.

<sup>76</sup> Between 21 Dec. 1775 and 1 Jan. 1776. Lisbon, archives of the Patriarcado, ms. 282. The *matriculas* for 1776-78 are missing. There is an excellent biographical note on this Edmund Dominic Bourke in T. S. F l y n n, 'The Dominicans of Rosbercon, Tallaght 1981, 31-32.

<sup>77</sup> The printed texts were recently found by Antonio do Rosario OP at Lisbon, Torre do Tombo, serie Preta, 3562, nos. 44, 66.

<sup>78</sup> TA, Russell, "Historical Notes on Irish Province", vol. 1, p. 29.



Bourke obtained both a house and land for a chapel on which work began at once with the governor's blessing. In the meanwhile, he was allowed to hold services in the court-house and quickly converted many of the Church of England. Bourke's social standing brought him to the attention of Prince William Henry, Duke of Clarence, later to rule England as William IV, but in 1786 merely captain of the *Pegasus*, invested with the surrogate magisterial power accorded by law to the masters of the first three vessels arriving in the island each season. The prince soon noticed at Placentia that Bourke commanded more respect and regard than he did himself<sup>79</sup>. The result was an immediate decree that Catholics were to defer to the magistrates and that no Protestants were to be married or baptised by the priest. Prince William forbade the use of the court-house for Mass and even questioned Bourke's right to build a chapel. Thanks to O Donel, the governor intervened, but this only encouraged the young prince, on reaching St John's, to throw an iron file from the window of a billiard-room at O Donel himself, and lay a plot to run him through with a sword. The following is O Donel's account of the earlier incident at Placentia<sup>80</sup>.

From the first day that he [Prince William] was appointed surrogate he ordered the Protestants to have no manner of communications with the idolatrous priest Bourke, on whom he heaped all the annoyance of which he was capable. He told him in public court that he was guilty of treason for having made proselytes and forbade Protestants to marry Catholics or bury their dead, as before, in the same cemetery as Catholics, which was the least of his many insults.

Father O Donel had scarcely recovered from the prince's visit, during which he had to hide in an attic for twelve days, when he was startled in 1787 by the arrival of Patrick Power, a fellow-Franciscan whom he knew and determined to chase back to Ireland at once. Power lost no time in writing to Dr Troy of Dublin who, in an unguarded moment, had actually recommended him. Power's letter adds an extra touch to what we know of Edmund Bourke<sup>81</sup>.

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<sup>79</sup> R. J. Lahey, "Edmund Burke", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, 5 (Toronto 1983) 122-23. Many other details are taken here from the same excellent article.

<sup>80</sup> Byrne, 58-61, 92-93.

<sup>81</sup> Caplin Bay, 29 Oct. 1787. DDA, 116/4, no. 41. Byrne, 90-91, wrongly gives the year as 1789.

I am sure your Grace's recommendation and my provincial's obedience were as good as that of Dr Egan's [bishop of Waterford] who recommended Fr Bourke after the same manner, which I saw, whom Mr O Donel made take an oath against drinking whilst in the mission here, on account of his extravagance in his house one night.

This statement, apparently true, came from a notorious trouble-maker whom Bourke and two other missionaries were to denounce in 1790 as "a scandalous outlaw and inciter of ancient feuds between the lay people of Munster and Leinster, which had been completely suppressed by our efforts" before his arrival<sup>82</sup>. Despite such unpleasant distractions, Bourke's mission flourished<sup>83</sup>.

By 1788 he had three chapels in his district, including a "very neat" one at Placentia itself. His parishoners numbered more than 3,000 and Bourke, who was engaged in the fishing business, had an estimated annual income of £ 300. That same year, Placentia's newly arrived Anglican clergyman, John Harries, noted with alarm that so strong was Roman Catholicism that it was effectively "the established religion, and our own Church within the limits of toleration". Conversions from the Church of England continued; in 1791 Bourke was reported to have made many converts as far away as Fortune Bay.

Late in 1791, Father Bourke "had a violent puking of blood which continued for three days and reduced him so very low" that Father O Donel feared he would "fall into a decay". On the contrary, a visit of several months to the doctors of Bristol restored him to perfect health and to the mission<sup>84</sup>. One finds him still in charge at Placentia on 20 November 1794 when, with two Franciscans and eighteen laymen, he successfully petitioned the Pope to name James O Donel OFM vicar apostolic, and therefore bishop, in Newfoundland<sup>85</sup>. After ten years' service, he left Placentia in December 1795, before O'Donel's consecration and much to O Donel's annoyance. While aware that Bourke wanted to go to the United States, his superior could not understand "how he could think of leaving his flock without the smallest provision made for their instruction". O Donel complained again to Dr Troy of Dublin on 20 December 1795<sup>86</sup>.

<sup>82</sup> Byrne, 110-11. This document pays touching tribute to O Donel.

<sup>83</sup> The quotation is from R. J. Lahey, as in note 79.

<sup>84</sup> Byrne, 116-17, 122.

<sup>85</sup> The original is in APF, SOCG 902, ff. 218, 223. Printed by P. F. Moran, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, III (Dublin 1884) 468-69 from a copy in DDA, 116/6, no. 13.

<sup>86</sup> Byrne, 133-38.

I had a letter lately from Mr Bourke dated at Trepassy in this island informing me that on his passage hither [to St John's] he met with a sloop of war in the aforesaid harbour in which he took a passage for Halifax on his way to the United States, and that he'll see me early in May. He acquainted me before of his intention to which I made no answer, as he told me he'd have a personal interview with me and of course thought I could then dissuade him from roving from his flock after fleecing them.

Bourke did in fact return to Placentia, as he had promised, but then there was a visit to Boston, probably in 1798, when he declined a good appointment there. Finally, in 1799 he went to Halifax, Nova Scotia, which he had visited several times before. So many Newfoundland Irish had migrated from Placentia to Halifax that they now made up most of the Catholic congregation in the town. On 25 September 1800, Edmund Bourke was formally appointed parish priest of Halifax and vicar general of Nova Scotia<sup>87</sup>.

A second Dominican, Thomas Lonergan, reached Placentia from France in 1785 without warning or authorization. His behaviour made Father O Donel complain at once to Propaganda Fide<sup>88</sup>.

In this district of Placentia lurks a certain apostate of the order of preachers from the Irish province who came there this year from France, who hears confessions without jurisdiction and does everything that pertains to a missionary legitimately sent. Horrendous things concerning him are related here [at St John's] and written to me by Father Bourke; indeed complaints about him were sent to the governor himself, namely that he had violently struck a Protestant fisherman and gathered a Catholic mob who threatened him with death, so that the fisherman was forced to give up the fishery and was out of pocket to the extent of 100 guineas. The fisherman wants to know by whom the loss is to be made good, whether by the King or by the governor who allows such priests on the island. But I hope this infamous man by the name of Patrick [sic] Lonergan, already publicly excommunicated, will shortly depart.

Dominican records are silent as to Lonergan's very existence. The surname strongly suggests that he came from Cork, but all one knows with certainty is that Thomas Lonergan, born on 16 June 1752, studied philosophy at Louvain and received sacred orders at Cologne, from tonsure to diaconate, in 1777<sup>89</sup>. At Newfoundland his brief career

<sup>87</sup> R. J. Lahey, as in note 79. Lahey also describes Bourke's later career.

<sup>88</sup> Byrne, 56. M. F. Howley, *op. cit.*, 182, says that Lonergan was accompanied by a Fr Daly of Cork.

went from bad to worse. When Governor Campbell ordered him out of Placentia in October 1785, he took to the east coast, south of St John's, whither O Donel pursued him that winter<sup>90</sup>.

Loneragan is a failed outlaw, abandoned by God and men; and now [November 1786] he is gone to Trinity Bay to spread scandal there. He publicly revealed the confessions of the people. He lived in sin with the wife of a certain Doctor Dutton, a Protestant, who appealed to the magistrate to send him into exile. But since the civil power is very weak along the coasts, the magistrate turned to me, and I in consequence crossed the bays in the height of winter as far as Renew's, a stretch of more than fifty miles, and excommunicated him in every harbour. This had the desired effect and made him take refuge in St Mary's where he kept a shack this summer. I believe that my first official duty in his regard will be to attend him at the gallows, because he will probably kill someone in Trinity Bay, which is quite a distance from me.

When Father O Donel mentioned Loneragan again, in a letter of 10 November 1787, that unfortunate priest was already dead<sup>91</sup>.

The apostate Loneragan is gone off, I am told, to the coasts of the Labrador after giving more scandal all over this island than can be repaired for a long time. He is the worst man I ever heard of, as in his drunken fits he sports with the most sacred parts of our holy religion; openly reveals the confessions he has heard in one harbour as soon as he gets to another ...

P.S. Unfortunate Loneragan died suddenly in Fuogo and I am afraid in a drunken fit, as he stretched in his clothes on a bench near the fire in a planter's house and was found dead in the morning. This news arrived only just before I sealed this letter.

The last Dominican associated with Newfoundland at this time was Michael Nicholas Burke, but he was only a visitor on his way from Waterford to New York in 1789. Father O Donel tried in vain to keep him<sup>92</sup>.

Fr Nicholas Burke has spent seven weeks with me waiting for an opportunity to New York. I offered him two vacant harbours in this island, but

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<sup>89</sup> A. Wilms, *Die Dominikaner in den Kölner Weiheprotokollen*, in *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland*, XXII (Leipzig 1927) 185-86. In Aug. 1777, he publicly defended philosophical theses at Holy Cross, with Ml O'Kelly and Pat. Rush. Printed original in TA, Louvain file.

<sup>90</sup> Byrne, 60, 360.

<sup>91</sup> Byrne, 63-64. Byrne also gives (p. 360) the actual date of death: 25 Oct. 1787.

<sup>92</sup> Byrne, 98, 101, 103.

could not prevail on him to remain with us, as I suppose he foresaw they would afford him too scanty a means of subsistence.

Before passing on, as Father Burke did, to the United States, it is as well to point out that the Newfoundland mission was largely the work of the Irish regular clergy, despite the fact that their own houses in Ireland were then in full decline. Several Augustinians worked there before ever James O Donel arrived. The first five bishops were Irish Franciscans. The Dominican bishop Troy of Ossory, archbishop of Dublin from 1786, did all in his power to help them, even while struggling with a host of more important domestic issues. The letters of bishop O Donel, who described Troy as his "best friend", are loud in his praise. Two Dominican agents at Rome, Charles O'Kelly and Luke Concanen, took care of all the official business of the mission, so much so that Concanen could write back to Troy in 1796: "I suppose you'll have acquainted O Donel of my having been the author of his promotion"<sup>93</sup>. Concanen claimed perhaps too much, but one cannot doubt his goodwill, hard work or influence.

#### NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA, 1785-1789

One sometimes finds references to Irish missionaries who went to "America" before the revolution of 1776, but that term was broadly used and sometimes meant Spanish America, the West Indies or parts of the present United States which belonged to France or Spain. Since their destination was usually so vague, one ought to mention Edmund Stone OP, authorized by the provincial chapter of 1738 to go to "New England in America", whether or not he ever got there<sup>94</sup>.

One effect of the revolution was to free the clergy of the "Thirteen United States" from their long dependence in matters spiritual on the vicars-apostolic of London. After some years with no adequate superior, Propaganda Fide in 1784 gave them a prefect apostolic in the person of a former Jesuit, John Carroll, destined to become bishop of Baltimore in 1789 and therefore the first bishop in the United States<sup>95</sup>. In the meanwhile, Congress had sanctioned religious freedom, but

<sup>93</sup> Rome, 16 Jan. 1796. DDA 116/6, no. 116.

<sup>94</sup> Biographical note in T. S. Flynn, *The Dominicans of Rosbercon*, (Tallaght 1981) 38-39.

<sup>95</sup> P. Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll*, (Westminster 1954) 163-77, 343-91.



since each individual State had its own legislature, the legal rights of Catholics varied from one State to the next. New York was slow to change its attitude of open hostility, but when the state constitution of 1777 guaranteed religious liberty and British troops evacuated the city in 1783, the way lay open for the church to develop. Father Farmer S.J., who had from time to time said Mass secretly "for a handful of Catholics in a loft on Water Street", felt free to enter the city openly only in 1784<sup>96</sup>.

In October [1784] Charles Whelan, an Irish Capuchin, arrived in New York where he began to say Mass in the house of José Roiz Silva, a wealthy Portuguese merchant; he became the nucleus of a congregation of about 200 Catholics. In the whole State, so the prefect apostolic, John Carroll, estimated (1785), there were about 1,500 Catholics. New York was, until 1800, capital of the republic, and the small Catholic body was augmented by official representatives of Catholic European powers, in whose houses chaplains also celebrated Mass, and by the few Catholic members of Congress. Led by Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, the French consul, and taking advantage of a state law of 1784 permitting any religious denomination to organise as a body corporate, they set up The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church in the City of New York. Crèvecoeur, with £ 1,000 advanced by Thomas Stoughton, the Spanish consul general, and the latter's business partner, Dominick Lynch, bought the unexpired leases of five lots of the Trinity Church Farm. There, on 5 Oct. 1785, the Spanish ambassador, Don Diego de Gardoqui, officiated at the laying of the cornerstone of the mother church of New York, Old St Peter's, on Barclay Street.

Dominic Lynch, mentioned above as a business partner of the Spanish consul, was a young merchant from Galway. Since neither he nor his friends had money enough to build the new church, they wrote for help to the clergy of his native city in September 1785, explaining that: "our having a decent church, with a good preacher, would be the means of awakening in the breasts of thousands a religion in which their forefathers were educated, but for want of opportunity they had not in their power to exercise"<sup>97</sup>. The Spanish ambassador, Don Diego de Gardoqui, who presided at the laying of the cornerstone of St Peter's, later obtained the services of a Dominican chaplain, John

<sup>96</sup> J. A. Reynolds, New York, Archdiocese, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 10 (1967) 399-400. It is curious that Guilday (op. cit. 247) should say that the New York constitution of 1777 "excluded Catholics from the rights of citizenship".

<sup>97</sup> E. Mac Lysaght (ed.), Report on Documents relating to the Wardenship of Galway, in *Analecta Hibernica* 14 (1944) 54-56.

O'Connell, who reached New York on 17 May 1786 with missionary faculties granted by the nuncio at Madrid at the request of the king of Spain<sup>98</sup>. One may say, until the contrary is proved, that John O'Connell was the first Irish Dominican to work in the United States.

While the surname O'Connell would suggest a Kerry origin, we know only that he studied in Spain and in 1778 received the royal alms granted to missionaries destined for Ireland<sup>99</sup>. Whether or not he used the money to go home, he was assistant to the vicar of the Irish Dominican hospice at Bilbao in July 1780 when the rector of Corpo Santo suggested his appointment as confessor at Bom Sucesso, Lisbon. On that occasion the rector mentioned that "Connell" had finished his studies in Spain some while before and that he was well spoken of<sup>100</sup>. Presumably O'Connell remained at Bilbao from 1780, for he was vicar of the hospice there at the time of his departure for New York. As embassy chaplain, his first duty was to serve Don Diego de Gardoqui and his staff in their private oratory, but he ministered also in the city and may have accompanied the ambassador to Philadelphia in 1788. That was the year in which, like his employer, he subscribed to Matthew Carey's *American Museum*. Towards the close of 1789, the year of the French Revolution, he returned to Europe, never to be heard of again<sup>101</sup>.

Even before O'Connell's departure, other Irish Dominicans had followed him to the States. For the moment it is enough to introduce the first and most important of them, William Vincent O'Brien. He was born about 1742 and took the habit at San Clemente for the convent of Dublin in 1761. Had all gone well he would have studied there, but poor health forced him to leave in August 1763 and begin philosophy again at S. Caterina di Formello in Naples, a convent of the Dominican province of Lombardy<sup>102</sup>. So it was at "Caizo" (Caiazzo?) in Naples that he received all sacred orders between 1767 and 1768<sup>103</sup>. Soon

<sup>98</sup> W. Harper Bennett, *Catholic Footsteps in Old New York*, (New York 1909) 378-79.

<sup>99</sup> Simancas, Hacienda, Avisos de la Segreteria de Gracia y Justicia, legajo 19 (1772-89). Reference kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.

<sup>100</sup> See above, p. 452.

<sup>101</sup> V. F. O'Daniel, *The Dominican Province of St Joseph*, (New York 1942) 123-24. D. Pochin Mould, *The Irish Dominicans*, (Dublin 1957) 243, says he went from New York to Rome.

<sup>102</sup> Coll. Hib. 14 (1971) 26; 10 (1967) 69. SCAR, no. 55, f. 32.

<sup>103</sup> R. Walsh (ed.), *A List of Ecclesiastics that took the Oath of Allegiance*, in Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 64.

after, he left for Bologna, also in the province of Lombardy, whence he was sent to Ireland in June 1770 on the completion of his studies<sup>104</sup>, and for the next seventeen years worked with the Dominicans of Dublin city. Although O'Brien left Italy, so far as we know, without a degree, he styled himself "lector of philosophy and vicar of the convent of Dublin" in 1777<sup>105</sup>. The provincial chapter of the same year postulated him for the degree of preacher-general, but that request had to be repeated in 1781 and 1785 before being finally granted. When the community moved house and chapel from Bridge Street to Denmark Street in 1780, the name of William O'Brien appeared in the deed concerning the new premises<sup>106</sup>. The only other detail of his career in Dublin is that about Christmas 1782 he took the oath of allegiance with most of the clergy of the capital<sup>107</sup>. One does not know, unfortunately, what motive induced William O'Brien to leave for Philadelphia in 1787 at the age of forty-five. According to O'Daniel, he was the first Dominican to enter the eastern States with the formal title of "missionary apostolic"<sup>108</sup>.

Father O'Brien, who came to the States recommended by archbishop Troy, went first to Philadelphia where the church, with a congregation of 2,000, was already well established. The parish church of St Mary's, the principal Catholic church in the country, had been built in 1763, while there was even a parish school, opened in 1782. However, O'Brien's work seems to have been in south-western New Jersey rather than in the city, for his name does not appear on the baptismal registers of St Mary's until 2 October 1787. In any event, he can scarcely have been in Philadelphia more than a few months when the prefect apostolic, John Carroll, named him pastor of St Peter's in New York<sup>109</sup>. This was a delicate and important assignment, for Charles

<sup>104</sup> See appendix, p. 620.

<sup>105</sup> See above, p. 365.

<sup>106</sup> Dublin, Deeds' Office, King's Inns, vol. 376, p. 258, no. 250680. Information kindly supplied by F. J. Litton SSC.

<sup>107</sup> As in note 103. Several Dublin Dominicans appear in this list. Some, like O'Brien, lived in Denmark St: Jas. T. Mulhall, Mich. MacDermott, Denis Ferrall, Mich. White, Sam. Kindelan, and Geo. Plunkett. John O'Connor of Smithfield was "serving in Denmark St chapel".

<sup>108</sup> V. F. O'Daniel, *Dominican Province of St Joseph*, (New York 1942) 124.

<sup>109</sup> Guilday, *op. cit.*, 278, 280. Curiously, Guilday also says (p. 245) that O'Brien was already in Philadelphia on 28 Mar. 1785.

Whelan, an Irish Capuchin and leader of the infant church at New York from 1784, had been dislodged in 1785 by a false confrère, Andrew Nugent, backed by a group of trustees and parishoners who discovered too late that Nugent was less worthy than his exiled predecessor. Although Nugent had the gratification of opening St Peter's church in November 1786, he was later suspended by Carroll. So it was that in November 1787 Father O'Brien became the first permanent pastor of New York and — the compliment comes from Guilday — "the most prominent Irish priest in America"<sup>110</sup>.

This early disturbance at New York, "the first schism in the United States", was soon followed by another at Boston where the first public Mass was celebrated in November 1788 by a troubled and troublesome priest named Claude de la Poterie. Six months passed before John Carroll discovered to his dismay that this "sad rascal" had been suspended in Paris before coming to the States. At Carroll's request, William O'Brien had to leave New York for Boston to survey the scene, "with the result that on 20 May 1789 Poterie was suspended, and a parish committee assumed the debts he had contracted"<sup>111</sup>. A pamphlet, the work of la Poterie, immediately appeared under the exotic title: *The Resurrection of Laurent Ricci or, a true and exact History of the Jesuits. Dedicated to the Rev. John Carroll, Superior of the Jesuits in the United States, also to the Friar-Monk-Inquisitor William O'Brien (one of his many contrivers)*<sup>112</sup>.

While this booklet adds nothing to our knowledge of Father O'Brien, we do know that he brought peace to New York and put the church there on a firm footing. During the long debate on the need for an American diocese, he gave John Carroll firm support against his opponents. The two men, according to O'Daniel, enjoyed a "trustful and intimate friendship". Occasionally, Father O'Brien crossed the Hudson to minister again in New Jersey, but his greatest preoccupation was St Peter's church: unfinished, undecorated and heavily in debt. So matters stood in 1789. Over the following three years he was to solve this pressing problem but that story may be left to a later page<sup>113</sup>.

<sup>110</sup> Guilday, *op. cit.*, 311.

<sup>111</sup> Ibidem, 285.

<sup>112</sup> Philadelphia 1789, 28 pp. There is a copy in APF, SOCG 892, ff. 516-31.

<sup>113</sup> O'Daniel, *op. cit.*, 124-25. Guilday, *op. cit.*, 626-27, 629.

## FATHER THOMAS DALTON'S LAST YEARS: 1789-1798

On ceasing to be provincial in 1789, Thomas Dalton lived on at Dublin as quietly as before. The chapter of 1793 put him forward for the degree of bachelor or *praesentatus* of theology, which he obtained by 1798. While serving the Dominican church in Denmark Street, he lived at 192 Abbey Street nearby<sup>114</sup>. A government spy interested in the revolutionary group called the United Irishmen kept a close eye on Denmark Street, submitting on 15 October 1796 a list of six friars who were "democrats", favouring national independence, and five "of moderate principles". Among the latter, not surprisingly, was the name of Father Dalton "brother to the late Count of that name"<sup>115</sup>. This recalls the problem of Dalton's family background. It now appears that one of his brothers was Count Christopher Dalton of Grenanstown, Co. Tipperary, and that his sister married General Thomas Plunkett, governor of Antwerp. Of the four sons of that marriage, John Thomas Plunkett, Dalton's nephew, became a Dominican at Louvain in 1784, spent most of his short life in Rome, and died at Verona while tending the fever-stricken in 1806<sup>116</sup>.

The only later reference to Thomas Dalton is in connection with the "pseudo-chapter" held at Dublin by a handful of Dominicans on 8 July 1797. The majority stayed away, partly because the viceroy had banned such meetings in the name of public security, and partly because the out-going provincial advised postponement of the chapter. Even Thomas Netterville attended the meeting, "commissioned by the vocals of Ulster", just as Dalton did "commissioned by the vocals of Leinster", so the presence of these two ex-provincials would suggest constitutional rather than political motives. When the master general, Balthazar de Quiñones, cassated the chapter acts of 1797, both Dalton and Netterville signed an appeal to the Pope at Dublin on 14 March 1798<sup>117</sup>. They thus joined the "appellants" whom the other vocals

<sup>114</sup> Cogan, Diocese of Meath, III, 676, though the identification is not certain.

<sup>115</sup> M. V. Ronan, Priests in the Independence Movement, 1796-98, in Irish Eccles. Record (Aug. 1946) 96.

<sup>116</sup> DDA 116/4, nos. 80, 81, 83, 110. D. Walsh, The Dominicans of Arklow, in Reportorium Novum (1964) 322. A Dublin newspaper of 1 July 1771 noted the marriage of Edward Dalton Esquire (the provincial's brother?), lieutenant colonel in the Austrian service and one of her imperial majesty's chamberlains, to Miss MacCarthy, daughter of John MacCarthy of Springhouse in the county of Tipperary. J. Brady, Catholics and Catholicism, (Maynooth 1965) 144.

<sup>117</sup> APF, SC. Irlanda 17, f. 461.



wished to deprive of active and passive voice in any further election until they gave proof of repentance. Netterville went to God in July 1799, but of Thomas Dalton there is no further trace.

#### JOHN DOLPHIN, 1789-1793

John Dolphin, elected provincial in 1789, was close to seventy and for almost forty years before had been working quietly in his native convent of Esker. Since he made profession about 1740, we may take it that his father was the Mr John Dolphin who paid the convent four pounds "for his son's diet" on 20 August 1739 and that he made his novitiate at Esker. The confraternity-book of that house includes the name of "John Dolphin of Turoe", a place in the barony of Athenry where this old family of Norse and English origin had been resident for centuries. John Dolphin studied in Spain where the climate did nothing for his health. That may explain why he was called to San Sisto in 1747 to finish theology, though he never in fact reached Rome<sup>118</sup>. In this sketch of his early career, one reaches firmer ground only in 1750 when he left the Irish hospice at Bilbao carrying the following letter of introduction to Hyacinth Keaghry of Esker<sup>119</sup>.

The bearer Mr [John] Dolphin has been highly esteemed in this country for both his superior talents and vertuous beheavour, when God was pleased to visit him with sickness about four years agoe, which deprived him of his health, and us of the great hopes we had that he would be a credit to his nation. He used all human means to retrive abroad, but since nothing will do, is now obliged to use the last, which is to take his native air where I hope he'll soon grow fat, and be an honour to his friends. Mr [Denis] Daly of Madrid ordered me to send by him the pence that remained after the disceased Mr [Edmund] McSwiney and [Dominic] Burke, for which he brings Mr [Peter?] Killikelly's bill of six hundred pieces of eight, payable to your orders, which is all the money I could make of their effects ... Mr Dolphin brings some books. I could make nothing of them. They'll serve there. As to the *Morality* of Genetto, they properly belong to himself because the disceased bestowed them to him some years agoe, tho' he didn't take possession then. I hope you won't deprive him of them as the disceased had so great a regard for him. Pray my kind respects to Mr Martin Burke [OP] and believe me to be, Sir, your most humble servant, etc.

Brother Dominick O Connor.

<sup>118</sup> AGOP IV, 217, p. 105. Another Dolphin (first name unknown) was a priest and lector of theology at Valladolid in 1746. Loc. cit., p. 95.

<sup>119</sup> Bilbao, 21 April 1750. Original in TA, Coleman letter-book I, p. 21.

While John Dolphin was certainly in Ireland from 1750 or 1751, his name does not appear in the Esker account-books until March 1754, even though other members of the community, like his kinsmen Humbert and Thomas Dolphin, are frequently named in connection with the quest.

The prior of Esker began to repair the house in 1752 and build a "new return" or extension. Two years passed before the job was done and the convent freshly thatched at a total cost of thirty-four pounds, but it can hardly have answered their needs since a far more expensive house had to be built there in 1766<sup>120</sup>. The senior members of the community carried out the annual quest between June and October, each at the parish chapels of his own "limitation" or area. This may explain why the name of John Dolphin, the newcomer, appears only in 1754 when he was allowed to quest in Kiltullagh, Killimor and Grange, formerly the limitation of Humbert Dolphin. In 1758, one finds him questing at Leitrim, once the area of another confrère of the same family, Thomas Dolphin. By 1762 he was a member of the house council, by 1766 a preacher general<sup>121</sup>, in 1769 definitor for Connacht at the provincial chapter, and prior of Esker itself from 1773 to 1776.

Even as prior, Father Dolphin continued to quest within his limitation, at least during his first year in office. One finds him taking care of Bullane, Kilreekill, Killimor, Grange, Kiltullagh, Tuam and Killinadima. After one of these expeditions in October 1773, a man was paid thirteen pence "for driving home sheep of Fr Dolphin's". Martin French, provincial at the time and resident at Esker, did not think it beneath his dignity to quest as much as anyone else. If Father Dolphin gave up this work it may have been because of the momentous decision reached by Propaganda Fide in December 1774 permitting the erection of a novitiate at Esker itself. The first two candidates took the habit there in 1775, while three more were admitted in 1776. Three of the five became "sons" of other convents in Connacht — Ballindoon, Galway and Burrishoole — which shows that the Esker community had the interests of the entire province at heart<sup>122</sup>. John Dolphin, to

<sup>120</sup> See above pp. 397-398.

<sup>121</sup> Patents issued on 11 Oct. 1766. AGOP IV. 231. p. 43. By April 1767, the nuns of Bom Sucesso had told the Irish provincial they would not accept Fr Dolphin "even if sent by the general". The identification with John D. is not certain, but highly likely. See above, p. 361.

<sup>122</sup> H. Fenning, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 320, 325.

whom the first novice made profession in March 1776, probably stayed at home to take care of them. Certainly he was novice-master in 1778 and 1779, and no one else is given that title in the records. This also explains why he wrote so anxiously to Arthur O'Leary the Capuchin in 1782 about the legal status of prospective novices under the act of parliament passed in that year<sup>123</sup>.

Martin French, Dolphin's predecessor as prior of Esker and provincial, was strongly recommended as coadjutor-bishop of Clonfert between 1774 and 1776, and would have been promoted but for the senior officials of Propaganda Fide<sup>124</sup>. John Dolphin was destined to have the same unpleasant experience. In his case, the earliest document was a brief statement of 1785 signed by four members of parliament for Galway: Denis Daly and William P.N. French, governors of the county, with Anthony and Denis B. Daly, representatives of the city<sup>125</sup>.

We the undernamed representatives of the county and town of Gallway in parliament do declare that we have no objection that the Rev. father John Dolphin should be titular Bishop of the Diocese of Clonfert, being a gentleman of ancient good family, irreproachable in his life and conduct, and that his nomination can't be offensive to government.

This recommendation was mentioned in a more formal request, signed at Loughrea on 10 November 1785 by Andrew Donnellan bishop of Clonfert, James O'Fallon bishop of Elphin, and Philip Phillips archbishop of Tuam. Twelve priests of Clonfert added their signatures to this postulation favouring Dolphin as coadjutor to their bishop, then aged ninety-three. While Phillips candidly admitted that he did not know Dolphin at all, the others esteemed him as a man of irreproachable morals, a tireless missionary and preacher who had received many into the church, had been promoted by his own order, belonged to an ancient, prominent and Catholic family, was related by blood to the most illustrious people in the diocese, and was highly popular with clergy and people alike<sup>126</sup>.

Less than a month later, bishop Donnellan had to write again to the cardinal prefect because a certain John Kemple had taken the trouble of nominating himself. The Congregation, said Dr Donnellan, should

<sup>123</sup> See above, pp. 466-467.

<sup>124</sup> See above, pp. 426-432.

<sup>125</sup> Undated English original. APF, SOCG 873, ff. 12, 15.

<sup>126</sup> Latin original. *Loc. cit.*, ff. 13-14.

not listen to "disturbers of the peace" but give the clergy John Dolphin, the man they asked for, inspired by no other motives than zeal for religion and discipline and love of peace, which could best be assured by naming someone acceptable to clergy and laity, both Catholic and Protestant<sup>127</sup>. Donnellan's letter crossed another of 7 January 1786 addressed to him by Propaganda, proposing a coadjutor whom Donnellan did not even know: Thomas Costelloe, a former student of the Irish College in Rome, recently a disappointed candidate for the diocese of Achonry. Donnellan wrote again with his dean, archdeacon and vicar general to Antonelli on 4 March expressing surprise and disappointment that their earlier request for Dolphin had been ignored. The bishop was only wasting paper. Propaganda wanted a secular priest, not a regular, and may also have preferred a candidate with a Roman background. Thomas Costelloe became coadjutor-bishop of Clonfert in June 1786, just a week before Andrew Donnellan died at Loughrea<sup>128</sup>.

While Propaganda Fide was at this time biased against the Irish regular clergy, its attitude was widely shared at home and abroad. The province of Connacht, perhaps because more Gaelic than Munster and Leinster, more heavily Catholic than Ulster, was largely free from discrimination between regular and secular, certainly in Clonfert for which the Dominicans French and Dolphin were postulated by the secular clergy in the decade 1775-1785. Yet five years later the case was different in the neighbouring diocese of Elphin, as may be seen from the following letter of Charles O'Connor, parish priest of Castlerea. O'Connor complained in 1790 that the bishop had replaced his curate, John Keelty OP, and had also removed John Daly OP, Lord Dillon's chaplain and curate in the parish of Loughlin. He lamented the end of the Franciscan friary of Elphin, where a solitary, poor old priest, Father Farrell, was lying on his death-bed. For good measure, O'Connor also gave a scathing account of the dinner at a recent ecclesiastical conference attended by a group he could only describe as "the bucks of Ballintubber". The importance of his letter lies, however, in its more general observations<sup>129</sup>.

<sup>127</sup> On 3 Dec. 1785. Latin original. APF, SC Irlanda 16, f. 167.

<sup>128</sup> APF, SOCG 873, ff. 3-10.

<sup>129</sup> Belanagare, Castlerea, 22 May 1790. O'Connor to cardinal Antonelli. Italian original. APF, SOCG 889, ff. 61-62. The translated text is from H. Fennig, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 351. The bishop of Elphin was Edward French (1786-1810). The intended convent was Clonshanville, of which a John Daly was prior in 1798.

New maxims begin to prevail even among the Catholic clergy. We see the religious, so highly venerated by our fathers, now persecuted by priests as they had another God than ours. We see this unworthy hate arm itself with the language of the world, with jokes, with ridicule; in a word, with language *à la mode*. Hence no more novices, no more respect.

Last year our house made a gift to Father Daly, superior of the Dominicans of this diocese, of forty acres of excellent land in a healthy and pleasant part of my parish, on the banks of the river Suck, under the condition that he would build a convent there. But yet he did nothing with it. I remonstrated with Father Daly in vain. I had hoped to have friars to help me, but they do not find novices any more. Daly, who is our confessor, made a very acute observation when he said that it was silly to think of friars so long as the principle established by the bishop is upheld: namely that no friar, no matter how learned or exemplary, is on any account to be promoted or employed so long as there is a single priestling available, no matter how ignorant he may be. Thus do the maxims of modern France prevail even among the clergy of Ireland. Today, no more friars. Tomorrow it will be, no more priests. Incredulity advances slowly, tainting everything with its poison, and no one knows where it will all end.

Father John Dolphin's daily round at Esker cannot have been upset too much by the episode of his postulation for Clonfert. Having been subprior there in 1783 and 1784, he was elected prior for the second time in summer 1786. In 1788 he was promoted *praesentatus* or bachelor of theology, *titulo missionis*, seven years after the provincial chapter postulated him for that degree<sup>130</sup>. Only a few weeks can have separated the end of his priorship from the start of his provincialate on 4 July 1789. Even as provincial he continued to live at Esker, visiting each year the same country chapels in which he had preached and begged for decades.

#### ORDINARY ADMINISTRATION: 1789-1793

At the elective chapter held in Dublin in July 1789, John Dolphin got all but three of the thirty-seven votes. His definitors were William Hanly of Cork, Patrick Jennett of Drogheda, Denis Ferrall of Dublin and John O'Beirne of Roscommon. In a new departure, having postulated twenty-one individuals for degrees, three of the definitors, with the approval of the entire chapter, postulated not only themselves but the provincial too for higher honours. In this context, they claimed that

<sup>130</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 19.



John Dolphin was sixty-seven years of age, fifty years professed, and had been on the mission for forty-three years. If these figures are correct, he was born in 1722, made profession in 1739 and returned to Ireland in 1746. While the last date (1746) is unacceptable, it may indicate the year in which he finished his studies in Spain and was ready to leave for the "mission". The definitors proposed him for the mastership "by title of preaching", which degree he duly got in 1790<sup>131</sup>. The title, "historian of the province", given to Michael Brennan of Donore in 1785, was now restored to John Daly of Newbridge. With respect to the chapter acts in general, one can discern the hand of John Dolphin in the decision to replace the usual "multitude of ordinations" by a simple appeal to every member of the province to remember the basic elements of the Rule and Constitutions:

... quemlibet interim suae vocationis ac professionis monentes, ut sicut veros decet religiosos constanter ac zelose Deo reddant vota quae distinxerunt labia eorum, et ut veri alumni ordinis praedicatorum prae oculis semper habeant, quod nobis in Prologo constitutionum nostrarum proponitur, scilicet quod ordo noster propter praedicationem ac animarum salutem principaliter institutus est, et ad hoc debent nostra studia tendere, ut proximorum saluti possumus utiles esse. Igitur fratres nostros hortamur in Domino, ut tamquam servi boni et fideles, pro collatis unicuique a Domino talentis in vinea Domini operari studeant ne servi nequam abscondentes talentum Domini sui poenam incurrant, sed juxta monitum Apostoli, attendentes sibi, lectioni et exhortationi, se ipsos salvos faciant et alios.

The only two "commissions" of the chapter, concerning choral recitation of office and the appointment of conventual lectors, were simply copied from the acts of 1785. The list of the dead, thirty in Ireland and three abroad, was ominously longer, fully half as long again as the list provided for an equal period in 1785. The names of seven nuns, recently deceased, were also noted, including that of Sr Catherine Evers of Waterford. Sister Catherine, professed in 1749, was probably the last Dominican nun of Waterford where the community dispersed in 1758 for lack of funds<sup>132</sup>.

One wonders what a provincial of sixty-seven, taking his part in the ordinary work of a remote country convent, actually contributed to

<sup>131</sup> Election confirmed on 5 Aug. 1789; S.T.M. conferred on 13 Feb. 1790. AGOP IV. 240, pp. 21-22.

<sup>132</sup> Hib. Dom. 365, where the surname is given as Ayeres, but in the index (p. 757) as Ayres.

the running of the province. Even with the best of intentions, he could do no more for the three foreign colleges beyond sending out a few students or taking care of the superfluous Mass-stipends of Rome and Lisbon. So far as Ireland was concerned, he was obliged to visit each house twice during his term, but he farmed out this duty to others in all areas outside his native Connacht. Boula near Portumna saw him twice, but the record supplies only the names of the priests he met there<sup>133</sup>. In 1790 he assigned Hyacinth Keelty to Roscommon and in 1792 visited that community, close to the border of his own questing area. Even the convent of Lorrha, only a few miles across the Shannon from Boula, had to be content in 1792 with a visitor, Patrick Bartly of Esker<sup>134</sup>. In all likelihood, this was the Father Bartly whom John Dolphin deputed in 1790 to investigate the alleged misconduct of John Daly OP, a curate in the diocese of Elphin<sup>135</sup>.

There was an unnamed visitor for Munster too, certainly for Cork, where his moderate expenses appear in the accounts for October 1790 and August 1792. That same account-book, under the date 29 May 1792, notes ninepence paid for "a double letter received from the provincial about the Waterford house". One would dearly like to have that letter now, but that simple entry suffices to show that Father Dolphin's concern was by no means confined to Esker. Bernard Brady, parish priest of Derryvullen in the diocese of Clogher, was still vicar provincial for Ulster, as he had been in 1774. In 1789 he recommended Patrick Cosselly, a young man of the parish of Ardtrea and archdiocese of Armagh, to the provincial of Spain. Cosselly immediately began his novitiate in the convent of St Thomas at Avila where he made profession on 23 January 1791<sup>136</sup>.

The visitor for Leinster in 1790 and 1792 was John Daly STM, prior of Dublin until February of the latter year. He began his work at Newbridge on 9 August 1790 by confirming ordinations made by

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<sup>133</sup> Thomas Howe and Pat. McArdle in 1790. Howe again and Pat. Rush, prior, in 1792.

<sup>134</sup> Bartly's original sealed appointment is in TA, Coleman letter-book I, 57.

<sup>135</sup> APF, Acta 161, ff. 154-74; SOCG 889, ff. 24-99. After nine years in the parish of Loughlin, O'Daly was removed as "infamous" by the bishop, even though nothing could be proved against him.

<sup>136</sup> From the original profession-book at Avila. Reference kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP. On Brady, see a biographical note in Clogher Record (1967) 294-95. Fr Cosselly died at Lisbon in April 1802. Lisbon, Corpø Santo, no. 31.

provincial Dalton in 1786<sup>137</sup> and then presented a document in Latin from John Dolphin himself. Although it bore the title "ordinations and admonitions", it urged only the necessity of an annual ten-day retreat as recommended by the general chapter of 1756. There was no obligation on all members of the community to make it at one and the same time, but even those who were parish priests were to attend to this duty; otherwise they would risk losing their first fervour by mingling too much with the laity. This emphasis on an annual retreat recurs in the more revealing ordinations drawn up a month later, apparently by Daly himself, for the nuns of Channel Row in Dublin<sup>138</sup>.

1. We ordain and most earnestly exhort our beloved sisters of said house to maintain a mutual love, peace, union, harmony and respect for each other, seriously reflecting with themselves on the admonition of the Apostle to the Galatians, viz. that those amongst whom enmities, contentions, wraths, quarrels and dissensions subsist, and who are guilty of the like, shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

2ndly. We strictly enjoin them carefully to avoid all disputes, altercations, disrespectful or injurious language to each other particularly in the presence of lay persons or pensioners in their house, as such conduct or treatment to each other never fails to inspire the laity with a contempt of them and their holy vocation.

3rdly. Whereas we find the house in its present circumstances cannot subsist without pensioners, we ordain that no pensioner shall in future be admitted or continued in it who constantly refuses to observe regular hours or to return to it at the seasonable hour at which the superior orders the doors of the convent to be locked up.

4thly. We ordain that the superior upon no account whatsoever shall permit the introduction of dances, balls, assemblies, drums, parties and suchlike vain modish amusements, as no emolument that may accrue from the admission of them among pensioners can possibly compensate the disgrace and contempt they never fail to reflect on a house devoted to the observance of religious duties.

5thly. We ordain and strictly prohibit any religious subject of the community, indiscreetly to reveal to any secular person or pensioners the secrets of the house. We also enjoin them to avoid all disputes, altercations, or the least offensive treatment to such lay persons. On the contrary, to show them on all occa-

<sup>137</sup> Text as on p. 504 *supra*.

<sup>138</sup> Cabra, a/c book 7 (1782-1801), tipped in. At a second visitation on 2 Aug. 1792, Daly confirmed these ordinations "by the commission of the Revd Father Master John Dolphin".

sions such examples of meekness, humility and decorum as become religious persons. As for these pensioners of untoward dispositions who are found to be deficient in their mode of conduct or in the respect that is due to any religious subject of the house, we enjoin the superior and mothers of council to dismiss them as soon as possible after the least offensive manner that prudence will suggest.

6thly. We earnestly recommend to our sisters frugality and economy in their mode of living, a prudent administration of their yearly revenues, the retrenching all superfluous and unnecessary expences in order to enable them to discharge the present incumbrances which affect their house.

7thly. We ordain that the bell be punctually rung at the stated hours for Angelus, Vespers, Matins, Rosary, etc.

8thly. We ordain that conformably to the ordination of the Provincial, that at some certain time appointed by the superior in the course of every year, ten days be set apart for the performance of a spiritual exercise.

9thly. As the number of our religious sisters of this community has been within these few years past reduced from the number of twenty-eight to that of four or five, we earnestly recommend to the superior and mothers of council, as far as the funds of the house will admit, to be diligent in their endeavours to procure, and easy in their terms to admit any proper candidate for the veil that may be found, in order to prevent the extinction of their community.

10thly. We ordain that no lodgers be admitted into the community without the unanimous consent of the prioress and mothers of council or at least the major part of them, or no chamber or apartment to be let or disposed of.

11thly. We lastly enjoin that these ordinations may be carefully inserted in the register book of the convent and frequently revised, to the end that a knowledge of them may be communicated to the subjects of the house for their observance of them. And we think proper to admonish our beloved sisters seriously to consider that through the neglect of the observance of Constitutions and ordinations, or what is worse through a contempt of them, the state and condition of every institution gradually begins to decline until it is finally brought to utter ruin.

These ordinations were received and published in our convent of Jesus, Mary, Joseph of the order of St Dominick, before the whole community. Dublin the 28th of September 1790. Br John Daly Mr D. and Visitor.

Some three years later, the Dominicans of Denmark Street in Dublin first patronised the orphanage now known as the Dominican Boys' Home. John Ferrar, the historian of Limerick, mentioned it in his account of the charity-schools of Dublin, published in 1796<sup>139</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> J. Ferrar, *The Prosperity of Ireland Displayed*, (Dublin 1796) 37-38.

The Roman Catholic clergy in Denmark Street and other humane persons have some little fund for supporting orphans. It was instituted about three years ago, and much to their credit it originated with a few journeymen shoemakers. The Rev. Mr. McMahon preached their first charity sermon, and that the present lord mayor should be abused for attending it, is an instance of blind prejudice and bigotry.

#### NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA: 1789-1794

Three more Irish Dominicans went to the United States during John Dolphin's provincialate. O'Daniel describes them as "a little band" from Lisbon, led by Francis Fleming, who came to America as missionaries apostolic in 1789<sup>140</sup>. True, all had earlier links with Corpo Santo, but one travelled from Ireland after about eight years "on the mission", while the second who sailed directly from Lisbon did so a year after the first. All one can attempt here is to improve on O'Daniel's account, particularly with regard to the earlier careers of the three missionaries.

The first, Nicholas Burke, like his confrère and namesake Edmund of Newfoundland, was a son of the convent of Rosbercon. In March 1780, under the name Nicholas of St Thomas Bourke, he received all sacred orders at Lisbon within a single week. Since Rosbercon was by then practically extinct, one is inclined to identify Nicholas Burke with a Dominican of Waterford casually mentioned in a letter of 1788<sup>141</sup>.

No news here. Mr [Antoninus] Duane has quitted and would not give up his abbey [Kilmallock]. Messrs [Nicholas] Bourke and [John] Kirwan are at private lodgings and will never be able to subsist on this poor pitiful establishment. God help us here.

The same writer, a Franciscan, reported again on 10 January 1789 that: "Messrs Duan and [Cornelius] Ryan live in Thomas Street house; the other gentleman [Bourke or Kirwan] in a private house"<sup>142</sup>. No wonder Nicholas left for the New World, as Edmund Burke too had

<sup>140</sup> V. F. O'Daniel, *The Dominican Province of St Joseph*, (New York 1942) 127-29. I have also used O'Daniel's notes (including photostats from the archives of Baltimore) preserved at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, with the kind help of Adrian Wade OP.

<sup>141</sup> Waterford, 4 Feb. 1788. W. F. Phelan OFM to Troy. DDA 116/4, no. 79. The convent of affiliation is given with his obit in the chapter acts of 1804. Biographical note in T. S. Flynn, *The Dominicans of Rosbercon*, (Tallaght 1981) 32.

<sup>142</sup> Same to same. DDA 116/4, no. 122.



done from Waterford four years earlier. One had to live: a fact to be borne in mind when explaining the closure of so many Irish convents at the time, or wondering why Irish priests chose to cross the Atlantic. After seven weeks as the expensive guest of John O Donel in Newfoundland, Nicholas Burke made his way to Philadelphia in 1789, hoping for better means of subsistence. John Carroll soon sent him to help William O'Brien OP, parish priest of New York, where the baptismal registers from November 1789 are in Burke's hand. Despite all expectations, not even New York was flowing with milk and honey. Writing about April 1790 to O Donel, his former host at St John's, Burke admitted that the city was: "too poor a place to support him and Mr O'Brien". At that stage, William O'Brien thought that Burke should go to Frederickstown in Maryland where there was: "a house, chappel and £ 80 currency for the priest besides free gifts"<sup>143</sup>. In the event, Burke stayed at New York alone while O'Brien, from summer 1790 to summer 1792, went on an extensive tour of Spanish America to raise funds for St Peter's. One of the reasons for his going south was that the archbishop of Mexico City, though not a Dominican, had been his fellow-student in Italy. During O'Brien's absence, Burke was pastor of St Peter's, lived at 41 Partition (now Fulton) Street, and as the only priest in the city had to deal unaided with the first epidemic of yellow fever in 1791. Although he never signed the baptismal registers, he continued to keep them until 2 December 1792, after which he was "sent to the south" but returned again to New York by October 1794.

Francis Antoninus Fleming, the second of these new missionaries, was a son of the convent of Mullingar, born about 1749, who appears to have entered the order at Louvain in 1765. On completing his studies at Holy Cross he took sacred orders at Malines in 1771 and 1772, but then stayed on at the college as *lector artium* and master of students. By 1775 at the latest, he was transferred from Louvain to teach at Lisbon, where from 3 October 1782 he was rector of Corpo Santo and vicar of Bom Sucesso for seven years<sup>144</sup>. Lisbon remembered him well, for even fifty years later one of his successors could write<sup>145</sup>:

<sup>143</sup> St John's, 13 June 1790. O Donel to Troy. DDA 116/5, no. 21.

<sup>144</sup> The chapter acts of 1781, postulating him S.T.P., describe his academic duties both in Louvain and Lisbon. His appointments as rector and S.T.P. are in AGOP IV, 240, p. 13.

<sup>145</sup> John P. Leahy, in TA, Lisbon 6, p. 21.

By those who studied in Corpo Santo during this time, the name of Mr Fleming was always mentioned in terms of the deepest veneration and warmest affection. He seems, from what I have heard, to have laboured assiduously and certainly not unsuccessfully to infuse into the minds of his subjects his own love of piety and thirst for knowledge.

More than a year before Father Fleming quitted Lisbon, a group of his friends at Philadelphia petitioned John Carroll on his behalf and received the following reply written at Baltimore on 22 July 1788. The final sentence, erased from the draft by Carroll himself, is not the least interesting part of the letter<sup>146</sup>.

I was honoured the 17th inst. with your favour of the 11th. Mr Fleming being an utter stranger to me, and the Rev. Mr O'Brien [OP] not pretending to any personal acquaintance with him, I cannot take upon me to write to Lisbon for him, and especially with a promise of placing him at Philadelphia. If he be really desirous of coming to America, and will bring with him sufficient vouchers for his good conduct and ability, I will be exceedingly glad of his service, receive him with cordiality and give him employment suitable to his profession. But I have many reasons not to make a previous agreement of fixing him in your town ... I have great cause to expect that a bishop will be appointed over us in a few months, and it is more than probable that Philadelphia will be the episcopal see. The bishop will undoubtedly choose to have near him clergymen of his own ... However, if Mr Fleming be inclined to attempt an establishment for his order in Philadelphia, or any of the United States, they shall have every encouragement I can give so long as I retain any authority.

Early in 1789, the Queen of Portugal prevailed on the nuncio at Lisbon to recommend Fleming for the vacant Irish diocese of Ossory. This was duly done, predictably without success, but his American plans were by this date well advanced. By 28 May 1789 he had obtained the permission of his provincial, John Dolphin, and been accepted by Carroll for Philadelphia where he was expected in mid-July "by the Catholics whom he had promised to serve". Those American friends had to wait, for while Fleming's term as rector had ended, the patents appointing his successor had yet to come and the master general neglected to answer letters on the subject until Propaganda reminded him of his duties<sup>147</sup>. Even with this problem out of the way, he still had to settle

<sup>146</sup> Baltimore archives, Case 9<sup>a</sup>, G. 2.

<sup>147</sup> Lisbon, 28 May 1789. Nuncio to Propaganda. APF, SC America Centrale 2, f. 375. Ant. V. Conway was appointed rector on 30 June 1789. AGOP IV. 240, p. 20.

accounts at Corpo Santo because of a large sum he donated towards the building of the college in October 1787<sup>148</sup>.

We the Rector and Fathers of Council of the College of Our Blessed Lady of the Rosary, Irish Dominicans in Lisbon, do hereby acknowledge that the Revd Father Francis Antonine Fleming, late rector of said college, advanced two hundred moydores to compleat the building of the apartments on the north-west part of this college, now tenanted. We accept his proposal in the name of ourselves and successors of remaining in possession of said two hundred moydores, which become the property of this college under the conditions of: first, paying him twelve moydores every year during his life, and secondly of celebrating every year after his death for ever twelve Masses for the repose of his soul and for his pious benefactors. This obligation of paying him said annuity is to commence on the ninth day of October of this present year. Given under our hands and sealed with the seal of this college of Our Blessed Lady of the Rosary, Lisbon, this 25th day of August 1789.

At last, in September 1789, Francis Fleming left Lisbon for Dublin and Philadelphia, bearing a letter of introduction from the papal nuncio<sup>149</sup>. On 3 December he reached Philadelphia where John Carroll had the pleasure two weeks later of meeting: "Mr Fleming, an Irish Dominican, lately from Dublin, a gentleman of amiable manner and a very excellent scholar"<sup>150</sup>. The amiable Fr Fleming was at once appointed to serve the parish of St Mary's, including the chapel of St Joseph, where he soon made his mark as a "pulpit orator", to use O'Daniel's phrase, and helped to do away with the old custom of reading sermons in favour of a more direct style of preaching. His discourse for St Patrick's day 1790 was the first on the subject ever printed in America.

The third newcomer, Christopher Keating, must have studied in Spain because in 1787 he received the royal viatick or travel-allowance for his return to Ireland<sup>151</sup>. However, instead of returning to the mission, Keating made his way to Lisbon where he first appears in the house-records on 31 December 1788 as major sacristan, an office taken over by

<sup>148</sup> TA, Lisbon 6, pp. 20-21.

<sup>149</sup> Lisbon, 4 Sept. 1789. Nuncio to Carroll. Baltimore archives, Case 8<sup>a</sup>, S. 5.

<sup>150</sup> J. G. Shea, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, II (New York 1888) 357.

<sup>151</sup> Simancas, Hacienda, Avisos de la Secretaria de Gracia y Justicia, legajo 19 (1772-89). Reference kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP. There was also a Thomas Keating at Philadelphia from May 1789, sent to Charleston in November following. O'Daniel suspected he too was a Dominican, but there is no proof of it.

Andrew Fitzgerald on 1 April 1790<sup>152</sup>. Though he cannot have lived with Father Fleming for many months, he became his devoted friend and joined him at Philadelphia in May or early June 1790. Keating's arrival was mentioned by John Carroll to archbishop Troy in a letter written on board ship as Carroll made his way to England for episcopal ordination<sup>153</sup>.

I am happy to inform you that Messrs [Francis] Fleming, whom I have placed in Philadelphia, and [Nicholas] Burke who supplies Mr [William] O'Brien's absence in New York, give general satisfaction. The former unites all those talents which conciliate esteem and love and serve for the most useful purposes. The latter is moral, assiduous and disinterested. Another of your brethren in religion, Mr [Christopher] Keating from Lisbon, was just arrived when I left Baltimore [c. 9 June 1790]. He is much commended by Mr Fleming and will be fixed near Philadelphia.

Mr O'Brien has been to the Havanna, is gone to La Vera Cruz, and in his last letter from the former place informs me of his intention to cross the Isthmus of Panama, to go to Acapulco, Lima etc., and return to New York in 1793, when he hopes to have collected sufficient to pay off their debts in New York and finish their church.

At Philadelphia, the older and more talented Fleming outshone his young friend Keating, though both were zealous missionaries and fine preachers. Bishop Carroll, on his return from England, named Fleming vicar general for the "Northern District" of the United States, in which capacity he attended the first synod of Baltimore in 1791. His "district" took in Pennsylvania, Delaware, the Jerseys, New York and New England. Fleming also maintained his links with Portugal by writing at length to the nuncio at Lisbon, largely to defend bishop Carroll against accusations of being pro-Jesuit and anti-German<sup>154</sup>. Apart from occasionally defending the Catholic church in letters to the local press, he also published a book, *The Calumnies of Verax, or Catholics Vindicated*, under the pseudonym Verus, just as William O'Brien of New York wrote though never published a *Life of St Paul*. Father Keating was appointed Fleming's assistant at St Mary's on 8

<sup>152</sup> Lisbon, Corpo Santo, no. 31. The same volume notes stipends given to Keating as alms in May 1790, probably on his departure.

<sup>153</sup> London, 23 July 1790. Spic. Ossor. III (Dublin 1884) 507-08.

<sup>154</sup> Lisbon, 20 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1791. Nuncio to Propaganda. APF, SC America Centrale 3, ff. 11-15. The nuncio here recommends Fleming for an Irish diocese on the instructions of the Inquisitor at Lisbon.

December 1790, but while both ranged frequently through the States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, caring for the faithful at many out-stations, this work devolved more and more on Keating alone. The baptismal registers of St Joseph's chapel, Philadelphia, enable one to chart these missionary journeys, revealing that of the three priests in the parish, Laurence Graessl and Fleming were most often at home, and Christopher Keating most often away.

Bishop Carroll, writing again to Troy in August 1791, was able to report that William O'Brien was still in Mexico "collecting dollars for his church in New York", while "his vicar, Mr Michael [Nicholas] Burke of your order, the excellent Mr Fleming and his young friend Mr Keating" were keeping well<sup>155</sup>. This happy state of affairs was not destined to last very long. In the early months of 1793, Philadelphia was invaded by West Indian refugees escaping the effects of the French Revolution in the Caribbean. They carried with them a plague of yellow fever, "so dreadful, so revolting and rapid in its progress, and so generally fatal in its results" that the city was seized by panic and half its population of fifty thousand fled. Within the space of six weeks, ten doctors and eight non-Catholic ministers of religion died martyrs to duty. Father Fleming wrote to bishop Carroll on 10 September 1793, assuring him that all was well, but three days later he made his will and died at the beginning of October. Father Graessl too, already chosen to be bishop Carroll's coadjutor, fell victim to the plague. Christopher Keating, after lying at death's door for weeks, was the only priest of St Mary's to survive<sup>156</sup>. To bishop Carroll, who could ill afford to lose any good priest, the tragic deaths of Fathers Graessl and Fleming brought a special sense of loss, evident even ten months later in another letter to Troy<sup>157</sup>.

Your kind condolence on the loss this diocese has suffered by the death of two of our most respectable and valuable ecclesiastical members, during the disorder at Philadelphia, revived that remembrance of them which always affects me with the most lively grief, as well as deep concern for the well-being of my diocese. I can truly say that their loss is irreparable to me; for I have

<sup>155</sup> Baltimore, 24 Aug. 1791. Spic. Ossor. III, 510.

<sup>156</sup> Guilday, *Life of John Carroll*, 571-72. Fleming's last letter to Carroll is in Baltimore archives, with his will appended. I have seen neither, but he left the remnant of his estate to Joseph Ham OP of Lisbon. O'Daniel and others place his death in September, and yet he signed the parochial register on the 29th. An obituary notice appeared in *The Federal Gazette* on 12 Oct. 1793.

<sup>157</sup> Baltimore, 12 July 1794. Spic. Ossor. III, 515-17.



not, amongst the clergy here, any men capable of filling that void which their deaths have made. Your lordship was acquainted with Mr Fleming's merits, and they could not have been exercised anywhere more to the credit of religion than at Philadelphia where he was universally loved and esteemed. Mr Graessl, his companion in life and death, and my designated condjutor, was equally esteemed; but being a German, and consequently not speaking our language with the same purity or with as much facility, could not render his talents so conspicuous to the most numerous part of the congregation.

### THE CATHOLIC RELIEF ACT OF 1793

The election of John Dolphin as provincial in July 1789 coincided with the fall of the Bastille and the transformation of the States General of France into a National Assembly. A few months later, Paris was in the hands of the Revolution. Before the end of Dolphin's term, early in 1793, not only had Louis XVI been executed but the new Republic, already at war with Austria, also declared war on Britain, Holland and Spain. These dramatic events had immediate sequels in Ireland. Groups of Volunteers mobilised to defend the country. The United Irishmen, founded in 1791, came to share the aims of the French Revolution and from 1793 became a secret, subversive organisation. The Catholic Committee at Dublin, moribund from 1783 to 1789, sprang into vigorous life to press for total Catholic emancipation. While such an idea was repugnant both to Dublin Castle and the Irish parliament, the British government, faced by war with France, did not want three million hostile Irishmen at its back and simply dictated the terms of emancipation to its representatives in Dublin. Those terms conceded practically everything, save the right to sit in parliament.

While the Catholic Committee, which was to employ and reward the revolutionary Theobald Wolfe Tone, was too varied in its membership and too independent of clerical influence for archbishop Troy of Dublin to support it without reserve, he regularly attended its meetings from 1787. When the Committee resolved in January 1790 to formulate a "declaration of civil principles", Troy feared the repetition in Ireland of a dispute between bishops and laity which such a "Protestation" had recently aroused among the Catholics of England<sup>158</sup>. "The bishops", he wrote:

<sup>158</sup> E. O'Flaherty, *The Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics*, in *Arch. Hib.* 40 (1985) 16.

acknowledge the competency of the committee to transact the temporal and political concerns of the body; but they will never give up their exclusive right to judge on all points of religious doctrine; they are the natural guardians of religion ... I claim this exclusive and inherent right in the name of all my brethren in this kingdom and from the disposition of the committee I doubt not of its dutiful acquiescence.

To offset the sneers of Protestant bigots, the Committee went ahead to produce, on 17 March 1792, quite a long theological statement of what Catholics did *not* believe, including even papal infallibility. Troy accepted it with reservations, urged its acceptance on the bishops of Leinster, and prevailed on the diocesan chapter in Dublin to give its "negative approval". The declaration, in other words, contained nothing contrary to Catholic doctrine. Left to himself, Troy would have preferred simply to discredit the radical elements in the Committee and rely as before on "loyal addresses" to the government, on the grounds that it was "absolutely necessary to step forward in a decided manner at this critical moment when our loyalty is suspected and the most extravagant levelling doctrines are openly avowed by some people here"<sup>159</sup>.

By an extraordinary feat of organisation, a Catholic Convention of 233 delegates from every corner of the country met at Tailor's Hall in Dublin on 3 December 1792. The "Back Lane Parliament", as it has been called, incensed by the rejection of two petitions from the Catholic Committee to the Irish parliament, decided to bypass Dublin Castle and appeal directly to London. Bishop Moylan of Cork and Troy of Dublin both signed the new appeal, while Troy at the end of his speech expressed "the determination of the clergy to rise or fall with their people". So complete was the success of the delegation sent to London that on 23 January 1793, the Lord Lieutenant was simply told what concessions were to be granted at once to the Catholics of Ireland: the right to vote, to serve on juries, to hold government offices and army commissions, to be members of corporations and be entitled to endow colleges. The Irish parliament obediently granted everything, save the right to sit in parliament: the only right for which London had not asked. This great victory, a far greater one than that of 1829, was due to the threat of war from France, the political needs of the government in London, and the remarkable ability of John Keogh,

<sup>159</sup> Ibidem, 19-22.

the Dublin silk-merchant who, having been the guiding spirit of the Catholic Committee for so long, saw the wisdom of disbanding it in 1793.

Archbishop Troy did not wait even for the passing of the Catholic Relief Act to prove that he had a mind of his own: immovable in matters theological, politically astute. He published a pastoral letter in the spring of 1793 to clarify Catholic doctrine and reaffirm papal supremacy in order "to remove the scandalous ignorance of some and the irreligion of other Catholics" particularly in Dublin. As he must have expected, it was badly received both by the Catholic Committee and the House of Commons. But once the Relief Act received the royal assent in April 1793, the opinion of the House of Commons no longer counted for much, and the Catholic Committee went into voluntary liquidation. Troy was still archbishop of Dublin to benefit from what the Committee had won and the House of Commons lost. If the foreign colleges swept away by the French Revolution were to be replaced by seminaries in Ireland, and that replacement achieved with the help of government, the bishops needed closer links with Dublin Castle. To this John Thomas Troy now turned his mind<sup>160</sup>.

#### FATHER JOHN DOLPHIN'S LAST YEARS: 1793-1796

On leaving office in summer 1793, Father Dolphin continued to live and work as he had done without interruption or variation for forty-three years, questing at the same chapels round Esker where he must once have preached even to the grand-parents of many of his listeners at Kiltullagh and Carabane, Grange, Bullane and Leitrim, Kilreekill, Athenry and Kilconieran. That was the pattern up to December 1794. He did not quest in 1795, but signed the house-accounts on 5 May in a shaky hand and by 3 August had been made subprior. On 6 February 1796 he quested for the last time at Kiltullagh, probably in severe weather, and failed to sign the accounts, most likely because of illness, on 24 March. Finally, on 6 May, the bursar noted laconically: "Received of Fr John Dolphin's assets, six pounds nine and fivepence halfpenny".

<sup>160</sup> Ibidem, 31. This sketch of an immense and complicated subject is drawn mostly from O'Flaherty, *op. cit.* See also D. Gwynn, *The Struggle for Catholic Emancipation, 1750-1829*, (London 1928) 58-93, and V. J. McNally, *A Study into the Theory and Practice of a Philosophy of Life*, an M.A. thesis presented to Villanova University (USA) in 1971.

## JOHN GEOFFREY NUGENT: 1793-1797

Father Nugent, elected provincial in summer 1793, is unusual on at least two counts. On the one hand, he was a parish priest at the time of his election and during his provincialate, while on the other he still has a place in the local traditions of Leamlara and Lisgoold, about five miles north of Middleton in the county of Cork and diocese of Cloyne, the place of his birth and of his first pastoral ministry.

He was born in 1734 or 1735 and entered the order at Holy Cross, Louvain, in 1755. Thomas Burke lists him as a novice there in 1756, a son of the convent of Glanworth, twenty-one years old, yet to be professed<sup>161</sup>. In later years, he was to ask permission to say Mass "for those of my family who belong to the Protestant communion"<sup>162</sup>. As for his place of birth, one must turn to the local tradition of Lisgoold, gathered in recent years by Mr Tomás O Riordan, historian of the parish<sup>163</sup>.

There is a strong tradition in the parish that he was born in the townland of Corbally North in Lisgoold parish. A Redmond Nugent held a small farm of about fifteen acres there in 1826 (as can be seen from the tithe-books of that year) and he also had a holding there in 1853, as is mentioned in Griffith's Valuation. Father Nugent is believed to be of this family and may have been a grand-uncle of Redmond Nugent... I made many enquiries among the older generation in Corbally and among some of the families connected with Nugents, and all gave me the same answer; that Father Nugent was born in Corbally.

There was a family named Barry in Leamlara (parish of Lisgoold) from the 12th century..., originally known as the Leamlara Barrys and later as the Standish Barrys. They were landlords of some 8,000 acres, very influential in Catholic circles in Lisgoold and throughout east Cork as they never gave up the Catholic faith. According to local tradition it was the Standish Barrys who were responsible for Fr Nugent's education for the priesthood, and like many priests in similar circumstances during that period, he was all his life beholden to the Standish Barrys. It is believed that they were responsible for his being made parish priest of Lisgoold in 1774.

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<sup>161</sup> Hib. Dom., 448, styling him simply "Galfridus" or Geoffrey, most likely a baptismal name.

<sup>162</sup> Louvain, 19 Sept. 1769. Writing as regent to the master general. AGOP XIII. 68095.

<sup>163</sup> T. Ó Riordan, *Where the Ownacurra Flows*, Lisgoold 1982. The author has kindly sent me several long letters on the subject.

At this point one must return to Louvain where the young Nugent completed his studies and gradually received sacred orders: from tonsure to diaconate at Antwerp between 1757 and 1758, and priesthood in the latter year at Liège<sup>164</sup>. His superiors kept him at Holy Cross to teach and so one finds him appointed *lector artium* in 1763, master of studies in 1765, second regent in 1766 and first regent in 1769<sup>165</sup>. While master of studies, he was dispensed from teaching scripture because of "poor sight", either a convenient excuse or a passing difficulty. On 25 August 1770 he received permission to be at once prior and regent of Holy Cross and continued in this dual capacity for two years<sup>166</sup>. There were at the time more than sixty in the community, but the house was falling down and its finances precarious because of the recent loss of an annual government pension and a prohibition to quest in the diocese of Cambrai<sup>167</sup>. To remedy the situation, John Nugent went to Ireland in November 1771 with a letter of introduction from the nuncio at Brussels to the archbishop of Dublin, but the result of his initiative is unknown. Eventually, on 8 May 1773, he was permitted to resign the priorship and return to Ireland. Whether by accident or design, he was just in time to attend the provincial chapter in July<sup>168</sup>. As student, lecturer and administrator, he had lived at Holy Cross for eighteen years.

Four Dominicans were attached to Glanworth, Father Nugent's house of affiliation, in 1756 and two in 1767, but there is no reason to believe that they lived together or even had parishes in Cloyne. Most likely they worked as curates in the north-east corner of the diocese. The fact that Nugent became parish priest of Leamlara in 1774 marks him off at once from the other "sons" of Glanworth. In the traditional view, he had powerful patrons — the Standish Barrys — whose opinion carried weight with the bishop, Matthew McKenna (1769-1791). As we shall see, Nugent also enjoyed the patronage of Tommaso Ghilini, nuncio at Brussels, who obtained for him papal provision to the parish. Leamlara and Lisgoold were in fact different names for the one parish,

<sup>164</sup> A. M. Bogaerts OP, *De Dominikanen in de Wijdingsregisters van het Aartsbisdom Mechelen*, Brussels 1965, 210-16. For Liège see Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 54.

<sup>165</sup> AGOP IV, 231, pp. 18, 38, 40, 44; 240, p. 2.

<sup>166</sup> AGOP IV, 240, pp. 3, 6.

<sup>167</sup> See above, pp. 379-380.

<sup>168</sup> Burke of Ossory claimed that Nugent planned his own election as definitor in 1773, but failed. See above, pp. 380, 402-403, and appendix, p. 621.



which in Nugent's time was an amalgam of four medieval parishes. He used the form "Lisgold" in 1778 when signing a postulation for Simon Quinn as coadjutor-bishop of Cloyne<sup>169</sup>. On taking the oath of allegiance in 1782, he stated that he lived at Lisgoold and had charge of the parishes of Lisgoold, Templebodan, Templenacarriga and Ballycarrana<sup>170</sup>.

At this point it is interesting to turn again to the local traditions collected by Mr Ó Riordan.

The penal days church in Lisgoold was in a secluded glen on my family's farm, immediately across the road from the site of the pre-Reformation church in Lisgoold north, now the site of the local graveyard. It was in use up to 1779 or 1780 when Father Nugent built a better one on the site of the present parish church<sup>171</sup>. He also celebrated Mass elsewhere in the parish: in the private oratory of the Standish Barrys at Leamlara House, in a cave at Templenacarriga, at a Mass rock in Ballycarranna and in a little cabin in Templebodan. He lived in a small mud and stone thatched house at the Puth in the s.w. corner of Corbally north, about three-quarters of a mile from his original home. This was said to have been given him by the Standish Barrys. According to tradition he travelled on foot throughout the parish and occasionally got a loan of a horse or pony.

The Whiteboys were active in Lisgoold and east Cork during his term as parish priest of Lisgoold. Father Nugent strongly condemned their activities. His house was attacked and the windows were broken at the time. He was also, in 1782, one of four priests in the diocese of Cloyne who took the oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Both of these actions were attributed locally to the Standish Barry influence, but the bishop of Cloyne at the time, Dr Matthew McKenna, also spoke out strongly against Whiteboy activity in the diocese.

Dr Simon Quinn, coadjutor of Cloyne, died before the bishop he had been appointed to help, and some attempt was made by Nugent's fellow-Dominicans to have him named as Quinn's successor. John T.

<sup>169</sup> Even then, the church was dedicated to St John Baptist. APF, SOCG 851, f. 134. Friar John Walsh (OP?), vicar of Churchtown near Mallow, also signed the postulation.

<sup>170</sup> Arch. Hib. I (1912) 54. For clergy-lists see J. Wilson, *The Clergy of Cloyne Diocese*, Cloyne 1959.

<sup>171</sup> The original lease of the plot of ground on which Fr Nugent built is in the possession of the present bishop of Cloyne. It comprised one and a quarter acres, "with a slate house recently built thereon and lately ditched round by Mr John Nugent". For these and other details omitted here, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr Ó Riordan.

Troy, bishop of Ossory, signed a brief statement on 26 December 1783 to the effect that Nugent was worthy of any vacant bishopric in the kingdom, but particularly of Cloyne and Ross. John Connolly, regent of studies at San Clemente, submitted to Propaganda an undated petition on the suitability of John Nugent S.T.M. who had taught him at Holy Cross and with whom he had lived at Louvain for years. The most revealing document, however, was the following letter to cardinal Antonelli written on 7 February 1784 by Michael MacMahon OP, bishop of Killaloe. As the only bishop of the regular clergy in Munster, MacMahon had long felt somewhat isolated, while as one of noble family he thought that the exclusion of regulars from the hierarchy discouraged young men of his class from becoming friars <sup>172</sup>.

... pauca superaddam de providendo futuro coadjutore episcopo pro diaecesibus Cloynensi et Rossensi, loco R.D. O'Quin nuper defuncti. Antistites et capitulum praedictae ecclesiae processerunt ad electionem, sed suborta quadam dissensione inter episcopum et electores ob suspicionem carnalis affectus, re delata est in aliam diem. Opinor enim jus nominandi devolvere ad praerogativam Curiae Romanae, quapropter enixe commendo Em. ae Vrae. et S. Congregationi in coadjutorem episcopum pro dicta ecclesia R.D. Joannem Galfridum Nugent ordinis praedicatorum, aetatis 47 anni, s. theologiae doctorem, pastorem emeritum, examinatore synodalem, necnon paenitentiarium in praefata diaecesi Cloynensi, virum sane omni exceptione majorem, profunda doctrina, morum exemplo, animarum zelo, ac summa prudentia ornatum, necnon nobilitate familiae conspicuum, quod plurimum facit ad promovendam rei ecclesiae at religionis in haecce regione; annos 18 operam dedit studiis Lovanii, ubi etiam tam philosophiam quam theologiam tradidit; ac tandem studii generalis regens primarius devenit et denuo prior; eius merita adeo perspecta fuerunt Em. o Domino Cardinali Ghilini tunc temporis nuncio apostolico in curia Bruxellensi, quod suo praesidio ipsi providerit de parochia (via quidem Romana) in praefata diocesi Cloynensi, in qua jam a decem annis verbo et opera indefessus laboravit, summo cum animarum fructu.

Naturally, considering the prevalent anti-regular mood at Propaganda, Nugent did not become a bishop, but it is interesting to note that he owed his parish to the nuncio at Brussels and was both synodal examiner and penitentiary of the diocese of Cloyne. Shortly after this attempt to promote him, Father Nugent left his parish in other hands to spend a year at Nancy in Lorraine looking after a boy of the Standish

<sup>172</sup> All three documents are in APF, SC Irlanda 15, ff. 483-84, 593-96. Nugent, already *praesentatus* by September 1769, is here styled *magister*, though not postulated by any chapter.

Barry family of Leamlara. With his good command of French and long experience on the continent, Nugent was a good choice as guide and tutor of a young Irish gentleman abroad. The journey, we are told, took place in 1784 or 1785, but may well have been a little later, since Corpo Santo gave or sent him more than a hundred stipends as alms in May 1787<sup>173</sup>. Finally, for this is our last detail of his career before he became provincial, he was transferred in 1792 to the more important parish of Mitchelstown. Since Nugent held Lisgoold by papal indult, the new bishop of Cloyne and Ross, William Coppinger, had to apply for a dispensation; fortunately so, for Coppinger's petition to Propaganda supplies the interesting background to the change. Charles Nagle, parish priest of Mitchelstown, had recently resigned because of age and illness, and there was a particular difficulty in the parish which only someone of Nugent's address and dexterity could deal with<sup>174</sup>.

Cum vero schola quadam acatholica ab acatholicis Comite et Comitissa de Kingsborough aliquot abhinc annis pro pauperum filiorum educatione erecta est, redditibus eidem scholae adsignatis praeter eleemosynas copiosas, quae undique colliguntur ab istiusmodi nobilibus sponsis, quorum animi si non adversi, saltem non aequi admodum sunt in rem Catholicam, comprobante experientia scholam hanc eo praecipue fine erectam fuisse, ut pauperum Catholicorum pueros seducerent a vera fide ... cum praeterea pastor in dicta cura de Mitchelstown vir sit oportet prudentia maxima praeditus, animarum salutis ac religionis servandae ardore flagrans, scientiaque demum non mediocri instructus, qui malo isti occurrere, et tot tantisque obviam ire possit insidiis, cumque omnibus hisce dotibus praeditus est P. fr. Joannes Nugent ex ordine praedicatorum ac pastor aliunde ex indulto apostolico ab annis pluribus parochiae de Lisgoold ...

For all these reasons, highly flattering to John Nugent, and on the advice of the other bishops of Munster, William Coppinger obtained the necessary dispensation to move Nugent from Lisgoold to Mitchelstown, with the obligation, to which Nugent gladly consented, of paying the former incumbent a pension of twenty-four pounds Irish a year for the rest of his life.

<sup>173</sup> J. A. Dwyer, *The Dominicans of Cork*, Cork 1896, 47. Lisbon, Corpo Santo, no. 31.

<sup>174</sup> Undated petition granted on 25 March 1792. APF, Udienze 30, ff. 203-04. Propaganda here recalled the decree of 1751 against regulars being appointed to parishes when secular priests were available. Nugent might have Mitchelstown: "provisionaliter tamen et ad nutum amovibilem". The bishop's agent was Valentine Bodkin.

## THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER OF 1793

On 22 June 1793, John Nugent STM, parish priest of Mitchelstown, was elected provincial. That office had obviously become less important, something a busy pastor could manage in his spare time. There had been criticism in earlier decades of provincials who had "never taught in the schools". Now there was a provincial who did not even belong to an established community, much less live in one. Curiously, although Nugent was entitled to attend provincial chapters, being a master in theology, he was not at the chapter which elected him. Patrick Gibbons STL, prior of Dublin and definitor for Leinster, presided in Nugent's absence. The other definitors were John Sheahan, prior of Cork, Thomas McDonogh of Drogheda and Thomas Tully PG of Esker.

The acts of this chapter contain little of interest, since its "ordinations" and "commissions" merely copied earlier legislation. The reappointment of John Daly as historian of the province was coupled with the directive that the provincial archives, still at Louvain, were to be preserved in Rome. This too had been decided before, in 1785, but even now at the eleventh hour no practical steps were taken. When the French army entered Louvain for the second time in 1794, the provincial archives disappeared. The Irish Franciscans, more careful in such matters, removed their most valuable papers from Louvain to Rome under the very eyes of the Republican officials. The chapter's chief concern seems to have been the choice of twenty-nine candidates for the degrees of the order. Ignoring law and custom, the definitors put three of their own names in the general list for promotion rather than ask permission in separate statements for each. The name of the fourth, Thomas McDonogh, does not appear; already a master of theology, he could be promoted no further. Even in the customary list of the dead — twenty-seven priests and seven nuns since 1789 — one notices a certain slackness, for no section was devoted to those who had died abroad<sup>175</sup>.

The lack of documentation for Nugent's provincialate does not

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<sup>175</sup> The acts of the chapter are in Tallaght. Nugent got 32 votes, the other 5 going to John Sheahan S.T.L. of Cork. The formal capitular document of 22 June appointing Luke Concanen as *socius* of the definitor to the next general chapter is in SCAR, no. 27, doc. 54. It is marked "Reg. fol. 16," which shows that records, later lost, were being kept at Dublin, and bears the signature of the chapter's secretary, Aug. Th. McMahon.



prove him an idle figurehead. As shall soon appear, he was in close contact with the Cork community, and in 1794 made his way on visitation at least to Esker. For 1795, all we have is the official document, which Nugent signed at the convent in Cork, naming Thomas Brennan as prior of Sligo since the community there was too small to hold an election<sup>176</sup>. When the second visitation fell due in 1796, the provincial can be traced only to Cork and Boula, but he used at least three visitators: James French of Galway to Athenry, John Daly of Clonshanville to Sligo and Roscommon, and Patrick Gibbons to Newbridge. Only the ordinations made for Newbridge survive. Behind them one can detect the influence of John Daly, ever anxious to have a real community at Newbridge, and one that would survive.

1. Ordinamus... ut RR. PP. huius conventus mutuam inter se foveant pacem, unitatem et concordiam, ac debitam superiori reverentiam ac obedientiam exhibeant...

2. Ordinamus... ut quilibet frater schedulam ceu inventarium habeat omnium suorum bonorum item ac debitorum tam activorum quam passivorum, ac testamentum propria manu scriptum et subsignatum conficiat, in quo alterum sui ordinis religiosum eiusmodi testamenti executorem constituat et nominet, cui bona sua legat per modum fidei commissi juxta statuta ordinis nostri post obitum eius expendenda. Fratres vero qui sine licentia superiorum similia bona propinquis vel consanguineis suis pro libitu suo legare non ventur, trepidare debeant ne criminis contra votum paupertatis rei ex hac vita discedant, ac in altera sibimetipsis damnationem aeternam ascendant.

3. Ordinamus ut nullus ex libris bibliothecae conventus in posterum alicui commodatur: cum experientia compertum sit, huiusmodi libri ex negligentia sive ex oblivione vel nunquam vel raro restituantur...

4. Ordinamus ut FF. e conventu discedentes ad quaestum vel circa alia negotia ceu ministeria parochis exhibenda, id semper superiori notificent ac eius licentiam desuper requirant. Si aliquae circumstantiae occurrentes longiorem absentiae moram exposcant id ei litteris significant.

5. Ordinamus in aggrediendis vel in exequendis ullis operibus quae huius conventus profectum decus vel commoda quocumque modo respicere possint, praecipue iis quorum executio insignes expensas exposcere possit, ut RR. PP. prius inter se mutuam adhibeant concilium, nec aliquis nequidem praelatus in his aggrediendis vel exequendis, posthabitis aliorum consultationibus, suo proprio utatur.

<sup>176</sup> Cork, 4 July 1795. Original in TA, Sligo records, marked "reg. pagina 21<sup>a</sup> pro Conacia". The following ordinations for Newbridge are at Newbridge itself.



6. Ordinamus ut ostio bibliothecae affigatur quoddam serae genus cum tribus clavibus levatoriis, vulgo *latch-keys*, ut inde maneat perpetuo clausa, et ne cuius domestico pro eorum libitu vel extraneo praesertim in absentia PP. in eam pateat ingressus, quod proculdubio variis inconvenientiis possit esse obnoxium...

Datum in conventu nostro S. Eustachii M. hac die 24 Augusti 1796 ... visitatore R.P. Patricio Gibbons S.T.L. ac priore conventus Dubliniensis.

#### BISHOP MOYLAN OF CORK: 1793-1815

On the resignation of John Butler, bishop of Cork, the regular clergy of the city strongly urged his replacement by bishop Francis Moylan of Ardfert. No less than four Dominicans — John Mahony, William Lonergan, William Hanly and Louis Walsh — signed a formal postulation with members of other orders in Moylan's favour<sup>177</sup>. They knew Moylan perfectly well, for he had served in the city from 1764 until his appointment to Ardfert in 1775. And yet, when Moylan returned to Cork as bishop in 1787, a new cause of disagreement soon arose, lasted throughout his episcopate and resurfaced in 1815 upon his death. Since there are two contrasting accounts of the difficulty, it is better to give the Franciscan one first, even though written as late as 1815 and with a generous dash of party spirit<sup>178</sup>.

With regard to the burthen of preaching in the North Chapel [the cathedral], to refresh your memory, I have been commissioned to mention to you the following facts. In the time of Doctor [John] Butler, the regulars preached sometimes in the North, but as usual everywhere, the preacher got the collection. When Doctor Moylan became bishop of Cork, the friars preached there from time to time, but received not the collection. On Christmas day 1793, the Rev. D. Callanan of our [Franciscan] house, who was to have preached, being taken ill, the bishop from the altar told the people that he knew the cause of their disappointment, insinuating that Mr D. Callanan [*a word or two inked out here*]. This unfounded calumny highly offending all the regulars, they refused to preach for him, when he wrote a letter of complaint to cardinal Antonelli, then prefect of Propaganda.

<sup>177</sup> Cork, 21 May 1787. APF, SC Irlanda 16, ff. 275, 280. See T. J. Walsh, Francis Moylan, Bishop of Cork, 1735-1815, in JCHAS (July-Dec. 1950) 98-110. Also E. Bolster (ed.), The Moylan Correspondence, in Coll. Hib. 14 (1971) 82-142; 15 (1972) 56-109.

<sup>178</sup> Cork, 27 Feb. 1815. R. Hayes OFM to J. McCormick OFM at Rome. Full text in C. Giblin (ed), Papers of Richard Joachim Hayes OFM, in Coll. Hib. 21 and 22 (1979-80) 109-10.

Bishop Moylan's letter, written in October 1793, put the matter in a somewhat different light. It all went back, he said, to a decision he made about 1789 to have public prayers and a sermon in his cathedral every Sunday evening. This particular arrangement, only one of many then made "to reform his flock", was intended to curb drunkenness. For three years all went well, as the bishop and a few of his priests preached to packed congregations. Exhaustion then set in, the priests grew weary, while doctors advised the bishop not to work so hard. Bishop Moylan then thought of enrolling *all* the clergy of the city, both secular and regular, which could neither interfere with services in friary chapels, long shut by evening, nor take away from the income of the regulars. Even the friars fell in with this plan until the first Sunday of 1793 when the Franciscan guardian failed to appear and left 5,000 men waiting in vain for a sermon. Even the present cathedral, one may note, would not hold so many. Only then did the bishop discover that the Franciscans, Augustinians and three Dominicans had agreed among themselves to abandon these services without informing him. Although the Dominican prior did his utmost to dissuade the rest, they simply ignored him, despite the fact that not one friar in the city had to preach at the cathedral more than three times a year<sup>179</sup>.

From the Dominican point of view, this incident serves to show the provincial chapter of 1793 in a better light, while proving that John Nugent wrote to the chapter before it convened and later corresponded with the definitory. Both chapter and provincial thoroughly agreed with bishop Moylan a full four months before ever he complained to Rome. Here is the letter from the definitory to Father Nugent at Mitchelstown<sup>180</sup>.

V.R.F.M. Provincial,

In these times of general prejudice to religion and religious orders, it becomes the duty of every religious individual to enlarge the circle of his respective institute. It is with infinite regret the Rev. Fathers of the definitory and the grave Fathers of the chapter have heard from the most authentic authority of an irreligious and ungenerous opposition of some of the Fathers of their house in Cork to the mild and tender requests of their worthy bishop, a man whose life has been a continued proof of affection and attachment to the order, and whose desires have had no other object in view but a general diffusion of religion and its sacred principles. Urged by these motives, he

<sup>179</sup> Cork, 31 Oct. 1793. APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 123-24.

<sup>180</sup> Loc. cit., f. 124. A copy.

proposed to the religious orders in Cork to preach in rotation, which took place for some time, but on account of some malicious reports, a disgraceful combination was entered into by the said Orders, and to the dishonour of the order of St Dominic, three of his sons in said town inrolled themselves in the list. You are therefore requested, V.R.F.M.P., to convey to the worthy bishop of Cork their high disapprobation of the conduct of the aforesaid gentlemen, and to assure his Lordship of their sincere and unalterable attachment. You are also requested to enjoin the gentlemen in Cork by no means to enter into any association of a like nature without previously consulting the provincial and his council.

Dublin, June 27, 1793.

Signed by order of the definitory,  
Br Austin Thomas MacMahon, secretary.

Much of this text was repeated *verbatim* in the letter Father Nugent wrote to the bishop about a week later, revealing that Nugent himself and John Sheahan, prior of Cork, had put the question in writing before the chapter<sup>181</sup>.

My Lord,

It is with particular satisfaction I comply with the earnest request and unanimous voice of our chapter in Dublin to convey to your Lordship their highest disapprobation of the conduct of some of our brethren in Cork ... when he desired their assistance to preach in rotation at his chapel ... Now, my Lord, I am highly gratified when I see that the general voice of our chapter coincides with Mr [John] Sheahan's and my opinion, which I gave him in writing and which appeared at the chapter. If such animadversions did not come from the grave Fathers, I really was decidedly determined to remedy this abuse. Therefore I make bold to request your Lordship will forget the offence given, assuring your Lordship at the same time that any mode devised by you and Mr Sheahan shall be minutely enforced by, my Lord, your most devoted humble servant.

Mitchelstown, July 3, 1793.

John Nugent, provincial.

The three Dominicans concerned immediately submitted to the bishop, but Moylan was afraid of "calumnies made against Father Sheahan" and himself, and so far from "forgetting" the offence, wrote about it to Propaganda. Luke Concanen, when asked for his opinion by cardinal Antonelli in January 1794, made three sensible points: that no one in Rome had heard from the religious directly concerned, that no decree of Propaganda obliged regulars to preach in cathedrals, and that Propaganda should tell bishop Moylan to enlist

<sup>181</sup> Ibidem.

the help of the provincials to *persuade* their subjects to preach for him. When writing to bishop Moylan, Propaganda did indeed suggest that he should use gentleness "tinged with authority", but also give the regulars to understand that should they disobey, Propaganda would deprive them of missionary faculties and the power to hear confessions. The Congregation also sent notes to the Irish Augustinian and Franciscan superiors in Rome, telling them to write to their brethren in Cork. George Staunton, the Augustinian provincial, replied directly to Antonelli in August 1794, regretting that bishop Moylan had said nothing to him "before disturbing the court of Rome", and stating that he found his subjects at Cork quite innocent of any charge the bishop made. Nor did they fear the loss of missionary faculties they never knew they had. The Augustinians did indeed have reason to complain of bishop Moylan, but this "special injustice" hurt them deeply<sup>182</sup>.

The difficulty of 1793 persisted until 1796 when we find Concanen at Rome warning archbishop Troy of Dublin not to "countenance the friars in their dispute with Dr Moylan; some have boasted of your coinciding with them<sup>183</sup>". "Though a regular myself", Concanen wrote, "I know and profess the respect and subordination to bishops. Of this I have given a proof when called upon for my vote by Antonelli in occasion of his difference with the regulars of Cork, which drew on me some censure from the regulars of other orders<sup>184</sup>".

Franciscan sources show that Dr Moylan dined with the friars in 1798 and 1800, surely a sign of better relations, and that from 1797 to 1809 members of the community were paid for "extra sermons" at the North Chapel, as the cathedral in Cork is called even today. On average, they preached eight or nine times a year<sup>185</sup>. These details agree perfectly with the more vivid account of the Franciscan Richard Hayes who, having had the first word in this account, may as well also have the last<sup>186</sup>.

<sup>182</sup> Cork, 9 Aug. 1794. APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 162-63. The other papers quoted are on ff. 123-24, 139-40.

<sup>183</sup> Minerva, 27 April 1796. DDA 116/6, no. 117.

<sup>184</sup> Rome, 24 Dec. 1796. Concanen to Troy. DDA 116/6, no. 125. The account-book of the Dominicans of Cork (now in TA) notes postage paid for no less than eleven letters to and from the provincial between July 1793 and July 1794; and for two further letters to Nugent in March and June 1795.

<sup>185</sup> FLK, R. L. Browne notebook, pp. 102-03. Information kindly supplied by A. Faulkner OFM.

<sup>186</sup> As in note 178 above.



The convents here [in Cork], altho' they protested against the burthen, yet, not to vex *old Dr Moylan*, and, as the communication with Rome was soon after interrupted, did furnish preachers *from time to time*, tho' unwilling, to the North Chapel. Now [in 1815] the vicar capitular, who will shortly be bishop [John Murphy] and the secular clergy insist upon it as a right, and we are resolved, sooner than submit thereto, to suffer ourselves to be suspended.

#### THE UNITED STATES: 1793-1797

In the summer of 1793, when Nugent became provincial, there were three of his subjects in America: Christopher Keating at Philadelphia, William O'Brien and Nicholas Burke in New York. At least three more went out during his term of office.

Among the newcomers was Dominic May, a student of Holy Cross, Louvain, ordained at Malines in 1785. By 1790 he belonged to the community at Sligo where he last signed the account-book on 4 June 1794. In the summer of 1794, as archbishop Troy mentioned in a letter to Carroll, Father May sailed for America with the Augustinians Michael Ennis and John Rossiter<sup>187</sup>.

Mr May, with whom I am but slenderly acquainted, was strongly recommended to me by his own regular superior, and by Dr Flynn, vicar general of the diocese of Elphin, where he resided, as a well-informed, exemplary and laborious clergyman.

O'Daniel says that Father May contracted ship-fever during the voyage, fell sick on arrival and died within a month or two of leaving Ireland. Bishop Carroll sent the bad news back to Troy<sup>188</sup>.

I had no opportunity of experiencing the good qualities which all accounts concurred in attributing to Mr May. It seems that during a few days' residence at Philadelphia, he must have contracted the yellow West Indian fever, for he arrived very sick at Baltimore where the same disorder then raged. I lodged him at my house, though I did not much apprehend the nature of his disorder. But it soon manifested itself in so visible a manner that he died three days after.

The burial-records of the cathedral at Baltimore note the death of a "malignant fever" of Fr Dominic May "of the order of preachers, lately from Ireland, aged about thirty-three years", on 2 October 1794.

<sup>187</sup> Dublin, 18 Oct. 1794. Baltimore, Case 8, M. 1. Guilday, *Life of Carroll*, 507, note 6, gives the year 1795 for Ennis' departure.

<sup>188</sup> Georgetown, 22 June 1795. DDA 116/6, no. 92.



A second newcomer, Anthony Caffrey, took the habit at Esker in 1776 for the convent of Burrishoole in county Mayo. After profession in 1777 he appears to have studied in France, for he was later described as a licentiate of the Sorbonne and signed at least one of his letters as a "doctor of divinity". His abrupt appearance in 1794 as the first pastor of the first city parish in Washington leads one to suppose that he had already been in the United States for some time. According to one account, Irish labourers prevailed on him to come out from Ireland. His memorial stone, erected outside St Patrick's church, Washington, in 1953 would have it that he was "brought from Dublin at the suggestion of James Hoban", designer of the White House and later architect of the Capitol<sup>189</sup>. By April 1794, Father Caffrey had bought the first lot or portion of the property at the corner of 10th and E. Street on which he began to build the first church of St Patrick, a frame house of one-and-a-half storeys completed about 1796 and clear of debt by 1798. To pay bills he used his own money and that of his friends, rich and poor, Catholic and Protestant. Among them were James Hoban, who is said to have been the first to suggest to bishop Carroll the need for a parish within the new capital of the United States, and James Greenleaf, prominent among the land speculators of the infant city<sup>190</sup>. Such benefactors also enabled him to relieve the distress of Irish workers who flocked to Washington to take part in the great building programme which Congress thought fit to delay. Writing to bishop Carroll in August 1800, he expressed the hope that he would find enough money to last out the following winter. He was then trying to "settle promises made" and fend off "accusers", but relied on Carroll's support, since: "I exposed my life to save yours in the yellow fever time in Baltimore"<sup>191</sup>.

Father Caffrey combined the social gifts required as an *entrée* to high society with the good humour which led him to "wrestle in the Irish fashion" with a fellow-priest. But, also in the Irish fashion, he was somewhat contrary and it was this trait, combined with ill-health, which speeded his departure from Washington. Bishop Leonard Neale, Carroll's coadjutor, put his finger on the heart of the matter early in

<sup>189</sup> P. Ó Mórdáin, *Annála Beaga Pharáiste Bhuiréis Umhaill*, (Mayo News 1960) 39-42. L. Taheney, *Dominicans Serving in Dublin Parishes*, in *Reportorium Novum*, III, no. 1 (1962) 153-54. Neither O'Daniel nor Guilday mention Caffrey at all.

<sup>190</sup> A. C. Clark, *Greenleaf and Law*, Washington 1901, p. 93.

<sup>191</sup> Baltimore, Case 8<sup>a</sup>, C. 3.

1804. On appointing Caffrey, bishop Carroll had made no more definite arrangement about the boundaries of his parish than to confine St Patrick's to the "precincts" of Washington. A more precise arrangement was necessary, but Caffrey was hard to please. Here is part of a letter from Neale to Carroll<sup>192</sup>:

Mr Caffrey insists on the whole city belonging to St Patrick's. If you mean the same by the term precincts mentioned in your letter, the difficulty would be enormous. Even many living near St Patrick's are not allowed by Mr Caffrey to enter that church. In a word, everything implies implication when any particular system is proposed. I wish your Reverence would put a final stop to the disagreeable jar which is continually sounding in every ear.

Whatever the reason, Father Caffrey's work at Washington soon came to "a final stop", and we find him next in 1805 as assistant-priest at St Peter's, New York. By 1808 he had been for some time back in Ireland because the provincial chapter of that year postulated him as a preacher general. He may have lived at Burrishoole itself, for in 1810 he was paying rent on land at Derryloughan nearby. On 26 February 1811 he wrote to Carroll, now archbishop, from Dublin but giving his address as Newportpratt, Co. Mayo, close to Burrishoole. By this time he had recovered his health in his "native air" and had met at Dublin the archbishop's nephew: "who feasted me with a long and detailed account of my friends and connections in America". Enclosed in his letter was "a deed for a lot I own in Washington". Father Caffrey hoped that "St Patrick's church would refund me 200 dollars, the moneys of my own which I expended thereon in the space of three years after my leaving it, that is in 1808. You were good enough to advance 80 dollars of said sum on my quitting Baltimore". At the time he wrote, Caffrey "had not taken on the care of souls", but later in 1811 he was curate of St Michan's, Dublin, and died about October of the same year<sup>193</sup>.

Christopher Keating, the only priest at Philadelphia to survive the

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<sup>192</sup> Georgetown, 27 Jan. 1804. Baltimore archives. Reference taken from the notes of Fr O'Daniel OP at Washington.

<sup>193</sup> Caffrey's letter of 1811, presumably from the Baltimore archives, is taken here from Fr O'Daniel's notes. Troy of Dublin wrote to Carroll on 2 Nov. 1811, mentioning Caffrey's very recent death. Carroll's reply, lamenting the "unexpected death of my good-hearted friend Dr Caffrey", is in *Spic. Ossor.* III, 533-34. The preceding sketch of Caffrey's career could obviously be improved by someone with access to American archives and libraries.

yellow fever epidemic of 1793, was still active there until 1795, though more concerned with distant "stations" than with the city itself. His sad story was related by Carroll to Troy with the delicate kindness of a father and the wisdom of one who had been a religious himself<sup>194</sup>.

I have reason to believe that the Rev. Mr Keating, who has resided several years at Philadelphia, will return soon to Ireland. As I have not any knowledge of, nor correspondence with the superior of his order in Ireland, I must beg leave to trouble your Lordship with the information which should be communicated to him.

The late worthy Mr [Francis] Fleming, who loved him with the tenderness of a father, wished to have him remain at Philadelphia. His talents or experience did not suit well with that appointment; but as his dispositions to labour in the harvest of souls were ardent, and his manners very pleasing, I consented to his being stationed there, under the eye and direction of so vigilant and capable an instructor. During the contagious disorder to which that good man fell a victim, Mr Keating exposed himself night and day with most exemplary charity and gained the love and esteem of all.

After the contagion was over and some months had passed, a visible alteration was observed in Mr Keating, which for a long time was thought to be the effect of the sickness which he himself had caught. At times he seemed to act inconsistently, to be totally unfit for the ministry, and to speak without any regard for truth. As long as these were considered the unhappy effects of his exertions, a hope was entertained that he would recover by degrees. But information was given to me at last that he had grown too fond of liquor and that his frequent incapacity, as well as other irregularities, were produced by it. He was admonished without amendment, till at length it was alleged that scandals were frequent and that my duty obliged me to animadvert upon him. I therefore gave a commission to that angelical priest Mr [John] Rossiter [OSA], whom your Grace mentioned with so much commendation, to repair to Philadelphia and make every necessary investigation; the result of which was that Mr Keating was unfit to be trusted longer with the functions of our ministry. This I made known to him and he intends to Ireland. As he is young and has many good qualities, I do not despair but he may be recovered if he can live again with such a friend as Mr Fleming. Gentleness and fraternal charity will operate strongly on his mind.

On this occasion I regret very much that a proposal made formerly by me to Mr Fleming has never been effected: which was that he would recommend it to the superiors of his order to have a subordination and religious government established here for those who belong to it. I suppose this may

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<sup>194</sup> Baltimore, 28 Sept. 1795. DDA 116/6, no. 93. I am indebted to Miss Mary Purcell for a complete typed copy of this important letter.

be consistent with their Constitution. When this is the case, if any member acts improperly, the bishop can advise his superior, and a remedy may be applied without publicity or offence. In the Society [of Jesus] to which I belonged, if only two were sent on a foreign mission, one of them was always constituted Superior, and it had good effects. And allow me to request your Lordship to mention this to some of the most respectable gentlemen of the order at Dublin or elsewhere, as I know that at this very time it would be much to the advantage of some of their brethren now employed in my diocese. The irregularities of religious men are corrected much more properly and advantageously by their own superiors than by bishops.

Bishop Carroll's views on the establishment of the Dominican order in the United States were sent by archbishop Troy to his Roman agent, Luke Concanen, who had already served his first three years as assistant of the master general. Concanen's status gives considerable authority to his comment of 16 January 1796<sup>195</sup>.

Dr Carroll is very right in his sentiment regarding an immediate regular superior for missionaries in distant parts. Our Constitutions provide in that point by deputing the oldest in profession in want of another provision. Let the provincial [John Nugent] immediately give an ample patent of vicar-provincial to whomever he'll judge most capable of the task in them distant parts. I should imagine that [William] O'Brien of New York would be the fittest person to be appointed.

It was an opportunity missed so far as the Irish Dominicans were concerned. The Augustinians, and not for the first time, showed more initiative and discipline. As early as May 1796, in bishop Carroll's words, they had already "been commissioned by their brethren in Ireland to form an establishment for their order in these States, in which endeavour they shall have every encouragement and aid in my power"<sup>196</sup>.

There can be no doubt that Christopher Keating, despite his weakness, was dearly loved by those who knew him best. At a meeting on 17 June 1795, the trustees of St Mary's parish, Philadelphia, resolved to give him 250 dollars "as a small testimony of their gratitude", since he was about to leave the city "on his return to Dublin". In actual fact his departure was delayed until December. As for his later career, we know only of his death at the age of thirty-nine, a curate in Castle-town-delvin in the diocese of Meath on 7 January 1802<sup>197</sup>.

<sup>195</sup> Concanen to Troy. DDA 116/6, no. 116.

<sup>196</sup> Baltimore, 25 May 1796. Carroll to Troy. Spic. Ossor. III, 520-22.

<sup>197</sup> The inscription on his tomb is given by Cogan, Diocese of Meath, II, 412.

Francis Bodkin, who reached the United States at the close of 1794, took the habit as Dominic Bodkin for the convent of Galway at Esker on 22 September 1776, just three days before Anthony Caffrey joined him there as a novice. While both spent their year of probation at Esker, neither appears in the defective record of professions<sup>198</sup>. He is said to have studied at Lisbon, which can have been only for a preliminary year for he began philosophy at San Clemente on 30 January 1779 and left Rome two years later for the convent of S. Catharina di Formello at Naples "to regain his health and begin theology"<sup>199</sup>. Eventually, in September 1785, the master general told him to return from Italy to Ireland<sup>200</sup>.

At this point, Bodkin's trail practically disappears, but seems to lead towards Spain and not to Ireland. In later years he was to claim that he once "had a parish in Old Spain", and it is interesting that of the four books bearing his signature, still in the conventual library at Galway, one is an ancient bible in Spanish and another the *Promptuario de la Teologia Moral* of Francisco Larraga OP printed at Alcala in 1793. Most likely he worked in London too, for he would also claim to have brought to the States "very ample credentials from Italy, Spain, England and Ireland", not to mention a large number of stipends given him by a Spanish friend in London. No evidence of his work, nor even of his presence in Ireland lies to hand.

Bodkin's arrival in America can be neatly dated, because bishop Carroll expressly states that he came after the death of Dominic May, which is to say, after 2 October 1794<sup>201</sup>.

Since his death, another Irish gentleman, and of the order of St Dominic, Mr Bodkin arrived from London [about November 1794], destined to live with a private family, but the arrangements were not made agreeably to the promises given in London, and he went [about March 1795] to seek a brother in the West Indies.

Between his arrival and his departure for the Indies, Father Bodkin visited Hagerston, Washington County, Maryland at Christmas 1794 to discuss with Fr Denis Cahill the terms on which Bodkin would replace

<sup>198</sup> Coll. Hib. 11 (1968) 50. The identification of Francis with Dominic is made in an old manuscript of Galway convent. TA, Ryan 3, p. 110.

<sup>199</sup> SCAR, no. 55, f. 40.

<sup>200</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 16. "Italy" is not mentioned, but by this date the general did not send anyone home from anywhere else.

<sup>201</sup> As in note 188 above.



Cahill in that neighbourhood. After "several conferences", Bodkin decided that his weak constitution would not allow him "to undertake so laborious a mission", while the financial arrangements on which Cahill insisted would leave Bodkin with a small and uncertain income. Writing from Baltimore to Carroll on 6 February 1795, Bodkin explained the whole situation in detail and only then "went to seek a brother in the West Indies" as Carroll was to say in June<sup>202</sup>. After his visit to the Caribbean, Father Bodkin returned to Hagerston in September 1795 and there remained until August 1796. Father Cahill went off at once to Virginia to look after some of his scattered congregations but came back a month later, partly to help Bodkin and partly to annoy him, as Bodkin claimed:

particularly about some money he had out on this congregation, and which Mr Charles Carroll had done away by giving him his note of £ 40 payable in two years and three months, which was to be deducted at £ 10 per year out of my subscription. This affair being settled, a subscription was put on foot for me here. We then went to Chamberstown where I was introduced to the congregation, officiated for them on Sunday and had a liberal subscription made for me after Mass, and was engaged to attend there once a month. From thence we went to Fort Cumberland ... where I officiated for the congregation and a generous subscription took place for me on consideration of my officiating there on six Sundays each year.

As the pair rode back to Hagerston, it became perfectly clear to Bodkin that Cahill wanted him out of the way and, when all else failed, behaved as an "examinator". Here Bodkin drew the line: he would go or stay as bishop Carroll directed, "and having with me very ample credentials from Italy, Spain, England and Ireland, I would not submit to be catechised by him". Bodkin had come to Hagerston recommended by a Mr Barrett whose son, living in the town, gave Father Cahill "a very generous annuity during his attendance". This, thought Bodkin, could well have been another motive for Cahill's strange behaviour. By return of post, Carroll told Bodkin to stay where he was and sent Father Cahill to Winchester. Unfortunately, Bodkin had not seen the last of him. There was another difficulty too: further defeats inflicted on the Red Indian tribes encouraged white migration to Kentucky

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<sup>202</sup> Among Fr O'Daniel's notes at Washington are photostats of seven letters from Bodkin to Carroll, all from the Baltimore archives, Case I, T. 1-7. They are used here without further reference.

and most of Francis Bodkin's congregation moved west. When next he wrote to bishop Carroll on 5 July 1796, his situation had greatly changed.

I have enjoyed tolerable good health, though several circumstances occurred to make me sufficiently uneasy. The principal supporters of this congregation having lately gone to Kentucky has, of course, reduced the support of this congregation almost to nothing, as few R. Catholics remained here but such as could not afford going there. But the chief uneasiness I experienced is the Rev. Mr Cahill's unceasing diligence in incommoding me, his frequently coming here in my absence, and darkly wounding my character ...

Last Christmas twelvemonths when I came here, I mentioned to him that at my leaving London a Spanish friend of mine gave me a very considerable number of Masses to discharge for him. I find now that ... he has endeavoured to insinuate amongst my people here my being so unwarrantably engaged for Masses that no Mass I say can benefit them, especially on Sunday, etc.

Father Cahill went so much further than this in his slanderous campaign that Bodkin "as parish priest" had publicly to forbid him to administer any sacrament in his district. For his part, Cahill took the attitude that bishop Carroll had no power to appoint parish priests "and said that this being a free and missionary country, every priest had power to administer every place, when and where he choosed". By August 1796, Bodkin had resigned his parish and sought permission to travel south. For so punctilious a man, especially one seeking a favour, it is strange that he sent his letter of resignation to his fellow-novice Caffrey at Washington rather than to bishop Carroll.

My Lord, having now almost a year attended these congregations, struggling through difficulties and constant opposition, and thinking it would conduce more to the spiritual advantage of this place, I have resigned into your hands these congregations ... and hope they still will benefit more by one who can peaceably attend them. As I know myself not to be free from error, and perhaps greater feelings than my neighbours, I shall candidly refer you, for the particular motives of my resignation, to a letter I wrote Mr [Anthony] Caffrey and intended for your perusal.

My present wish, my Lord, is your permission to accompany my friend Mr [Dominic] Jourdan down the Ohio, perhaps to the Spanish West Indies. On my way I expect to pass one or two months at Kentucky. I therefore humbly request you will be pleased to send to me a letter of recommendation and introduce me to New Orleans and Havanna ... If I can settle there to my satisfaction, I would not wish during these troublesome times to go to any of the islands.

Bishop Carroll was less than pleased at this decision, not having received the long letter to Father Caffrey OP of Washington "intended for his perusal", but Bodkin persisted in asking permission to accompany Mr Dominic Jourdan of Baltimore from Kentucky to New Orleans or Havana. Having once had "a parish in Old Spain" he was sure that a recommendation from Carroll would improve his chance of obtaining "a better situation there". In the same letter of 15 August 1796, Bodkin proposed a solution to the problems created by his leaving Hagerston:

I this day met a strange clergyman, a Mr Ryan. He informs me [that he] attends a congregation 34 or 5 miles from this called Emitstown [Emmitsburg]. I believe with your permission he could attend these congregations, having full leisure, as he now attends but one.

I shall deliver your letter to Kentucky as directed and during my stay there, which I believe will be until after Christmas, I shall endeavour to make myself as serviceable as possible to my neighbours. In the meantime, I'll renew my request of a letter or introduction at the Havana or New Orleans. The Havana is where I expect, and indeed would rather for the present wish to remain. But if a convenient place would offer at New Orleans, I'd content myself ...

I sincerely assure your Lordship that if I imagined my service could be of as much benefit as that of another clergyman, I should not wish to leave the place. Indeed the heads of my congregation have desired me to write a petition and have it signed by them. But I thought that so much like party business and so disedifying that I totally declined and forbore.

At this point, the elusive Bodkin disappears again for seven years until January and February 1804 when he wrote twice from New Orleans to bishop Carroll, and wrote as though there had never been a break in their correspondence<sup>203</sup>. In the space of three short years (1800-1803) the province of Louisiana had been ceded by Spain to the French Republic and sold by Napoleon to the United States for fifteen million dollars. Where exactly Bodkin spent the interval between 1797 and 1803 the reader may decide for himself on the basis of this short extract:

I take the liberty of informing your Lordship that to pass away the winter and see my old friends and correspondents, I undertook a long and tedious journey down the river, and have been in the King [of Spain's] employment since last spring [1803], which has hindered me of passing to the Havana. Since my arrival here I have experienced several changes. I witnessed the

<sup>203</sup> Baltimore, Case I, T. 8-9. On Louisiana see Guilday, *Life of Carroll*, 700-08.

Spanish, French and now the American flag flying... The ecclesiastical establishment continues on the same footing until your will is known. The pay of all the French clergymen is stopt. The Irish only enjoy their pay, and will leave this country during the course of this month.

The bulk of these two letters describes the state of the church in New Orleans and strongly urges Carroll to appoint priests on whom he can absolutely rely. There is no suggestion that Bodkin was indirectly seeking "a better situation" for himself. He writes as a disinterested friend, simply to point out difficulties and opportunities, as though his own future was secure. He already was, or later became a chaplain in the Spanish army until 1808 when he returned to Ireland on a year's leave of absence. The disturbed state of Spain in 1809, the difficulties of travel and his own poor health prevented his return to military service. So much appears from representations made in 1819 and 1821 by the Spanish ambassador at London to the court of Madrid for the payment of Bodkin's salary<sup>204</sup>. Without ever receiving these arrears from the Spaniards, Francis Bodkin died in his native convent of Galway on 27 September 1822.

There is much less to say about the two Irish Dominicans at New York during John Nugent's provincialate. Nicholas Burke returned to the city "from the south" towards the end of 1794, again as assistant in St Peter's parish. He was just in time to attend the victims of a particularly severe plague of yellow fever in 1795. In the summer of 1796 he may well have revisited Lisbon, for Corpo Santo gave him forty stipends "as alms" in July of that year, surely too few to bother sending to America. The yellow fever returned to New York in 1798 and again in 1799, yet still Nicholas Burke survived. Death came for him in quite another form, for he was drowned while crossing a river in February 1800<sup>205</sup>. Burke was soon joined in death by Bartholomew Augustine MacMahon OP, a preacher general who came to the United States in 1799, spent a short while in Philadelphia, baptised for the first time at New York in January 1800 and died there of yellow fever in July. Both Dominicans were listed among the dead of 1800 in the diocesan *Ordo* of Baltimore for the year 1801<sup>206</sup>.

<sup>204</sup> Madrid, AHN, Estado, leg. 5502, nos. 22, 86. An M.P. had asked the ambassador to intervene. Information kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.

<sup>205</sup> V. F. O'Daniel, in *Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of St Antoninus Parish*, Newark N.J., 1875-1925, p. 16.

<sup>206</sup> Guilday, *Life of Carroll*, 626. O'Daniel, *Province of St Joseph*,

William Vincent O'Brien, pastor of St Peter's from 1787, remained at his post, a true *pastor fidelis*, during the plagues of 1795, 1798, 1799, 1801 and 1805, "visiting the sick and dying everywhere"<sup>207</sup>. In 1800, he opened St Peter's Free School, the first in New York and the first Catholic school in the State. From about 1806 he began to suffer acute rheumatism and signed the baptismal registers for the last time on 13 July 1807. One detail, unknown to O'Daniel, is that since O'Brien's sister and children depended entirely on him for support, he obtained permission in 1796 to bequeath to them what little he might leave on his death<sup>208</sup>. His withdrawal from active service seems to have coincided with the appointment in 1808 of Luke Concanen OP as first bishop of New York. Future historians may unravel what lay behind Concanen's remark to 'Troy in a letter announcing his appointment<sup>209</sup>.

Instead of being in my grave, I am appointed bishop of New York ... I know not how agreeable my appointment may be to my old friend Fr O'Brien, who would hold my place, had he not in his advanced age swerved from the zealous and edifying tenour of his youth.

Out of gratitude for so many years of faithful service, the trustees of St Peter's voted Father William O'Brien a yearly pension on which he was to depend until his death at New York on 14 May 1816.

#### HOLY CROSS, LOUVAIN: 1789-1794

There is little one can say about the college at Louvain between 1789 and its total loss to the Irish province in 1794. While the Irish Franciscans of Louvain smuggled their most valuable manuscripts to Rome about 1792, and the English Dominicans of Bornhem carried

128-29. MacMahon was the Aug. Thomas, secretary of the provincial chapter of 1793. Both he and James Ml. Bushe OP (active from 1799 in New Jersey, Albany and Norfolk) went to America from Dublin as political refugees, having been involved with the United Irishmen.

<sup>207</sup> O'Daniel, Province of St Joseph, 125-27, on which the rest of this paragraph is based.

<sup>208</sup> APF, Udienze 35 (1796), ff. 341-42. The petition mentions his constant exposure to death from the plague.

<sup>209</sup> Rome, 25 March 1808. DDA 121/7, ff. 361-62. Guillarday, Life of Carroll, 631, wonders why O'Brien was not proposed for the new diocese. See V. R. Hughes, Richard Luke Concanen OP (1747-1810), Fribourg 1926, though Hughes does not raise this point.



their records safely to England, the Irish Dominicans on the return of the French army lost everything save the matrices of two seals and some Austrian bonds which Fr Bartholomew Russell would try long after to redeem. The master general having long lost practical control over the college, even the names of its officials, whom it was his duty to appoint, are now unknown. We do, however, have the names of the last seven students ordained from Holy Cross <sup>210</sup>.

Patrick Duffy	}	Subdiaconate and priesthood	1790
John Kennelly			
Patrick Rice			
Peter Crodden			
David Keavy [Kervy?]		Tonsure to priesthood	1790-1791
Daniel McCraith		Tonsure to diaconate	1791
Patrick Quinn		Tonsure to priesthood	1793-1794

On 14 July 1794, just a month after Quinn's priestly ordination, archbishop Troy wrote twice to Rome in some alarm about developments in Flanders, foreseeing that they could only make more acute the shortage of priests already felt in some Irish dioceses <sup>211</sup>. "Everyone in Flanders has fled before the fury of the French. The sacred temples, colleges, seminaries, convents, even the monasteries of nuns are derelict. The Irish and English dames of Brussels, Louvain, Ghent, Bruges etc. arrive daily in England. Our colleges at Louvain and Antwerp are derelict; the Irish Franciscan and Dominican convents abandoned. Everything is desolation and confusion". Obviously Troy had not heard of James Cowan OFM, still guardian of St Anthony's, Louvain, in October 1796. Cowan, if no one else, had the courage to stand his ground, whatever the cost <sup>212</sup>.

Our sufferings and afflictions, these six months past, are beyond description. I would rather be a galley slave, nay I would rather, if it was God's will, be dead, than a superior of a religious house in the present circumstances. We are harassed day and night in such a manner that were I not afraid that

<sup>210</sup> A. M. Bogaerts, *De Dominikanen in de Wijdingsregisters ... Mechelen*, Brussels 1965. H. Fennig, *The Undoing of the Friars*, 372.

<sup>211</sup> To cardinal Antonelli. APF, SOCG 900, ff. 24-25. To Mgr Zondadari, in APF, Udienze 32 (1794), ff. 344-45. The latter was partly a petition (granted 30 Aug. 1794) on behalf of an aged Dominican who wished to bequeath half his money to a needy monastery of Dominican nuns. Most likely a reference to Th. Netterville and the nuns of Drogheda.

<sup>212</sup> B. Jennings (ed.), *Louvain Papers, 1606-1827*, Dublin 1968, 508.

our convent once abandoned would be immediately ravaged and totally destroyed, we would have fled long since; but for this very reason I am resolved to stand it out to the last extremity.

When Bartholomew Russell, as historian of the province, enquired in 1834 about the fate of Holy Cross, he received the following answer from John Kennelly of Athy, one of the seven students listed above <sup>213</sup>.

To my knowledge there were no documents of any kind such as you require in the convent of Louvain. When the French were approaching closely towards Louvain, and that we determined to quit the convent, we packed up about 200 of the choicest of the books and gave them in trust to a gentleman that we considered a friend and benefactor to the convent. His name I at present forget, but I know he lived not far from the convent. After peace was concluded on the continent, the then provincial commissioned Fr [Stephen Joseph] Taylor, commonly called Abbé Taylor, of the order, who was then [in 1803] going from Ireland to Rome and was to travel through Belgium, to enquire after these books. The answer he received from our supposed friend was, that the books were seized and taken away by the French, as being convent property. I remember perfectly well every occurrence that happened in the order, both in Louvain and in Ireland these fifty years past. But, my dear brother, anything I could tell you will be found in a more summary and concise manner in the provincial book of the order, which is always in possession of the ruling superior.

Father Kennelly had himself ruled the province from 1820 to 1825, but "the provincial book of the order" to which he referred no longer exists. An earlier register of the kind was lost at Dublin during the rebellion of 1798 <sup>214</sup>. For a more vivid account of the "flight from Louvain", we must turn to an even later letter of 1878 written by the grandnephew of Fr Bartholomew Shine OP, ordained at Antwerp in 1787 and remembered even today at Brosna in Kerry where he was parish priest from 1804 until his death in 1827 <sup>215</sup>.

He [Father Shine] went to college and after some time joined your Order, was ordained priest, was selected from among many as chaplain by a notable who lived, I must suppose, within four English miles of Louvain. At his

<sup>213</sup> Athy, 10 Feb. 1834. Original in TA, Ryan 5, pp. 117-18.

<sup>214</sup> The provincial chapter of 1801 asked the general to excuse any errors in its postulations, because: "registrum provinciae insaeviente rebellione deperditum fuerit, nec hucusque invenire potuerit".

<sup>215</sup> Fossa, 30 Dec. 1878. P. Shine PP to John Ryan OP of Tralee. Original in TA, Ryan 5, tipped in at pp. 183-85.

house he said Mass every day for four years. They became strongly attached to one another in the course of this time and had made arrangements to visit Rome in a day or two and go from that on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This plan was put an end to by the sudden invasion of the French army. This personage takes to the battle-field, and no more do I know of him.

The inmates of the college [Holy Cross] with my grand-uncle are obliged to move before the invading armies. They spend a night in a dozen towns in succession where they get a little resting time, but are obliged to decamp on the morning by the invading foe. I must mention an anecdote of the battle-field. He with a number of brother-priests were on the field of carnage preparing the dying. He is administering the last rites to a person and he sees an old woman bent with age robbing the dead. She has attached to her cincture a long string of rings and precious valuables plundered from the wounded and the dying. She notices a ring of great value on the finger of a dying officer. She tries to pull it off, but the finger being swelled cannot do so, and tries to cut off the finger with a penknife. And then a brother-officer, seeing the cruelty, fires at her a chain-ball which cutting her at the middle sends herself and looted treasure into the air, one half of her with a string of plundered valuables attached falling behind the priest [Fr Shine] with a crash where he was preparing a dying soldier.

From this disturbed state of things he is drawn towards the shore that separates England from the continent and through the charity of an English officer is enabled to come home. We find himself and some brother Dominicans at Knockanure not far from the river Feale. Here they are obliged to accept secular missions <sup>216</sup>.

#### THE FOUNDING OF MAYNOOTH: 1793-1796

While the loss of foreign colleges at Louvain and Antwerp in 1794 made archbishop Troy reflect on the future training of Irish priests, the question had been on his mind for quite some years before. Even the most recent writers on the foundation of Maynooth tend to forget that Troy, as bishop of Ossory, had created both a seminary and a lay school at Kilkenny in the 1780s. As early as 1791, cardinal Antonelli suggested that he look into the possibility of obtaining government assistance towards building seminaries in Ireland. Only in that year did all hope for the Irish colleges in France disappear and it was in

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<sup>216</sup> Mr Padraig de Brún tells me that Knockanure is about five miles N.E. of Listowel, Co. Kerry, in the present Catholic parish of Moyvane. The church ruins were said to be "comparatively modern" in 1841. Fathers Daniel O'Keane and Maurice Stack would have been Fr Shine's companions there about 1795.

France after all that the vast majority of Irish priests were educated. Besides, diplomatic relations between London and Rome had turned from enmity to friendship since the appearance of the French revolutionaries as a common menace. The times were ripe and it was Troy who took advantage of the situation. The subject is introduced here because Maynooth College was to gain such international importance, because its foundation was such a significant event in the history of the Irish church, and because the man with the best claim to be called its founder was a Dominican friar<sup>217</sup>.

We find Troy in March 1793 suggesting to archbishop Bray of Cashel that the next meeting of the four metropolitans should consider a petition to the King asking for a charter to found a seminary, as well as the money to build it. The archbishops would also consider how private subscriptions might be raised and what rules should be framed to regulate studies and discipline. A week after this meeting, held at Dublin in November 1793, Dr Troy had an interview at Dublin Castle with Major Hobart, chief secretary, at which he explained how the destruction of seminaries "in the French dominions, where near four hundred persons were constantly maintained and prepared for the ministry" had already caused a shortage of Irish clergy and would continue to do so. A seminary in Ireland, subject to the bishops alone, was immediately necessary, even though that would require not only further legislation to overcome a disabling clause in the Relief Act of 1793 already passed, but also "some pecuniary aid from government". A long memorial from Troy to the Lord Lieutenant, submitted on 14 January 1794 "on behalf of all the bishops of Ireland", ruled out Trinity College as an appropriate place of study for Catholic seminarians and formally applied for the "royal licence" for the endowment of seminaries under Catholic "ecclesiastical superiors". At that time it was hoped to build not one, but several seminaries. The submission of this memorial has been described as "the first important step towards the founding" of the college of Maynooth<sup>218</sup>.

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<sup>217</sup> The best and most recent account is by V. J. McNally, John Thomas Troy and the Establishment of Maynooth, 1791-1795, in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 67 (1981) 565-88.

<sup>218</sup> J. Hally, *Maynooth College: its Centenary History*, Dublin 1895, p. 98. See also the article in three parts by M. R. O'Connell, *Political Background to the Establishment of Maynooth College*, in *I.E.R.* (May, June and July 1956), though O'Connell scarcely mentions Troy.

Legal and political difficulties delayed an answer to this memorial for almost a year, and the reply when it came on 2 January 1795 was cold, abrupt and unhelpful. Three days later, the Lord Lieutenant who dictated it was replaced and we find archbishop Troy, in the very same month, casting about for a suitable site on which to build. He thus anticipated by three months the necessary act of parliament which received its first reading only on 24 April and obtained the royal assent on 5 June 1795. Not that Troy was the "only begetter" of Maynooth. Statesmen like Henry Grattan and Edmund Burke, bishops of the calibre of Francis Moylan and Patrick Plunkett, Dr Thomas Hussey who was to become the first president of the college, all took their part in the great achievement. And yet even the combined efforts of such able men would have come to nothing had the English government not thought fit to allow and even finance a national seminary under the effective control of the bishops alone, to offset its refusal of complete Catholic emancipation and calm a country moving steadily towards rebellion. Bishop Healy, the historian of Maynooth, says that Dr Troy "took a leading part in everything connected" with its foundation, and was "the most influential and most laborious of the original trustees of the college"<sup>219</sup>.

At nearly all the early meetings of the Board of Trustees, Dr Troy was present; and whenever a committee was appointed with some hard work to do, he was almost always appointed the first member. Many of the meetings of the Board were held at his house; and no matter what work was to be done by any of the Trustees in the College, Dr Troy was ever ready to give his services. So that it may be truly said that Maynooth owes more to Dr Troy than, perhaps, to any other Irish prelate that was ever connected with the College.

The same author regrets the lack of any detailed description of the events of 20 April 1796 when the Lord Lieutenant, Earl Camden, came to Maynooth to lay the foundation stone of the new buildings. The following letter from bishop Plunkett of Meath to John Connolly OP, his Roman agent, may not tell the full story, but it shows how much the social status of Irish bishops had improved since their exile in 1698<sup>220</sup>.

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<sup>219</sup> J. Healy, *op. cit.*, 117. No author seems to advert to the fact, certainly not accidental, that the new college was sited in Troy's diocese.

<sup>220</sup> Navan, 12 Oct. 1796. SCAR, no. 107, doc. 2. Connolly's reply is in Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, III, 207.



The front of the College of St Patrick, Maynooth, is advancing rapidly. This part of the building will furnish accommodation for two hundred students, besides a temporary chapel, refectory and halls for public lectures. As yet no more than fifty students are supported on the establishment. The foundation stone was laid on the 20 of April last by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland accompanied by the Lord High Chancellor, the chief judges of the courts, the Duke of Leinster, the Earl of Fingall, Lord Kenmare, Sir Edward Bellew, and as many of the ecclesiastical trustees as could be assembled. Twenty-one trustees have been appointed by act of parliament to superintend the establishment, viz: the four first judges, who are the only Protestant trustees, six laymen who are Catholic noblemen and gentlemen, and eleven ecclesiastics who are at present the four Catholic metropolitans, six suffragans and one priest, Doctor Hussey, president of the college. Doctors O'Reilly of Armagh, Troy of Dublin, your humble servant and Doctor Hussey were the only ecclesiastical trustees that could be [in] time enough at Maynooth to assist at the ceremony of laying the foundation stone.

The Viceroy was received at the approach of the college by the trustees, a number of the nobility and the fifty students in their gowns. Three of the students pronounced in presence of Earl Camden the Lord Lieutenant three odes, one in Greek, one in Latin and one in English. His Excellency and suite sat down to a plentiful collation of which we the ecclesiastical trustees had the honour to partake. We received at Maynooth cards of invitation to dine that day with the Lord Lieutenant at the Castle of Dublin, and his Excellency had the goodness to order his carriages to convey the ecclesiastical trustees from Maynooth to Dublin, a distance of eleven miles. Doctors O'Reilly, Troy, Abbé Hussey and I came to the capital in the Viceroy's splendid coach and six attended by his servants. We had the honour of dining that day along with the other trustees at the Castle with the Lord Lieutenant. The dinner, you may be sure, was suitable to the place and the occasion: the politeness, attention and affability of the Lord Lieutenant was such as to leave us nothing to wish for.

It was not the least remarkable circumstance of that extraordinary day, that the Lord Lieutenant called on Doctor O'Reilly of Armagh to bless the table. "Doctor O'Reilly, be so good as to give us grace". After the king and royal family, the first toast given by the Viceroy was "success and prosperity to the Seminary of St Patrick". The Duke of Leinster, on whose estate the college is situated, assisted with delight at the ceremony of the laying of the first stone and was one of the guests at the Castle dinner that day. His Grace behaved towards us with marked civility and kindness. The scene exhibited on the 20th of April was in every respect so new, I thought this detail would not be unacceptable.

## SAN CLEMENTE, ROME: 1778-1797

None of the three foreign colleges preserved its records better than San Clemente and none has been better served by historians<sup>221</sup>. Yet there is little of importance to say about the college during this period of twenty years. Only seventeen Irishmen received the habit there at that time, twelve of whom were admitted between 1784 and 1788. Of these twelve, five took the habit in 1784 and another five in 1786. Obviously, San Clemente as a novitiate shone bright but briefly in the middle 1780s. It is stranger still that while two of the novices of 1784 were from Ulster, all five of those admitted in 1786 were from the same province. Such an unwonted concentration of northerners may have been due to the initiative of Bernard Brady, vicar-provincial for Ulster. Another curious detail from 1784 is that two of those admitted — John T. Plunkett and Pius Garret Stack — had taken the habit already at Louvain and come to Rome for their novitiate. They must have been too young to make profession legally in the Austrian Netherlands. Three Italian laybrothers, who were to give loyal and valuable service to the house, were also novices in San Clemente at this time. Only three Irishmen appear in the record after 1788: Francis J. O'Finan in 1792, Edmund Lyons in 1795 and the last of all, another Ulsterman, Joseph McKey in 1797.

Father Boyle's estimate of "three or four" students in community during the final quarter of the century seems somewhat low, since there were at least seven in 1779, but one would need a computer to settle the matter. After 1785 the official record of the coming and going of students was not kept with the usual care, while even before that date the students were highly mobile: coming with philosophy already done, leaving to study theology elsewhere, retreating to some Italian convent because of "poor health", coming back to study for a few months before their final departure. The story of Edmund Albert Clarke, one of the five novices of 1784, illustrates the difficulty. He went back sick to Ireland in 1786 but after a few years returned to Italy to resume his studies. Once arrived at the convent of San Domenico in Genoa, he wrote to inform the general of his return and ask permission to stay

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<sup>221</sup> L. E. Boyle, *San Clemente Miscellany I*, Rome 1977. This includes a chapter (pp. 27-58) by H. Fenning on the life and work of the community up to 1797.

where he was, not having money enough to travel on to Rome<sup>222</sup>. Another gentleman, Constantine McKenna, studied for ten years in the province of Andalusia until such time as he got the general's licence to return to Ireland. Thus freed from his books, he set out for Lucca and arrived at Rome in 1796 "to see the city"<sup>223</sup>. He was just in time.

There is yet another way of estimating San Clemente's contribution to the manpower of the province: from the master general's record of those sent back to the mission on the completion of their studies. Sixteen went to Ireland directly from San Clemente, not counting the entire community of eleven permitted to go home in 1798. Nine others, many of whom had earlier associations with San Clemente, left for Ireland from Lombardy, Reggio Emilia, Lucca, Naples and the Minerva at Rome itself. All in all it would seem that the college in Rome, directly or indirectly, sent at least one missionary back to Ireland every year. But for the French Revolution, which made the journey between Ireland and Rome so much more difficult every year, San Clemente would surely have done better.

In May 1796, the French occupied Lombardy and threatened the Papal States. Pope Pius VI attempted in July to buy them off with gold and silver melted down from the altar-plate of Rome. The so-called "Peace of Tolentino" in February 1797 left Bologna, Ferrara and the Romagna in French hands. But Rome itself was the great objective, and the French army finally swept into the eternal city on 10 February 1798. One cannot attempt here even to summarise such extraordinary times. Father Boyle has more than adequately explained how San Clemente, against all odds, survived the experience. Even the letters of Luke Concanen, who lived through it all, to archbishop Troy of Dublin would provide material enough for a book. One may, however, attempt to cast snippets from these letters into diary-form, if only to give some idea of how the crisis affected San Clemente<sup>224</sup>.

<sup>222</sup> Undated Italian original. AGOP XIII. 68095. The weary general endorsed the letter: "non si risponde".

<sup>223</sup> AGOP XI. 3500. McKenna, with his companion Jas. MacNamara OP, twice received the royal viatick to leave Spain for Ireland: in 1792 and again, while both were at Jerez de la Frontera, in 1794. Simancas, Hacienda, Avisos de la Secretaría de Gracia y Justicia, leg. 20 (1789-99), nos. 25, 40. Information kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.

<sup>224</sup> These very numerous letters are in DDA 116/6 and 7; 121/7. There seem to be hardly any for the years 1802-05 inclusive.

April 27, 1796. Please to write a few political lines in my name to provincial [John] Nugent, specifying Messrs [John] Sheahan, [Anthony] Conway, etc. He's a strange man. Why doesn't [Patrick] Gibbons answer my letter regarding [Francis] Bushe? He may send the youth destined for Denmark Street [Dublin] to St Clement's.

July 2, 1796. All the collegians and Irish friars are ready to decamp [on receiving news of a threatened French descent on the city] ... I agreed with Fr [Clement] Dunne, now prior of St Clement's, to leave your money, 787 scudi, in the convent to be sent to you in a better day. I wouldn't get 50% for your *cedulas* in them days.

July 9, 1796. All have been ordered to yield up all plate save chalices, remonstrances and pyxes. The Madonnas of the city are turning their eyes towards heaven, as at Ancona.

July 16, 1796. We daily expect the French commissioners.

August 6, 1796. Prior Gibbons [of Dublin] should send two candidates to St Clement's in order to have a course of philosophy there in due time. One novice isn't enough. There are no hopes now of getting a place in Italian convents for our people. They are all either stript or impoverished by the French ... Dunne, prior of St Clement's, demands the two novices. [Francis] Bushe cannot leave this college [the Minerva] before next summer. Gibbons bids me send him home before winter. How? Or with what means? Strange people. He wants shirts and breeches. We now dread here both famine and a plague. At all events this is a ruined country.

October 1, 1796. The master general [Balthazar de] Quiñones is esteemed by the Pope a perfect and complete Jacobin.

December 24, 1796. The sums deposited in your hands will either serve for my journey to Ireland, or for forming a *censo* [fund] for St Clement's ... Would to God all the funds of that house were, as Mr Thomson [the Scottish agent] many years ago advised me to do, sunk in England or Ireland ... If anything happens the *luoghi di Monte* [shares], which is apprehended universally, you know the Casanate establishment is finished. Then I shall be a *cavallo a spasso* [i.e. out to grass] ... Quiñones continues to remain in Viterbo.

February 5, 1797. The Fathers of St Clement's persuaded me to make over to the convent 400 scudi, with which, and some more money they had lying by, they concluded this day an advantageous *censo* [fund] with the Duke of Fiano at 5%. They promise me an annual proportionable *vitalizio* or *livello* [life-annuity] from said *censo*, should I want or demand it. I agreed ... seeing that it is impracticable to attempt passing over to Ireland.

February 25, 1797. The approaching French army has offered terms. The little silver that remained in the churches, with all the plate of the seculars, is to be given in to the Mint within three days. The payment of *luoghi*

*di Monte* [shares] is to be instantly suspended. *Addio Casanatensi!* I shall wait to see it out, and to do all I can to save St Clement's and then ... numbers of convents and monasteries must be suppressed ... Dr MacMahon [of Killybegs] invites me to be his coadjutor ... I shall pray him to nominate a fitter subject. Perhaps he could now subscribe the letter in favour of [John] Connolly.

*April 8, 1797.* We were on the point of losing the Torrione [vineyard] etc., but the cardinals deferred it ... Prior Dunne is to write to Gibbons to get the Masses of St Clement's discharged by the gentlemen at the future chapter.

*May 27, 1797.* Please to remind Gibbons to propose me for the definitorship [general] in the future chapter. I suppose Fr [James] Connolly will be elected provincial.

*August 26, 1797.* An immense tax has been imposed on all church lands and possessions. A sixth of the capital is to be given to the State for paying off its debts; and the remaining funds subject to the taxes imposed on the laity: viz., a *bimestre de luoghi di Monte* [two-months' profit on shares], 8% on houses, vineyards, holdings, etc. Poor St Clement's must pay about 5,000 scudi for the sole capital. This, though bad enough, would be tolerable, were we not in an actual commenced famine. At Torrione they pay six pauls a day for every workman. Quinones is still at Viterbo and never can be reconciled with the Pope... My constant intention is, in case of a suppression of our establishment here, to retire and serve in some chapel, either in Dublin or America.

*September 23, 1797.* I have happily disposed of your dirty precarious *cedole* by purchasing 14 *luoghi di Monte S. Pietro 2<sup>da</sup>* at the low rate of 91 scudi per *luogo* [share] ... Lector [John T.] Plunkett returns you many thanks ... I heartily condole with you on the death of your brother. An anniversary for him and Fr [James] Dunne shall be celebrated at St Clement's. I have drawn up a *memoriale ragionato* for getting S. Clemente and S. Matteo [of the Irish Augustinians] exempted from the recent ruinous taxes. I gave your compliments to the Marquis Rondanini, reminding him of his promise of a picture of the Crucifixion for Denmark Street, but expect nothing from the unpolished old boor ... Please to acquaint prior Gibbons that the Fathers of S. Clemente cannot receive any novice or student for some years to come. Even if exempted from the general tax, they must diminish their little community, such is the present misery and dearness of all the necessities of life. I wish Gibbons were a better correspondent. I await his answer yet to my proposal last October of affiliating the clever lector [Stephen] Kelly of Lisbon to Denmark Street house...

*December 30, 1797.* Disaster is near at hand because of the murder of the French general Duphot and the immediate departure of the French am-



bassador. Nothing could be effected in all our attempts to free St Clement's from the general tax of the fifth of all its lands. Cecchini's (or Fottrell's) vineyard is condemned to be sold by auction, and is in the printed list of vendible church goods. The Fathers mean to redeem it at the public estimation, as the proprietors have the preference.

*February 10, 1798.* Rome is in the possession of the French. Their vanguard entered the Castel S. Angelo this morning.

*February 24, 1798.* An inventory was taken yesterday of the effects of the national colleges. The convents will surely go. The Isidorians [Irish Franciscans] and Merulani [Irish Augustinians] have a good number of French troops in their houses. The Minerva, they tell me, has actually 250 horse and as many troopers, besides officers.

*March 17, 1798.* In this memorable day, the Grillo [Irish College], Anchor [S. Clemente] and holy house are to be suppressed. Also the Merulano [Irish Augustinians] ... All ecclesiastical strangers, secular and regular, are to depart from this city and out of the State. [Pio Giuseppe] Gaddi is vicar general. All church property is to be seized by the municipality.

*May 5, 1798.* Quiñones has gone off to Spain, leaving procurator-general Gaddi as vicar general in Rome ... 2,000 foreign priests and friars have been expelled from Rome. I too got my note of banishment but obtained a prorogation. Mr Clements, Messrs Grillo, Isidoro and Merulano were declared bankrupt the 17th and 18th March. The French have taken the effects of said gentlemen, except of Mr Clements [S. Clemente] whose goods are seized by Madam Amore [i.e. Rome].

*May 12, 1798.* I cannot suppose that Fr Francis Bushe, now at St Clement's, though a silly creature, has written what they say of my dreamed disgrace with Balthazar [de Quiñones] ... I expect every day my expulsion.

*June 2, 1798.* Mr [Philip] Crane [OSA] and his brothers set off for Ireland last month. All is gone. Clement's boys are all here with me, but soon to depart.

Concanen himself, as assistant-general, in compliance with the edict of the Roman Republic, gave everyone at San Clemente permission to leave for Ireland on 19 May. They were Matthias Clement Dunne, the prior, John Connolly STM, Daniel Kennedy STP, John T. Plunkett STL, subprior, Francis Bushe STL, Mark Nowlan, Daniel MacGrath, Thomas Reardon and the two novices Vincent O'Rourke and Joseph McKey. All save Concanen and Connolly drew their travelling expenses at the Minerva on 6 June 1798<sup>225</sup>. And yet, in point of fact, only the

<sup>225</sup> AGOP IV. 240, p. 31. AGOP XI. 3500.

younger members of the community left the country, as can be seen if we continue Concanen's "diary".

*June 30, 1798.* Mr Martin of Esker [i.e. the Frenchman] shows himself here to be a cruel savage and insatiable robber ... Balthazar [de Quiñones] died at Florence on the 20th of June when embarking for Spain ... Mr Clement's children are all gone except Connolly who lives with a penitent in the Stradone, and lazy [Daniel] Kennedy who is loitering at the Elephant [Minerva]. Dunne remains some time, acting the *sottocurato* at Civitavecchia. The spirit of the times has invaded the minds of most of Clement's boys. I am little satisfied with them ... Torrione is in the hands of a new proprietor ... The bells of St Clement's have been melted down.

*September 21, 1798.* The few remaining in Mr Kelly's quarter [Casatenzian] live upon the sale of moveables, kitchen-furniture, etc., which is almost out ... Connolly remains in St Clement's with leave to say Mass there on festivals only. He's chiefly supported by a devout penitent lady ... A Genovese, one Lavaggi, has purchased Torrione. Bartolomeo serves him and regaled me this morning with some potatoes: a valuable present, for our bread is black, dear and sickening.

In the meantime, the students and priests made their way to Ireland as best they could, either by sea through Lisbon or north through Germany. On reaching Genoa, Daniel McGraith wrote back to "Citizen John Connolly" at San Clemente reporting on their adventures<sup>226</sup>.

Father Master,

I would have wrote to you a long time ago but circumstances did not admit it. From Rome to Genoa we had an unhappy voyage of it. We left Rome the 14th of June and arrived at Genoa the 13th of July, a journey which I thought to make in six days. We were blockaded in different places both by bad weather and by the Turks. We were at last obliged to go aboard a Genoese vessel which carried French colours, and by that means we arrived here. We were obliged to make quarantine for seven days, as being visited by a French privateer. We all enjoy good health, thank God, except Brother [Joseph] McKey who got a heavy fever even aboard. He's at present better; he's in S. Dominick. Father [Thomas] Riordan is just bound for Lisbon on board of a Greek vessel and pays 65 crowns for his passage and maintenance. Father [Mark] Nolan will travel by Germany. Father [Francis] Bushe and I are bound for Barcelóna. Between 18 and 20 crowns is the common price for the passage and maintenance. Brother McKey must remain here

<sup>226</sup> Genoa, 4 Aug. 1798. Original in SCAR, no. 107, doc. 3. There are two interesting letters of February and March 1798 from John Connolly to bishop Plunkett in Cogan, Diocese of Meath, III, 218-19.

for some time. I mean to go as speedy as possible to Ireland. I would be glad you would write to me at Lisbon. If I don't arrive there before your letter, it will be forwarded to me wherever I am. I expect to be in Ireland soon. My address will be Coher, County Tipperary. I'll pay you with gratitude my debt punctually according to your orders to me. You'll be so kind as to give my compliments to Master Concannen, the prior [Dunne], Lector [Daniel] Kennedy, etc. This is no time of asking or giving news.

With the greatest sincerity, I am your most obedient and humble servant,  
Genoa, Aug. 4th, 1798.

Br. Daniel McGraith.

#### CORPO SANTO, LISBON: 1789-1797

Three of the Roman refugees — Riordan, McGraith and McKey — reached Lisbon safely. McKey was to continue his studies and receive ordination there; the other two are mentioned in the account-books of Corpo Santo, the only foreign college of the province to reach the end of the century undisturbed. So far as the training of students was concerned, it seems at this period to have done twice as well as San Clemente. No ordination records survive for the years 1787 to 1792, but fifteen Irish Dominicans were ordained there between 1793 and 1799, which means that Corpo Santo was producing two priests a year. Even the community, estimated at eighteen in 1790, was larger than in Rome. On the other hand, Corpo Santo was not a novitiate but continued the old practice of sending postulants to Portuguese convents. This is more than mysterious, because Rome granted the necessary permission to train novices at Corpo Santo itself, first in 1795 "at the request of the provincial chapter", and again in 1801<sup>227</sup>. Some point of law or protocol, rather than reluctance on the part of the community, must have barred the way. As late as 1797 one of these novices is mentioned in a private letter. "Mr [John] Pearson received the habit and is in his novitiate among the Portuguese"<sup>228</sup>.

Even the appointment of rectors and teachers proved a recurring difficulty, in 1788, 1791 and 1793, because of what the nuncio at Lisbon styled the "usual indolence" of the master general<sup>229</sup>. On the one hand, a rector could not claim to rule once his term came to an end, while on the other he had no power to keep as teachers priests whom

<sup>227</sup> AGOP IV. 240, pp. 29, 32.

<sup>228</sup> Lisbon, 4 Dec. 1797. Fran. Levins OP to Troy. DDA 116/7, no. 37.

<sup>229</sup> APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 1, 71-73. ASV, Arch. Nunz. Lisbona 26.

the general had not appointed to do so. One unfortunate result of the general's neglect was the departure for Ireland in 1791 of Andrew Fitzgerald who was to play such an important role in the seminaries of Kilkenny and Carlow. As for the rectors themselves, since even the records of Corpo Santo are less than perfect, one may as well supply their names and dates of appointment from the general's register: Anthony V. Conway STP from 30 June 1789, Joseph Ham from 9 January 1793, Peter Magennis STP from 27 May 1796, and Michael Coyne from 10 June 1799 "*ad consuetum triennium*". Each rector had four lectors to assist him, so there was at least one teacher for every two students in the house.

One would have imagined archbishop Troy too busy with matters of church and state to spare a moment for the Irish nuns of Bom Sucesso, but they relied on him in fact to maintain their numbers. One gathers as much from a letter he received in 1793 from Fr Francis Levins of Lisbon <sup>230</sup>.

The bearer, Mr [Anthony] Conway, our worthy former rector of Corpo Santo, I recommend to you, as he intends going to your city. He takes Miss Sullivan under his protection, and as she is the only cause of his going to Dublin. The Ladies [i.e. nuns] here are surprised at Miss Flinn's delay. I request you'll desire Mr [Patrick] Gibbons to hurry her and not leave them in suspense so long. This house is in very great necessity of subjects. I request as on other occasions you'll procure some fit subjects for them and advise them when any offer.

In another letter of 1797, Levins tells Troy at great length about the strange novitiate at Bom Sucesso of a certain Miss Byrne of Dublin <sup>231</sup>.

She appeared at the door without money or recommendation to the house, only a letter from Mr Gibbons to the youngest nun of the house, not as yet a year professed, setting forth her being very pious, and having an early desire to a religious state. She was one of your Dublin chapel hunters, of whom there are many good and holy souls, and indeed Miss Byrne was and is one of them, but has not health, and is not calculated for a religious life in a convent.

<sup>230</sup> Lisbon, 1 July 1793. DDA 117/7. This folder includes many letters (1780-97) from Ml Daly, rector of St Patrick's, who often refers to Dominicans on the point of leaving Lisbon, including Andr. Fitzgerald in 1791. Here also are about five important letters from Corpo Santo for 1810-11 and 1814.

<sup>231</sup> DDA 116/7, no. 37.

The worst was yet to come. Under pressure, she was forced to admit that her father was a tailor. Granting that dreadful circumstance, her admission as a choir sister was quite out of the question. For twelve months she lived in the monastery, on the understanding that she would profess as a lay-sister, but this she finally refused to do:

She answered she would not be a lay-sister, neither would she go out, and much more rudeness which exasperated them. There were orders given by a nominal superior, or as termed, a visitor, the 31 December for her expulsion by violence if she resisted, and she was expelled the 1st of January 1797. Much insolence was after this offered to the superiors of the house by her abettors from abroad.

The Irish architect, James Murphy, author of a fine book on the Dominican priory of Batalha, mentions the community of Corpo Santo in a more famous work, his *Travels in Portugal* during 1789 and 1790<sup>232</sup>.

That convent was entirely destroyed by the earthquake of 1755. It is recorded that one of the fathers, animated by a pious zeal to preserve the sacred pax [pyx?], rushed into the midst of the ruins during the violence of the earthquake, brought it forth and walked with it in procession to the church of St Isabel, attended by a vast concourse of people, imploring the divine mercy. After several years had elapsed, the fathers were enabled to rebuild their little seminary and church through the munificence of the humane. Some respectable Catholic families in Ireland gave donations for the purpose, but the greater part of the expence was defrayed by the benevolent people of Portugal.

The inhabitants of the convent at present are about eighteen, exclusive of servants. They live chiefly on voluntary contributions. The students are remarkably docile and sober. Even the Portuguese, whose career from youth to age is rarely chequered with sallies of intemperance, hold them as models of imitation to the probationers of their monasteries. King Joseph I had a particular esteem for these fathers, though he once made a witty remark on them. One evening he observed from the balcony of his palace, four or five of them crossing the Tagus in a ferry-boat, in which there were some females. "Your Majesty's Irish friars", said one of the Lords in waiting, "are fond of mixing with the ladies". "I am not afraid of their making love to them", replied the King. "I would sooner trust them with my wife than the key of my cellar".

The same writer knew the community particularly well; they employed him in 1802 to propose alterations and improvements in the

<sup>232</sup> London 1795, 177-78.



convent. The long letter in which he explained the plans submitted, chiefly for new "necessaries" or toilets, was written with the robust irony one could risk only with friends. At least he gives some idea of what it meant to live at Corpo Santo<sup>233</sup>.

The first thing that claims attention is the hepatic air [sulphuretted hydrogen] arising from the sewers and necessaries, which has extended to an alarming degree; in so much indeed that I found a burning lamp gave no light in the parts contiguous to the lowest necessary, and was almost extinguished on entering the door of it. This is the exact criterion of azotic [nitric] gaz so fatal to vitality. On every story the effect of the necessaries is pretty nearly the same, and indeed it cannot be otherwise from the nature of their construction. A current of wind is continually rushing through the main sewer, which forces back the vapour of the collected impurities of the convent and collateral sewers of the neighbourhood, and from the want of elasticity in the confined air of the cloister it remains suspended or circulates through the convent and church. Thus this hepatic air, which in a certain degree is privative of life is constantly inhaled by the Fathers and students, and even the auditory during the time of divine worship.

An infection of this dangerous tendency, which menaces the lives of all who are subject to its influence, requires a speedy and effectual remedy, and the one I propose is to remove at once the effect and the cause by taking down the necessaries with the appended closets and back stairs, and adding to the cloister the space they occupy, which amounts to about 20,000 cubic feet. A privation of stench and hepatic air are not the only advantages to be derived from the alteration. It will also make the cloister nearly as large again ... It will also leave a large cellar to dispose of, and an upper room which will considerably enhance the value of the adjoining apartments. The small court next the kitchen is well calculated to receive the new necessaries ... but unless they are constructed in a different manner from the old, they will be subject to the same inconvenience... Water is the principal agent required, and of this [there] is a vast quantity running from the kitchen of the convent and that of Mr Stack's house. To this will be added the rain water of the cloister and roofs adjoining.

The cloister has long been infested with extraneous lumber of different kinds, and of different odours, the dregs of neighbouring shops and cellars, exposed for years to rain and damp and vermin, producing myriads of living creatures the continual death and regeneration of which induce putrefaction, stench and disease. Through the negligence of servants, the halls and corridors are advancing rapidly to decay. The windows, cornices and ceilings are covered with the industry of spiders and the stagnant air corrupted with the dead bodies of thousands of them, mingled with the victims of their prey.

<sup>233</sup> Lisbon, 12 May 1802. Murphy to rector. Lisbon, Corpo Santo, E 69.

Whilst these sources of pestilence unhappily exist in your house, what less can be expected than pallid countenances, hectic fevers, and a disorganisation of the whole animal economy? ... The walls ought to be white-washed with caustic lime once every six months at least, and the floors washed and scrubbed with a hard brush once a week.

To remove the offensive smell complained of in the church, other expedients may perhaps be found necessary, for I am inclined to suppose that part of it proceeds from the corpses interred in the vaults during the stage of putrefaction, and part from the exhalations inseparable from a crowded auditory, especially in warm weather. The latter will be removed by making apertures for ventilation in the cupola, and opening a small door in the screen placed before the church entrance to admit a current of fresh air...

The windows I propose filling up are seven and twenty in number, and yet the absolute quantity of light in every part where light is necessary will not be diminished ... All the apertures at the dexter side of the chancel must necessarily be closed, in consequence of renting out the adjoining apartments, except one or two in the upper part where Mr Stack and his family attend divine service. A similar use renders it necessary to leave a few of those at the convent side open also for the convenience of such of the Fathers as are indisposed...

If those [alterations] I have designed be properly executed they will render your convent more spacious, more wholesome and respectable, and increase your rent at least twelve hundred milreis a year upon a fair valuation.

I am, Reverend Gentlemen, with great respect and esteem, your affectionate countryman and humble servant.

James Murphy

#### THE SCHISMATICAL CHAPTER OF 1797

For Concanen, provincial John Nugent was "a strange man", perhaps only because he wrote seldom to Rome. In Concanen's letters to Troy, he always refers Dominican business to Patrick Gibbons, prior of Dublin and a former Sixtinian, but never to the provincial. An even greater coolness separated Nugent from the other Roman agent, John Connolly. This antipathy dated from 1792 when Connolly and Charles O'Kelly acted successfully as the Roman agents of Patrick Dunworth, parish priest of Cove, in his dispute with Dr Coppinger, the new bishop of Cloyne, who put Nugent in Mitchelstown in the very same year. Such, at least was Connolly's explanation<sup>234</sup>.

<sup>234</sup> Rome, 20 Jan. 1798. Connolly to Rich. Roche OP of Cork. TA, Letters, under date. The fact that Nugent was a "Louvainist" may explain his poor relations with Rome. On Dunworth, see APF, Acta 164, ff. 68-89; SOCG 898, ff. 219-32.

His letter against me to the general, which was not taken the least notice of, was written near two years after Mr Dunworth's parish and deanship were confirmed to him by a decree of the Congregation of Propaganda. I suppose that his real motive for writing against me, was his wrongly imagining that I had been, about that time, the cause of his disappointment here in an affair for which he seems to have a great vocation ... Should my worthy friend Mr [John] Sheahan foresee that Mr Nugent is to speak against me, or attempt to anywise hurt me at the next chapter, for having with my ever dear late friend Mr Charles O'Kelly, as agents to the late bishop of Cloyne [Matthew McKenna] successfully defended Mr Dunworth, I request he will communicate to Mr Bernard Mullaney what I said regarding Mr Nugent and myself in this business in my letter of the 7th of January last year [1797].

The reference, though obscure, is obviously to John Nugent's ambition for a better parish, a deanery or a mitre: diocesan affairs which it would be difficult and not particularly relevant to pursue. The arrival of a French fleet off Bantry Bay in 1796, and the encouragement that gave to the United Irishmen, are much more to the point. Dublin castle taking alarm, as well it might, decreed that all meetings would be regarded as seditious. The Franciscan provincial, sizing up the situation in good time, obtained permission from Propaganda Fide to postpone the provincial chapter they were due to hold in the summer of 1797<sup>235</sup>. To John Nugent's credit, he attempted to do the same, but left matters too late and went the wrong way about it. His letter reached Concanen only on 10 June 1797, a month before the chapter was supposed to convene at Dublin, too late for him to receive a timely reply. Concanen immediately dashed off a letter to Troy about this "odd novelty", expressing opinions he would later drastically revise<sup>236</sup>.

I received yesterday a letter from provincial Nugent, dated 4th April, wherein to my great astonishment, he demanded I would induce the general to put off the provincial chapter for another year, without having alleged motives or reasons for doing so. I am surprised he'd propose a thing so strange and unprecedented. I wouldn't dare mention such a proposal to Quinones. If he hasn't convened the chapter, it belongs to Prior Gibbons

<sup>235</sup> APF, Udienze 36, ff. 428-29.

<sup>236</sup> Rome, 10 June 1797, DDA 116/7, no. 11.

to do it. He proposed Gibbons for being vicar provincial. I hope the latter has no part or fault in this odd novelty. Nugent says he has accounted with Gibbons, concerning my fees, etc. Is it not strange that this gentleman refuses me the pleasure of even a few lines? I hope Nugent has thought better in the business, and that the chapter has been convoked and [James] Connolly elected. If not, *infra mensem*, the vicar provincial is obliged to legally convene it.

Left with no word from Rome, Nugent did all he could to prevent a chapter taking place, but several vocals, including two former provincials, met secretly on 8 July 1797 to hold a "provincial chapter" and elect a new provincial, James Connolly of Drogheda. On 31 January 1798, the master general declared their proceedings null and void, but even then the offenders appealed from the general to the Pope. The new "provincial", after all, had once appealed to the Pope to confirm his "right" to be subprior of Drogheda! Their appeal of 1798 was, of course, rejected, but the bitter division caused by the "schismatical chapter" and its aftermath did nothing to help a weakening province to face the demands of the new century<sup>237</sup>.

After this fiasco, John Nugent devoted his full attention to the parish of Mitchelstown where he died in 1814. The exact date of his death and even the place of his burial are unknown.

<sup>237</sup> The principal papers on this dispute are in APF, SC Irlanda 17, ff. 595-640. The chapter of 1797 caused such an upheaval in the province that it is taken in this study as a *terminus ad quem*. Whoever is to write of the Irish Dominicans of the 19th century will find it a most definite point of departure.





# Appendix

## *A List of Dominican Missionaries sent to Ireland by the Masters General*

1698 - 1798

This table, compiled exclusively from the registers of the Masters General, contains only the names of those formally assigned to the mission by their authority. It includes neither priests whose departure for Ireland is mentioned incidentally in the registers, nor those who are known from other sources to have left the continent for the mission during this period. Some details have been added from other documents in order to indicate a missionary's point of departure, or the effectiveness of the assignation he received. All references, unless otherwise stated, are to AGOP IV. The following abbreviations have been used.

APF	=	Archives of Propaganda Fide.
Hib. Dom.	=	T. Burke, Hibernia Dominicana.
Irish Priests	=	W. P. Burke, Irish Priests in the Penal Times.
MacHenry	=	List of Irish Convents (1734-35) as above, pp. 195-99.
O'Heyne	=	John O'Heyne, Epilogus Chronologicus, Louvain, 1706. All references are to the second edition by A. Coleman, Dundalk, 1902.
SCAR	=	Archives of San Clemente, Rome.
TA	=	Provincial archives, St Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

### LIST ONE: 1698-1721

1. 11 Mar 1698. John of St. Rose. From Italy, because he had poor health there. 182, p. 356.  
On 26 Apr 1710 an Irish priest of the same name was assigned to the convent of St. Paul, Seville, and on 2 May 1711 to that of Puerto di S. Maria. 176\*\*, Bethica, ff. 33<sup>v</sup>, 35<sup>r</sup>.
2. 29 Mar 1698. Raymund Sweetman. From the province of Lombardy, to his native convent of Kilkenny. Repeated on 31 May. 182, pp. 357, 359.  
On 22 Jun 1698 he was assigned to the convent of Casale Monferrato in the province of Lombardy. 190, Lombardia, f. 76<sup>v</sup>. On 13 Sept 1710 he was transfiliated from his original Irish convent to that of Praiano in the Congregazione della Sanità. 191, Congr. Sanitatis, f. 18<sup>r</sup>.

3. 26 Apr 1698. Philip MacDowel. From the province of Lombardy. 190, Lombardia, f. 75<sup>r</sup>.  
On 9 May 1708 he was assigned to the convent of St. Dominic, Soriano, and removed thence to the Irish College of San Sisto in Rome on 29 August. 191, Calabria, ff. 22<sup>v</sup>, 23<sup>r</sup>.
4. 11 Apr 1699. Thomas Nangle, P.G. From San Sisto in Rome where he had taken refuge after his exile. 182, p. 369. He died in Italy before 1706. O'Heyne, 41.
5. 11 Apr 1699. Thomas Costelloe. From San Sisto in Rome where he had taken refuge after his exile. 182, p. 369. He died at Louvain in 1702. O'Heyne, 229-231.
6. 12 Sept 1699. Peter MacCollin. 182, p. 375.  
On 27 Mar 1700 he was assigned to Louvain. 182, p. 383. In 1706 he had been subprior of the Irish College of Holy Cross, Louvain, for three consecutive terms. O'Heyne, 17. In Apr 1707 he was said to have lived in Holy Cross for the past fifteen years. APF, SC *Irlanda* 6, f. 256<sup>r</sup>.
7. 12 Sept 1699. Dominic MacMahon. 182, p. 375.  
On 27 Mar 1700 he was assigned to Louvain. 182, p. 383. In 1706 he was resident in Holy Cross, Louvain. O'Heyne, 19.
8. 14 Apr 1700. Thomas Naghten, P.G. 182, p. 383.  
In May 1700 the General enquired about his work at Madrid. 194, f. 79<sup>r</sup>.
9. 4 Sept 1700. James Murphy. 182, p. 390. See nos. 21, 63.
10. 27 Oct 1700. James Collins. From San Sisto, Rome. 182, p. 392.  
On 3 Sept 1722 a J.C. witnessed the profession of Albert O'Brien in Cork. TA, Cork Profession and Confraternity book.
11. 27 Oct 1700. Edmund Geraghty. From San Sisto, Rome. 182, p. 392. See no. 16.
12. 30 Oct 1700. Christopher French, S.T.L. 182, p. 392.  
In 1706 he was resident in Holy Cross, Louvain. O'Heyne, 153.
13. 9 Apr 1701. James Taaffe. From San Sisto, Rome. 182, p. 396<sup>b</sup>.
14. 3 Sept 1701. Oliver Power. 182, p. 400.
15. 2 Feb 1702. James Lacy. To England and Ireland. 182, p. 405<sup>e</sup>.  
Perhaps the Peter Lacy who in 1706 was serving a hospital at Dinan in Brittany. O'Heyne, 91.
16. 29 Jul 1702. Edmund Geraghty. 182, p. 408. See no. 11.
17. 12 Aug 1702. Patrick MacBrannan, S.T.L. To England and Ireland. 182, p. 409.  
In Jan 1704 he was at Bilbao, en route to the mission. 194, f. 214<sup>v</sup>. On 9 Jun 1711 he was appointed prior of Roscommon. TA, Liber Provinciae, f. 30<sup>r</sup>.
18. 18 Aug 1703. Raymund Burke. From France. 166, p. 234; 182, p. 420. Described in 1706 as having been living in Brittany since the exile. O'Heyne, 205. A priest of this name returned to Athenry from Spain

in May 1707 and died (while subprior of Athenry) at Galway on 7 Dec 1711. Another died at Athenry on 26 Jul 1733. TA, Athenry House-Chronicle.

19. 24 Aug 1703. Dominic Flanagan. From Lisbon. 182, p. 421.
20. 24 Aug 1703. Peter Butler. From Lisbon. 182, p. 421.
21. 31 May 1704. James Murphy. 182, pp. 436-437. See nos. 9, 63.
22. 17 Jun 1704. Thomas Clemens. 166, p. 259; 182, p. 439.
23. 17 Jun 1704. Thomas Fitzgerald. *ibidem*.
24. 17 Jun 1704. John Baptist O'Shiels. *ibidem*.
25. 19 Aug 1704. Bernard MacDermott. 182, p. 446.
26. 19 Aug 1704. John MacKeown. 182, p. 446.  
A John Keown had been assigned by the provincial to the convent of Gola on 12 Feb 1701. TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 38<sup>r</sup>.
27. 22 Aug 1705. Raymund Fahy. From Bilbao. 166, p. 288.
28. 9 Jan 1706. Peter Cluan. From San Sisto, Rome. 166, p. 94. See no. 32.
29. 9 Jan 1706. John Gusman. From San Sisto, Rome. 166, p. 94. See no. 33.
30. 20 Feb 1706. Patrick Sarsfield, S.T.P. To his native convent of Limerick. Permitted 'to assist the archbishop in his palace, from which post no inferior authority may remove him'. 166, p. 95. O'Heyne wrote in 1706: 'if he is alive, he is in Spain'. p. 91.
31. 17 Apr 1706. Peter MacCarthy. 166, p. 96.  
He was prior of Cork in Aug 1721 when the provincial chapter postulated him for the degree of Preacher General. AGOP XIII 157.
32. 14 Aug 1706. Peter Cluan. To Scotland. 166, p. 98. See no. 28.
33. 14 Aug 1706. John Gusman. To Scotland. 166, p. 98. See no. 29.  
This priest, also named Gildea, had a chalice made for the convent of Sligo in 1716. J.J. Buckley, *Some Irish Altar Plate*, Dublin 1943, 136.
34. 28 Aug 1706. John Ryan. 166, p. 99.  
On 10 Apr 1706 he had been assigned as a formal student to the convent of St. Peter Martyr, Naples. 191, *Regnum*, f. 30<sup>v</sup>.
35. 8 Jan 1707. Antoninus Tiernane. 166, p. 102.  
On 22 Feb 1707 Propaganda considered his request for money to buy lay clothes, he being then at San Sisto, Rome. APF, Atti 77, f. 43<sup>rv</sup>.  
On 2 Apr 1707 the General named him prior of Sligo. 166, p. 105. He was prior of Clonshanville on 2 Sept 1728. SCAR, Codex I, Vol. 4, f. 996.
36. 2 Apr 1707. Thomas Fleming, S.T.L. 166, p. 105.  
Mentioned by O'Heyne (227) as a student at San Sisto, Rome, in 1706: but listed among those who went to the mission from Holy Cross, Louvain, between 1705 and 1712. APF, SOCG 601, f. 206<sup>r</sup>. On 14 Jan 1710/11 he was made prior of Rathfran. TA, *Liber Provinciae*, f. 29<sup>f</sup>.

37. 4 Jun 1707. Ambrose MacDermott, S.T.M. From Rome. 166, p. 108. Though the register does not indicate it, he had been bishop of Elphin since March.
38. 4 Jun 1707. Peter MacDermott, S.T.M. From Rome. 166, p. 108. On 9 Jul 1709 he accepted the priorship of Roscommon. TA, Liber Provinciae, f. 30<sup>r</sup>.
39. 12 Nov 1707. Cornelius Reynolds. From France. 166, p. 113. See J. Toravel, *Nomenclature des Religieux de la Congrégation de Bretagne*, Angers 1964, for a C.R. who was at Rennes in 1702 and 1711: on his return from the South Seas in the latter year he deposited 200 livres in the convent. A priest of the same name was arrested as he tried to land at Youghal in June 1713. W. P. Burke, *Irish priests in the penal times*, 173.
40. 19 Dec 1707. Edward Fitzgerald, S.T.L. To Ireland via Lisbon. 166, p. 115. On 6 Apr 1709 he was named second lector of theology in the Irish Dominican College at Lisbon. 200, p. 2. See no. 75.
41. 29 Sept 1708. Bernard O'Berne, S.T.P. 166, p. 135. On 4 Jan 1698 a priest of this name had been permitted to transiliate to a convent in the Roman province. 190, Romana, f. 38<sup>r</sup>.
42. 6 Oct 1708. Colman O'Shaughnessy, S.T.L. 166, p. 136. From Holy Cross, Louvain. APF, SOCG 601, f. 206<sup>r</sup>. On 5 Jul 1711 he was elected prior of Athenry. TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 11<sup>r</sup>.
43. 10 Aug 1709. Michael MacEgan. From Louvain. 200, p. 4. See no. 62.
44. 1 Sept 1709. James Dillon. From Rome. 200, p. 5. On 30 Jul 1701 he had been assigned from Holy Cross, Louvain, to study philosophy at San Sisto, Rome. 182, p. 399.
45. 21 Sept 1709. Ambrose O'Connor, S.T.M., ex-provincial. To Great Britain. 200, p. 5.
46. 2 Aug 1710. William Burke. 200, p. 19. Probably the W.B. professed in the convent of Roscommon on 10 Feb 1703. TA, Liber Provinciae, f. 28<sup>v</sup>. Went to the mission from Holy Cross, Louvain. APF, SOCG 601, f. 206<sup>r</sup>.
47. 2 Aug 1710. Thomas Burke. 200, p. 19. From Holy Cross, Louvain. APF, SOCG 601, f. 206<sup>r</sup>. On 7 Aug 1713 signed a letter (probably at Dublin) as prior of Waterford. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 185<sup>r</sup>.
48. 27 Dec 1710. Edmund Burke, S.T.M. 200, p. 25. On 12 Jul 1710 had been named professor of theology to the Canons Regular of Louvain. 200, p. 17. Arrived at Athenry about summer 1711. APF, CP 34<sup>b</sup>, f. 200<sup>r</sup>.

49. 14 Mar 1711. Thomas Morley, S.T.L. From Holy Cross, Louvain, with permission to return there to take up the second regency in the College. 200, p. 26.  
In Jan 1713 he was named second regent of Holy Cross. 200, p. 40. See no. 67.
50. 3 May 1711. Andrew MacCarthy, P.G. 200, p. 28.  
In Apr 1706 had been appointed *lector artium* at San Sisto, Rome, and in July of the same year promised the next vacancy as lector of philosophy at Holy Cross, Louvain. 166, pp. 96-97.
51. 1 Apr 1713. John Scanlon. From San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 41.
52. 29 Apr 1713. Thomas Kilty. 200, p. 41.  
Probably the O'Quilty described by O'Heyne (269) as living at Ancona in 1706. Also the Kiltry who in 1713 was recommended to Propaganda as a missionary by Cardinal Orsini, bishop of Benevento. The Cardinal said Kiltry had been for a long time in the convents of the province of Lombardy, and for some years had been preaching in his own diocese, but now wished to go to Ireland. APF, SOCG 587, f. 338<sup>r</sup>.
53. 3 Jun 1713. Bernard Geoghegan. 200, p. 41.  
He was appointed by the provincial chapter of 1721 as an examiner of candidates for the Order in the province of Leinster. AGOP XIII 157.
54. 27 Jul 1713. Dominic Daly. 200, p. 42.  
Three days before, having finished his studies at San Sisto and at the Minerva, Rome, he applied to Propaganda for money to go to Ireland. APF, Atti 83, ff. 283-284.  
In Apr 1714 he was elected prior of Athenry. TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 12<sup>v</sup>.
55. 15 Jan 1714. Simon Archbold, S.T.M. 200, p. 44.  
On 3 Feb 1714 his election as prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, was confirmed. 200, p. 44.
56. 15 Jan 1714. John MacDonnell, S.T.L. 200, p. 44.  
On 16 Jul 1698 he had been assigned from San Sisto, Rome, to the convent of St. Dominic at Civitavecchia. 182, p. 361.
57. 9 Feb 1714. Dominic Kelly, S.T.L. 200, p. 44.  
On 5 Sept 1710 he had been made second regent at San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 22. See no. 84.
58. 9 Feb 1714. Vincent Butler. 200, p. 44.  
On 7 Jul 1705 he received the habit at San Sisto, Rome. SCAR, Liber Receptionum.
59. 10 Feb 1714. Thomas Farrell. From San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 44.  
He was appointed by the provincial chapter of 1721 as an examiner of confessors for the province of Leinster. AGOP XIII 157.
60. 10 Feb 1714. Thomas MacDermottroe, S.T.L. From San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 44.



- On 6 Oct 1714 he was ordered to be transported from Galway to the continent. W.P. Burke, *Irish priests*, 415.
61. 10 Nov 1714. Raymond MacKeige. 200, p. 48.  
He received the habit on 24 Oct 1709 in Holy Cross, Louvain, and was professed a year later at San Sisto in Rome. He is referred to in the house-council book of San Sisto as *Edmundus Thadaei*. SCAR, Council-book, f. 52<sup>v</sup>; Liber Receptionum. On 11 Jun 1712 he was sent to study at the convent of San Severo, Naples. On 23 Jun 1714 he was given an honorary lectorate and told to do his examination for faculties at the studium generale of Santa Maria dell'Arco, Naples. 191, Aprutina, ff. 22<sup>v</sup>, 24<sup>r</sup>.
62. 2 Mar 1715. Michael MacEgan, S.T.M. From Louvain, to the province of Munster 'where the harvest is great and the labourers few'. 200, p. 49. See no. 43.
63. 1 Feb 1716. James Murphy. From the convent of Livorno, where he had been living for many years. 200, p. 57. See nos. 9, 21.
64. 19 Sept 1716. Mark Falney. 200, p. 64.
65. 3 Oct 1716. Ambrose Mandeville. From Marseilles: he had written asking to be permitted to go as a missionary to India or China. 200, p. 64.
66. 21 May 1718. James Stapleton. From Louvain, where he was then subprior of Holy Cross. 200, p. 79.  
It was said in Mar 1707 that he had been ordered by the provincial a year before from Holy Cross to the mission. APF, SOCG 558, ff. 422-423<sup>r</sup>.
67. 21 May 1718. Thomas Morley, S.T.P. From Louvain, where he was then first regent at Holy Cross. 200, p. 79.  
He was reinstated as regent in Nov 1718. 200, p. 85. See no. 49.
68. 21 May 1718. James Cormick, S.T.L. From Louvain, where he was then second regent at Holy Cross. 200, p. 79.  
In Aug 1720 he was prior of Dublin and secretary of the provincial chapter. TA, Chapter acts.
69. 21 May 1718. Christopher Dillon. From Louvain to Ireland at his own request. 200, p. 79.  
In Dec 1728 a Fr. James Christopher Dillon was prior of Dublin. 214, f. 16.
70. 30 Jul 1718. Dominic Burke. From Civitavecchia. 200, p. 81.  
On 24 Aug 1716 he had been assigned from Lisbon to San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 64.
71. 21 Jan 1719. John O'Brien, S.T.L. From the convent of St. Paul, Seville. 200, p. 86.  
In Aug 1721 he was appointed by the provincial chapter as an examiner of confessors for Munster. AGOP XIII 157. On 31 Aug 1722 he signed

- a petition at Cork as professor of theology and vicar-provincial of Munster. APF, SOCG 641, f. 57<sup>r</sup>.
72. 11 Mar 1719. Patrick O'Hart, S.T.L. 200, p. 88.  
On 19 Aug 1719 he was ordered to leave Holy Cross, Louvain, for Ireland within three days, under pain of suspension. 200, p. 95.
73. 14 Apr 1719. John Donnelly, S.T.M. From San Sisto, Rome. 200, p. 90.  
In Aug 1721 he was appointed by the provincial chapter as an examiner both of confessors and of candidates for the Order in the province of Ulster. AGOP XIII 157.
74. 22 Apr 1719. Augustine Burke, S.T.M. He had been a missionary in Ireland for twelve years before his exile, and then spent many years in French convents and at Holy Cross, Louvain, where he had been novice-master; now he is sent again to Ireland at his own request. 200, p. 90.  
On 19 Jul 1720 he accepted the priorship of Athenry. TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 13<sup>v</sup>.
75. 5 Dec 1719. Edward Fitzgerald, S.T.M., procurator at Madrid. 200, p. 97.  
On 24 Jul 1723 he was reinstated as procurator. 201, p. 116. See no. 40.
76. 29 Jun 1720. Thomas Burke. Having finished his studies at Ancona. 200, p. 100.  
In Feb 1721 he was elected subprior of San Sisto, Rome. SCAR, House-Council book.
77. 29 Jun 1720. Hyacinth Keaghry. Having finished his studies at Ancona. 200, p. 100.  
By 12 Jul 1724 he had become subprior of Athenry. TA, Athenry House-Chronicle, f. 16<sup>v</sup>.
78. 17 Aug 1720. John Byrne. A formal student at Bologna: dispensed from six months' study and sent to the mission. 200, p. 101.  
Probably the J.B. whom the provincial chapter of 1725 postulated for the S.T.P., saying that for many years he had taught philosophy and theology in Dublin. AGOP XIII 157.
79. 16 Nov 1720. Michael Shee, S.T.P. From San Sisto, Rome, at his own request. 200, p. 103.
80. 23 Nov 1720. John Fitzgerald. From Lisbon, where he had recently finished his theological studies. 200, p. 104.  
On 3 Sept 1722 a J.F. witnessed the profession of Albert O'Brien in Cork. TA, Cork Profession and Confraternity book.
81. 23 Nov 1720. Thomas Maddin. From Lisbon, where he had recently finished his theological studies. 200, p. 104.
82. 23 Nov 1720. Thomas MacCarthy. From Lisbon, where he had recently finished his theological studies. 200, p. 104.

83. 23 Nov 1720. Michael Hervan. From Lisbon, where he had recently finished his theological studies. 200, p. 104.
84. 29 Mar 1721. Dominic Mary O'Kelly. From the convent of San Romano, Lucca, at his own request. 200, p. 104. See no. 57.
85. 2 Aug 1721. Augustine Vaughan. From Faenza, where he was then a student: permitted, because of poor health, to return to his own country, 200, p. 108.

## LIST TWO: 1721-1745

1. Hyacinth Keaghry. 20 Sept. 1721. From Civitavecchia in Italy. 201, p. 109. He was subprior of Athenry by 12 July 1724. List I, no. 77.
2. Thomas Plunkett. 28 Mar. 1722. From Ancona at his own request. 201, p. 111. Reissued on 11 July when he was at Padua. 201, p. 112.
3. Cornelius Egan P.G. 4 Apr. 1722. From Louvain, where the prior is to give him a formal precept to return to Ireland. 201, p. 111.
4. Thomas Burke. 26 May 1722. From St. Sixtus at his own request. 201, p. 112. List I, no. 76, p. 597.
5. Thaddaeus Tully. 11 July 1722. A deacon and student of philosophy at Pavia. Allowed return to Ireland because of poor health. 201, p. 112. A member of the Roscommon community on 28 Aug. 1728.
6. Dominic Brullaughan. 7 Dec. 1722. From St. Sixtus. 201, p. 114. D. B. junior who was at Coleraine in 1735. MacHenry.
7. Dominic Eugene O'Neill. 16 Dec. 1722. From the convent of St. Dominic, Pesaro, in the province of Lombardy. In poor health. 201, p. 114.
8. John Newman. 30 Jan. 1723. From Forli in the province of Lombardy. 201, p. 115. He was prior of Kilkenny on 5 June 1731. Coll. Hib. No. 9 (1966) 20-21.
9. Anthony Sall S.T.M. 3 Apr. 1723. From Lisbon. 201, p. 115. In the same year he was definitor at the intermediate chapter in Dublin.
10. Humbert Burke S.T.M. 8 May 1723. 201, p. 115. On ceasing to be prior of St. Sixtus. Appointed rector at Lisbon on 10 Apr. 1728. 214, p. 5. See no. 57.
11. Bernard MacHenry S.T.L. 11 Nov. 1724. Master of students at Louvain, sent to Scotland. 201, p. 126. Later provincial, 1734-1738.
12. Michael MacDonogh. 9 Dec. 1724. From the college of St. Thomas, Naples. 201, p. 126. Later bishop of Kilmore, 1728-1746.
13. John Crapton, *melius* Crofton. 7 Apr. 1725. May go to Ireland for three months to convert his brother to the faith. 201, p. 127. A student at Louvain in 1725. Irish Rosary, Aug. 1927, 604.

14. Michael Banks. 25 Aug. 1725. At Correggio in Italy. Given patents, at his own request, for England, Scotland, and Ireland. Permitted to send to Rome for examination the books he says he has written in English. 201, p. 129. Presumably Nicholas B. who was at Galway in 1735. MacHenry.
15. Vincent of St. Thomas. 7 Sept. 1725. From Lisbon to Ireland at his own request. 201, p. 129.  
Apparently V. O'Heyne S.T.M. who taught at Lisbon from 1704 to 1730. 214, p. 25.
16. Patrick O'Heyne. 29 June 1726. From Cingoli in Italy. 201, p. 131.
17. Charles MacDermott. 6 July 1726. From Malta. 201, p. 131.  
On 5 Apr. 1723 he had been assigned to Valetta at the request of the Holy Office. 206, f. 23<sup>v</sup>.
18. John Morgan. 6 July 1726. From Marseilles. 201, p. 131.  
He was appointed prior of Newtownards on 2 Feb. 1736/37. PRO (Belfast). D. 1449/14.
19. Dominic O'Hart. 20 July 1726. On finishing studies at the Minerva. 201, p. 132.  
On 4 Sept. he was dispensed for 4 years from the oath he had taken at the Minerva to return to his province immediately after his studies. 201, p. 134. He was prior of Ballindoon in 1744. *Irish Priests*, 438.
20. Dominic Lynham. 12 Oct. 1726. From the convent of Gradi at Viterbo, from which he had been recalled by the prior of Dublin. 201, p. 135.  
Repeated on 15 Feb. 1727 when he was at Genoa. 213, Lombardia, f. 13<sup>r</sup>. But he was already in Dublin by February 1728. 214, p. 3.
21. Philip Lynham. 12 Oct. 1726. 201, p. 135. Exactly as in the preceding, save that Philip was not yet a priest in October 1729. 214, p. 22.
22. James Dowdall. 20 Oct. 1726. From Rome, with a formal precept. 213, f. 7<sup>r</sup>.  
On 15 Feb. 1727 the prior of St. Dominic's, Genoa, was told to send him to Ireland. 213, Lombardia, f. 13<sup>r</sup>. On 17 Jan. 1728 the master general said he had gone to Lisbon without permission. 214, p. 1.  
This priest was nine years a student in Spain before going to London in 1723. After spending more than 2 years there, he was suspended by the vicar apostolic. On 10 Feb. 1727 he was said to be teaching in the Dominican convent at Grasse in France. APF, Acta 97, ff. 74-75, 171-174.
23. Antoninus MacRory. 1 Feb. 1727. From Vicenza in Italy, after his studies. 201, p. 136.  
The provincial chapter of 1732 said that he was prior of Derry and had been preaching on the mission for 4 years.
24. John Bodkin. 28 Feb. 1727. 201, p. 136.  
Probably from Italy, for on 10 September he was permitted to act as chaplain on a Venetian ship. 213, f. 13<sup>v</sup>. See no. 110.
25. Eugene Leonard. 28 Feb. 1727. 201, p. 136.

- On 18 March, while he was at Ferrara, this permission was reissued. 213, Lombardia, f. 13<sup>v</sup>.  
Probably E. Lennan, already at Drogheda in 1735. MacHenry. The chapter of 1732 said that Lennan had preached on the mission for 4 years.
26. Thaddaeus Brullaughan. 26 Mar. 1727. From Genoa on finishing his studies, 201, p. 137.  
The provincial chapter of 1734 said that he had been preaching for about 6 years.
27. John O'Connor. 6 Oct. 1727. From Marseilles. 201, p. 141.  
A J. O'C. was made companion of the vicar of the Irish hospice at Bilbao on 8 Mar. 1737. 209C, f. 254<sup>v</sup>.
28. Dominic Dulany. 2 Dec. 1727. From France. 201, p. 141.
29. Edward Sampson. 1 May 1728. From the Minerva. 214, p. 5.  
Already at Drogheda in 1735. MacHenry.
30. Michael Mulryan. 5 June 1728. From Italy with the permission of the Irish provincial. 214, p. 7.  
A missionary in Scotland from 1729 to 1731. Also Ryan.
31. Vincent Mary Ennis, a cleric. 7 July 1728. From St. Sixtus, being in poor health. 214, p. 10.
32. Thomas Keaghry. 7 July 1728. From Pisa, on finishing his studies. He is told to meet the sick student V. M. Ennis at Livorno and accompany him to Ireland. 214, p. 10.  
T. K. was professed at Athenry in 1718 and died there in 1759. Coll. Hib. No. 11 (1968) 44, 52.
33. Thomas Teeling S.T.L. 21 Aug. 1728. From Cologne, on finishing his studies and taking his lectorate examination. 214, p. 12.  
In 1731 he was teaching at the Benedictine abbey of Meziere in Champagne. 214, p. 43.
34. John Byrne S.T.P. 24 Aug. 1728. On ceasing to be first regent at St. Sixtus. Sent to Dublin. 214, p. 12.  
He was assigned to Rosbercon in 1735. MacHenry. List I, no. 78.
35. Melchior Moriarty. 18 Sept. 1728. From Fermo in Italy, on finishing his studies, to his native convent of Tralee. 214, p. 13.  
Reissued on 2 October when M.M. was at Macerata. 214, p. 14. The provincial complained in 1731 that he was still in Italy. 214, p. 50.
36. Peter Corr. 12 Oct. 1728. From the college of St. Thomas in Naples, on finishing his studies and taking his lectorate. 214, p. 14.  
A son of Roscommon who in 1735 was assigned to Arklow. MacHenry.
37. Vincent Lonergan. 8 Jan. 1729. From Louvain, on finishing his studies, to his native convent of Limerick. 214, p. 18.  
Working in the British West Indies in 1743. V. *supra*, p. 186.
38. Ambrose O'Connor. 11 June 1729. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 20.



A son of Roscommon who in 1735 was assigned to Arklow. MacHenry. Later a parish priest in the Dublin diocese.

39. James of St. John Barret. 9 July 1729. From Italy to England. He had recently been exiled from Ireland after a year's captivity and arrived at Civitavecchia from Spain. 214, pp. 20-21.
40. Michael MacDonagh. 3 Aug. 1729. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 21.  
It appears from the notes of Cloud Mercier T.O.P. (in typescript at S. Sabina) that M. MacD. was a parish priest on St. Domingue (Haiti-Dominican Republic) from 1731 until his death on 14 Aug. 1733.
41. Antoninus Phillips. 3 Dec. 1729. From Genoa to Ireland via Louvain. *Non compos mentis*. 214, p. 24.  
The provincial chapter of 1745 noted his death (since 1742) at Louvain.
42. John Bern, *melius* Byrne. 4 Mar. 1730. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 26.  
He was at Drogheda, his native convent, in 1735. MacHenry.
43. James Aug. Pius Plunkett. 14 Mar. 1730. From St. Sixtus on finishing his studies. 214, p. 26.  
Reissued on 5 Sept. 1733 when J. P. was at Louvain. He then claimed to be a son of the convent of Dublin. 214, pp. 80, 84, 86.
44. James Moran S.T.P. 26 Aug. 1730. From Louvain, on ceasing to be first regent. 214, p. 33.  
Because J. M. knew Spanish, he was assigned to the English province on 6 Oct. 1731 at the request of Richard Ean, then grown old, who needed an assistant in the Spanish embassy chapel at London. 214, p. 47.
45. Thomas MacAlpin. 31 Mar. 1731. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 43.  
T. William MacA. signed a letter on 6 May 1732 as a member of the Dublin community. AGOP XIII. 68095.
46. James Fitzgerald S.T.M. 12 May 1731. Affiliated to the convent of Cagli in the province of Lombardy. Assigned to Ireland at his own request. 214, p. 43.  
The Irish provincial said in 1735 that J. F. was still in Italy. 214, p. 128.
47. Gregory O'Heyne. 7 July 1731. From the convent of Fano in the province of Lombardy. 214, p. 44.  
On 3 Feb. 1734 he was assigned to the convent of Centocelle. 213, f. 46<sup>v</sup>.
48. Thomas Burke. 24 Oct. 1731. From Nantes to Galway. His assignation by the provincial to Galway had been opposed by the vicar-provincial, Colman O'Shaghnessy. 214, p. 47.
49. Francis Cusack S.T.L. 22 Dec. 1731. From the convent of St. Dominic in Brescia, province of Lombardy, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 52.  
See no. 117.
50. Bernard Brullaughan S.T.L. 15 Mar. 1732. From Louvain where he was master of students and lector of scripture. 214, p. 58.

- B. B. was appointed first lector at Lisbon on 28 June 1732. 214, p. 65.
51. Dominic Andrew Fottrell. 5 Apr. 1732. From Pesaro, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 58.  
See no. 115.
52. Anthony O'Dogherty. 28 June 1732. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 65.  
In 1738 the provincial chapter said he had been preaching in his native convent of Derry for 6 years.
53. Dominic Burke. 19 July 1732. From Genoa. 214, p. 66.
54. Thomas Vincent O'Kelly S.T.L. 11 Sept. 1732. From St. Sixtus, on ceasing to be first regent. 214, p. 69.  
In May 1734 he was secretary of the provincial chapter at Dublin.
55. Thomas MacMahon. 25 Sept. 1732. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 69.  
Said to be a son of Gola in 1735. MacHenry.
56. Eugene O'Carroll. 11 Oct. 1732. From St. Sixtus, on medical advice. 214, p. 69.  
Already in his native convent of Carlingford in 1735. MacHenry.
57. Humbert Burke S.T.M. 20 Dec. 1732. From Lisbon. 214, p. 70.  
Although repeated several times (1733), H. B. was still at Lisbon, suspended *a divinis*, in January 1734. 214, pp. 86, 91, 93. The provincial chapter of 1742 noted his death at Lisbon since 1738. See no. 10.
58. Thomas Moore. 11 Apr. 1733. From St. Sixtus. 214, p. 79.  
T. M. was already at Dublin about October 1733. 214, p. 89.
59. Dominic MacDonnell S.T.L. 25 Apr. 1733. From Lisbon. 214, p. 79.  
Reissued on 12 September. 214, p. 86. But D. of St. Thomas MacD. was still at Lisbon in 1736. 214, p. 147.
60. Laurence Ford. 12 May 1733. From Ancona, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 80.  
L. F. was already at Dublin about October 1733. 214, p. 89.
61. Nicholas Crump S.T.L. 12 Sept. 1733. From the convent of the H. Rosary "apud Gavottas" in Venice, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 87.  
On 30 Mar. 1737 the prior of Dublin wished to make room for him there as a son of the convent. 217, p. 4.
62. John Ryan. 12 Oct. 1733. After studies in Italy and France. 214, p. 88.  
Reissued on 30 Jan. 1734 when J. R. was at Genoa. 214, p. 92.  
Probably the J. R. at Limerick in 1735. MacHenry. At Cashel in 1756. Hib. Dom. 236.
63. Michael Hoare. 22 Nov. 1733. From Marseilles, on finishing his studies: with permission to transiliate from Kilmallock to Limerick. 214, p. 90.  
The provincial chapter of 1738 said he had been preaching for 5 years in Limerick and its neighbourhood.

64. Martin Burke S.T.L. 27 Feb. 1734. From Lisbon, with a formal precept. 214, p. 93.  
Reissued on 14 July. 214, p. 105. The provincial chapter of 1742 said that he was prior of Athenry and had been preaching for 8 years.
65. Thomas MacHugo Burke S.T.L. 13 Mar. 1734. From Lisbon. 214, p. 95.  
He went from Lisbon to Malta that summer, came back to Naples in August 1735, and died at Rome on 5 October 1735. 214, pp. 107, 112, 122.
66. Nicholas Trevers, *melius* Travers. 3 Apr. 1734. From Ancona, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 96.  
N. T. was again ordered (from Italy?) to Ireland on 29 Mar. 1749. 217, p. 114.
67. Peter Killikelly S.T.P. 3 July 1734. From Louvain, on ceasing to be first regent. 214, p. 103.  
See no. 119.
68. Dominic French S.T.P. 14 July 1734. From Lisbon with a formal precept. 214, p. 105.  
Reissued on 13 November. 214, p. 109. Eventually, with the help of a royal decree of exile, he returned to Ireland about 1736. 214, pp. 125, 132, 135. The provincial chapter of 1745 said that he had been 8 years on the mission.
69. John Deane, 14 July 1734. From Lisbon with a formal precept. 214, p. 105.  
J. D. in 1735 had been 7 years a student at Lisbon. He finally went to Ireland in September 1735. 214, p. 124.
70. Patrick O'Diamond S.T.L. 4 Sept. 1734. From Marseilles where he had taught philosophy and theology for 6 years. 214, p. 105.  
Apparently P. Dominic O'D, who left St. Sixtus in 1727 and was prior of Coleraine in 1737. 217, p. 3.
71. Thomas Brennan S.T.L. 14 Sept. 1734. From St. Sixtus, on ceasing to be second regent. 214, p. 105.  
He reached his native convent of Roscommon by 1735. MacHenry.
72. Patrick Reynolds. 5 Oct. 1734. From Carpentras to Scotland. 214, p. 107.  
A son of Derry and a student at Lisbon earlier that year. 214, p. 91. He was in Ireland in 1741, suspended *a divinis*, according to the provincial's report.
73. Michael Forrestal, *melius* Forstall S.T.L. 3 Feb. 1735. 214, p. 112.  
On 10 April 1736 he was permitted to act as field chaplain to the Antwerp regiment of His Catholic Majesty. 214, p. 132. In 1749, when he belonged to the province of Lombardy, he was permitted to go to Ireland on business. 217, p. 114.
74. Ambrose MacGrath. 7 June 1735. 214, p. 117.  
The provincial chapter of 1742 said he had been preaching on the mission for 7 years. He went to the mission from Louvain.
75. John O'Duane. 7 June 1735. 214, p. 117.  
From Louvain. He went at once to Ireland but the provincial sent him back to finish his studies in France. He was at Paris on 12 July 1736 when

- the General assigned him to Douai. Not having enough money to live at Douai, his assignation to Ireland was renewed on 29 Dec. 1736. 214, pp. 136, 147. He was at Boula in 1744. Irish Priests, 428.
76. John Goulden. 9 July 1735. From Louvain, where he had been syndic. 214, p. 117.  
Also Goulding. He remained at Louvain until 1740 when the Irish provincial sent him to the mission. 217, p. 58. He died at Drogheda between 1757 and 1761.
77. Francis Fyan. 15 Oct. 1735. From Padua, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 124.  
See no. 109.
78. John Lynch. 8 Nov. 1735. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 126.
79. Bernard Laghlen, *melius* O'Loughlin. 29 Jan. 1736. From France, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 129.  
The provincial chapter of 1749 said that he was prior of Lorrha and had preached on the mission for 15 years.
80. Patrick Hurley. 18 Feb. 1736. From Louvain where he had studied for 5 years. 214, p. 129.  
The provincial reported in 1739 that he was in Munster and was "disobedient".
81. Dominic O'Kelly S.T.L. 14 Apr. 1736. From Louvain, on ceasing to be first regent. 214, p. 132.  
Reissued on 1 September. 214, p. 139. According to Cloud Mercier (cf. no. 40), this D. O'K. was parish priest of Grand-Cul-de-Sac on Martinique from 7 July 1743 to 11 Feb. 1745.
82. Andrew Morris. 21 Apr. 1736. From Florence, because in poor health. 214, p. 132.
83. James Sexton S.T.L. 28 July 1736. From Louvain, where he had been master of students for 2 years. 214, p. 136.  
In 1743 he had already been at Waterford for 6 or 7 years. V. *supra*, p. 186.
84. Joseph Lynham. 8 Sept. 1736. From Lisbon. 214, p. 140.  
On 27 November he was permitted to act as chaplain on the Portuguese ship Europa going to the Indies: he had once gone on this voyage before. 214, p. 144.
85. Vincent O'Brien, *melius* O'Breen. 2 Oct. 1736. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 214, p. 141.  
The provincial chapter of 1742 said he had been preaching on the mission for 6 years.
86. Patrick Higgins. 27 Jan. 1737. On concluding his business at Rome. 217, p. 2.  
According to Mercier (cf. no. 40) P. H. was a parish priest on Guadeloupe from 19 Dec. 1731 to 2 Mar. 1736, and again from 27 Dec. 1738 until his

- death on 12 May 1743. Hence one may take it that his appointment (15 Aug. 1738) as Irish confessor at San Pablo, Seville was ineffective. 217, p. 33.
87. Bonaventure Nagle S.T.L. 16 Feb. 1737. From Louvain, on ceasing to be second regent. He asked to be sent to Ireland in order to restore the convent of Clonmel. 217, p. 3.
- The provincial chapter of April 1738 mentioned that he was prior of Cashel.
88. Francis of St. Philip Philips. 24 Apr. 1737. From St. Malo, where he was a vagabond: with a formal precept. 217, p. 5.
- His early history is given in the registers (214, p. 109) under date 25 Dec. 1734, when he was permitted to go to France from Spain. About 1727 he had been exiled from Ireland and then spent 7 years in the province of Andalusia, principally in the convent of St. Dominic at Alcala. He arrived at Louvain in January 1736 and the prior there sent him to Ireland.
89. William Hoban. 24 Apr. 1737. From St. Malo, where he had been a naval chaplain: with a formal precept, 217, p. 5.
90. Patrick Kennedy. 8 June 1737. From Lisbon, where he had been syndic. 217, p. 7.
- Reissued three times until P. K. eventually left Lisbon about May 1738. 217, p. 29.
- The provincial chapter of 1753 said that he had been preaching on the mission for 16 years.
91. John Maguire. 28 July 1737. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 12.
- Reissued on 27 Sept. 1738. 217, p. 34. He eventually went to Ireland from Louvain in 1748. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47.
92. Patrick Brullaughan junior S.T.L. 7 Sept. 1737. From Italy. He finished his studies at St. Sixtus in 1729 and then spent some years preaching in the convent of Cornigliano in the province of Lombardy. 217, p. 14.
- Later bishop of Derry (1751-1752). Hence he went to London in 1737, and not in 1730 as is stated in Hib. Dom. 511.
93. Dominic Colgan S.T.L. 9 Nov. 1737. From Louvain. 217, p. 17.
- D. C. was a missionary in Scotland in 1743. V. *supra*, p. 186.
94. Edmund O'Reilly S.T.L. 9 Nov. 1737. From Louvain. 217, p. 18.
- This order was later cancelled (25 Jan. 1738) at the request of the bishop of Meath who said that E. O'R. could not return to Ireland because his family was being persecuted there. Hence, on 22 March, he was named lector of philosophy at Louvain. 217, pp. 21, 24. He remained at Louvain until 1755.
95. James Murry. 8 Feb. 1738. From Louvain, where he was syndic: at his own request. 217, p. 22.
- He was said to have been imprisoned in Ireland in 1745. V. *supra*, p. 187.
96. Humbert Murphy. 7 June 1738. From Lisbon, where he had been a student for 6 years. A native of the convent of Galway, who had been sent



- to Lisbon as a professed novice. 217, p. 27.  
The provincial chapter of 1757 said that Hubert M. was prior of Galway and had been preaching there for 15 years.
97. James Crafton, *melius* Crofton. 12 July 1738. From Genoa, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 30.  
He was already at Genoa in 1734. 214, p. 107.
98. John Ferrall. 26 July 1738. From St. Sixtus, where he had been for 4 years. *Non compos mentis*. 217, p. 31.  
Because of his mental sickness he had been in the conventual prison at St. Sixtus ever since his arrival from Spain in 1734.
99. Vincent Kennedy S.T.L. 9 Aug. 1738. 217, p. 33.  
V. K. had been syndic at Louvain since 1735. 214, p. 117bis. The provincial chapter of 1745 said that he had taught for 2 years in Belgium and preached for 6 years at home.
100. Maurice Fitzgibbons. 15 Nov. 1738. From Lisbon, where he was vicar. 217, p. 37.  
The provincial chapter of 1749 said that he was prior of Glanworth and had preached for 10 years.
101. Patrick Kelly. 14 Aug. 1739. From the convent of St. Catherine de Formello at Naples, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 48.
102. Vincent John Meany S.T.L. 22 Aug. 1739. From Lisbon, with a formal precept. 217, p. 49.  
Reissued in 1740 and 1741. 217, pp. 57, 74. *Non compos mentis*. The provincial chapter of 1761 said that he had been preaching on the mission for 24 years.
103. James Hart. 13 Sept. 1739. From St. Sixtus, where he had studied theology for 3 years. 217, p. 51.
104. Richard Nugent. 13 Sept. 1739. From St. Sixtus, where he had studied theology for 3 years. 217, p. 51.  
He was lector of arts at Lisbon in 1745. V. *supra*, p. 190.
105. Thomas Nangle S.T.L. 13 Sept. 1739. From St. Sixtus, where he had been second regent for 3 years. 217, p. 51.  
Reissued on 9 June 1742 when T.N. was still in Italy. 217, p. 77. On 4 Jan. 1744 he was affiliated to the convent of Marostica in the province of Venice. 209A, f. 220<sup>v</sup>.
106. Richard Stanton. 18 Sept. 1739. From the convent of St. Catherine de Formello in Naples, on finishing his studies. From Connacht. 217, p. 51.
107. James MacNamara. 13 Feb. 1740. From Louvain, where he was second regent: at the suggestion of the provincial who gave him a bad character. 217, p. 58.  
Cloud Mercier (cf. no. 40) says that he was in the convent of Troyes, province of Paris, on 12 Mar. 1743 and a parish priest on Grenada in 1754.

The identification is not certain.

108. Paul Slattery. 26 Mar. 1740. From Louvain. 217, p. 59.

Reissued on 29 October. 217, p. 69. Subsequently P. S. wandered about until on 15 Oct. 1748 he was ordered from Italy (Maddaloni) to Ireland. 217, pp. 110-111.

He was at Kilmallock in 1756. Hib. Dom. 285.

109. Francis Fyan. 23 Apr. 1740. From Venice. 217, p. 60.

Reissued on 23 July. 217, p. 65. See no. 77.

110. John Bodkin. 14 May 1740. On his arrival at Livorno from Constantinople. He may go to England if the Irish provincial agrees. 217, p. 62. On 26 November he was appointed confessor at San Pablo, Seville. 209A, f. 70<sup>v</sup>.

The provincial chapter of 1757 noted his recent death in the province of Lombardy. See no. 24.

111. Dominic Farrell S.T.P. 30 July 1740. From Lisbon, on ceasing to be rector. 217, p. 65.

Twice reissued later in the year. 217, pp. 67-68. D. O'Ferral was still at Lisbon in 1745.

112. Michael Sullivan. 17 Nov. 1740. From Nantes, with a dispensation from one year of study. 217, p. 70.

113. John Dougherty. 28 Dec. 1740. From Forlì, where he had been assigned as a priest-student of philosophy. Delicate and totally unsuited to study. 217, p. 71.

J. D. did not go to Ireland but to France (St. Maximin). In November 1747 he came to Centocelle and asked leave to visit Rome. 217, p. 106.

114. Patrick Skerrett. 6 May 1741. From Italy, because of poor health. A first-year student of theology. 217, p. 72.

Reissued on 13 Jan. 1742 when P. S. was a student in north-west Italy. 217, p. 75.

See no. 128.

115. Andrew Fottrell. 17 June 1741. 217, p. 73.

A. F. died at Arklow according to the provincial chapter of 1757. See no. 51.

116. Mathew Bellen, *forsitan* Bellew. 24 Feb. 1742. From Douai, because of poor health. A student of theology. 217, p. 77.

117. Francis Cusack. 28 Apr. 1742. From Parma. On his asking permission to act as chaplain in the castle of Parma, the General told him to obey the order given to him 10 years before. 217, p. 77.

See no. 49. F. C., however, obtained permission to work as chaplain at Parma on 11 Jan. 1744. 217, p. 86.

118. Peter MacEnnis. 16 June 1742. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 78.

The provincial chapter of 1749 said that he was prior of Kilkenny and had been preaching on the mission for 7 years.

119. Peter Killikelly S.T.M. 19 July 1742. From Rome to France. 217, p. 78.  
See no. 67.
120. Thomas Burke S.T.M. 26 Sept. 1742. From St. Sixtus, on ceasing to be first regent. 217, p. 81.  
The author of *Hibernia Dominicana*, who returned to Ireland in 1743. Hib. Dom. 552.
121. Dominic Dillon. 19 Mar. 1743. With a dispensation from the rest of his formal studies. 217, p. 83.  
Apparently from Italy, for he went from St. Sixtus to Ancona in 1739. 217, p. 50.  
D. D. was prior of Athy in 1756. Hib. Dom. 257.
122. Thomas Commins, *melius* Cummins. 23 Apr. 1743. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 84.  
T. C. was stationed at Athy in 1756. Hib. Dom. 257.
123. James Dillon. 22 June 1743. From St. Sixtus, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 84.  
He was lector of arts at Lisbon in 1745. V. *supra*, p. 190.
124. Patrick Sheridan. 30 Oct. 1743. With permission to take his lectorate examination at Viterbo and come to Rome on pilgrimage before going to Ireland. 217, p. 86.  
The provincial chapter of 1757 said that he was prior of Carlingford and had been preaching for 10 years in the area of his native convent of Cavan.
125. Thomas Dalton. 25 Apr. 1744. From Aix-en-Provence, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 86.  
T. D. was named sundic at Louvain on 30 Mar. 1748. 217, p. 109.
126. George Dogherty, subdeacon. 28 May 1744. From St. Sixtus, where he had proved to be rebellious. 217, p. 87.  
A student at Louvain in May 1745. V. *supra*, p. 192.
127. Patrick MacDonogh. 19 Dec. 1744. From Lisbon, because his mother was sick in Ireland. 217, p. 88.  
Resident at Sligo in 1757. Hib. Dom. 249.
128. Patrick Skerrett. 31 May 1745. From St. Sixtus, where (after studies at Terracina) he had spent 28 days in prison for violence and vagabondage. 217, p. 90.  
See no. 114. He was at Athenry in 1767. Coll. Hib. No. 8 (1965) 96.

### LIST THREE: 1745-1761

1. Louis Walsh. 6 Mar. 1745. With a *sanatio* to allay his scruples regarding the validity of his profession for Kilmallock. 217, p. 89.  
From Lisbon, to which assigned as a student of philosophy on 2 July 1740. 217, pp. 63-64. See above, pp. 176, 191. On 4 Jan. 1749 permitted to transfiliate from Kilmallock to Cork. 217, p. 113. The chapter of

- 1753 said he had served the mission for eight years. At Cork in 1756. Hib. Dom. 217.
2. Thomas (Robert) Browne. 21 Aug. 1745. From Louvain, at the request of the definitory who said he had no duties there. Had written to the general falsely claiming to be syndic. 217, p. 90.  
Repeated on 17 June 1747 and 14 Sept. 1748. 217, pp. 101, 110. See below, no. 30.
  3. Augustine Kelly. 23 July 1746. At his own request, on ceasing to be prior at Louvain. 217, p. 97.  
In 1749, the chapter said he was prior of Roscommon and had been preaching for 12 years.
  4. Thomas Fitzsimons. 30 July 1746. From Louvain, on finishing his term as subprior and syndic. 217, p. 97.  
Probably the T. F. who signed a *relatio status* of Kilmore diocese on 9 June 1750 as pastor of Drumlane. Arch. Hib. 5 (1916) 133. The chapter of 1753 said he had been preaching for six years. Prior of Cavan in 1756. Hib. Dom. 288.
  5. Bernard Hogan. 27 Aug. 1746. On finishing his studies at San Sisto. 217, p. 85.  
Prior of Rosbercon in 1756. Hib. Dom. 271.
  6. Dominic (James) Farrell S.T.M. 14 Sept. 1746. From Lisbon, after two years as confessor at Bom Successo. 217, p. 97.  
Also Ferrall. See List 2, no. 111. Reissued with a formal precept on 28 June 1747, but D.F. had already sailed for Ireland on 7 June after receiving a royal decree of exile. 217, pp. 101, 104. Died in Waterford before 21 June 1749 when the chapter gave his obit.
  7. Patrick Sheridan. 11 Feb. 1747. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 98.  
See List 2, no. 124. Probably the P.S. who signed a *relatio status* of Kilmore diocese on 9 June 1750 as professor of theology and pastor of Oughteraghy. Arch. Hib. 5 (1916) 134. The chapter of 1757 said he had preached for ten years in the neighbourhood of his native convent of Cavan.
  8. James O'Heyne, *melius* Heynes. 11 Feb. 1747. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 98.  
At Rosbercon by 1756. Hib. Dom. 271.
  9. Dominic O'Connor. 4 Mar. 1747. From Louvain, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 98.  
Possibly the D. O'C., vicar of the hospice at Bilbao on 23 June 1751. 217, p. 123.
  10. Matthew Casey. 11 Mar. 1747. From San Sisto after his lectorate examination. 217, p. 99.

- Appears to have passed to the Roman province. Assigned to Centocelle on 1 July 1750. 213, f. 92<sup>v</sup>. Died at the convent of S. Maria, Civitavecchia, shortly before 2 June 1753. 223, prov. Romana, p. 13.
11. James (Francis) Berford. 15 Apr. 1747. A professed novice, sent back from San Sisto because suffering from consumption. 217, p. 99.  
He came to San Sisto from Lisbon on 10 Sept. 1746, and in May 1747 the community gave him travelling expenses to Ireland. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 67. 217, p. 95.
  12. Dominic (Andrew) MacGrath. 13 May 1747. Formerly syndic at Louvain. 217, p. 100.  
Also MacCraith. The chapter of 1753 said he had preached for five years in Ireland. At Cork in 1756. Hib. Dom. 217.
  13. Thomas MacDermott. 2 Dec. 1747. 217, p. 106.  
Perhaps the T. MacD. of List 1, no. 60. A Thomas Dermoth was permitted on 21 Aug. 1754 to act as chaplain to an English noble named Swinburn. 217, p. 139.
  14. John Dougherty. 6 Dec. 1747. Refused a similar command seven years before, spent the interval at St. Maximin (near Toulouse), and recently wrote from Centocelle asking permission to visit Rome. 217, p. 106.  
See List 2, no. 113, and below, no. 37.
  15. James Mathews. 10 Jan. 1748. After studies at Aix-en-Provence. 217, p. 107.  
The chapter of 1769 noted the obit of a John M. in the convent of Dublin.
  16. John Cruise. 10 Jan. 1748. After studies at Aix-en-Provence. 217, p. 107.  
At Trim in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 99.
  17. Joseph Archer. 6 Mar. 1748. Of Leinster. 217, p. 107.  
Said to be at Lisbon, under the Portuguese provincial, in summer 1753, having spent the previous five years wandering about France and Spain. 217, p. 131.
  18. John Lynch S.T.L. 30 Mar. 1748. Had written from Reval for this permission. 217, p. 109.  
See List 2, no. 78. Reval is on the Baltic coast near Leningrad. The licence was renewed on 8 Mar. 1749 when J. L., still at Reval, was chaplain to the noble Andrea de Brilly of Milan, lieutenant-general of the Muscovite army. In November 1750 he left Reval for Riga, intending to remain there until May 1751 when he would bring the sons of General Browne to Boulogne in Picardy for their education. On 22 Apr. 1752, being then in England, was permitted to accompany James Farrell, a planter, to Montserrat in the West Indies. 217, pp. 113, 121, 126. The obit of a J. L., lector and prior of Cork, was noted by the chapter of 1757.



19. John Quain, 5 Aug. 1748. From Nantes. 217, p. 109.  
The chapter of 1757 noted his death in the convent of Portumna.
20. John Maguire S.T.P. 3 Aug. 1748. From Louvain, on finishing his term as regent. 217, p. 110.  
See List 2, no. 91. The chapter of 1749 mentioned that he was prior of Gola.
21. Paul Slattery S.T.L. 15 Oct. 1748. With a formal precept. Had been wandering about outside his province for eight years. 217, p. 111.  
See List 2, no. 108. Was said, a month earlier, to be assigned to Maddaloni (Italy). 217, p. 110. At Kilmallock in 1756. Hib. Dom. 285.
22. Nicholas Trevers, *melius* Travers. 29 Mar. 1749. 217, p. 114.  
See List 2, no. 66. Had been permitted on 30 Mar. 1748 to act as chaplain on a Venetian warship sailing to England. 217, p. 109. The chapter of 1761 said he had been preaching for 12 years. At Longford in 1756. Hib. Dom. 303.
23. Dominic Kelly S.T.P. 7 May 1749. From the conventual prison at Seville, with a formal precept to return to Ireland without landing on French or Spanish territory. Had been in America with an imposter who styled himself Duke of Modena. 217, p. 114.  
Probably the D. K. of List 2, no. 81. There was a D. K., *praesentatus*, at Athenry in 1756. Hib. Dom. 234.
24. Michael Forstall S.T.L. 17 May 1749. A member of the province of Lombardy, allowed go to Ireland on business. 217, p. 114.  
See List 2, no. 73. At Parma on 3 Apr. 1751, when the general invited him to San Clemente as confessor. 221, Lombardy, p. 22.
25. James Dillon S.T.L. 23 July 1749. Master of students at Lisbon. Permitted to resign on grounds of health and go to Ireland. With a transfiguration from Athy to Trim. 217, p. 114.  
See List 2, no. 123. Wished to return from Ireland to Lisbon in 1751. 217, p. 123.  
He served the Neapolitan chapel in London from 1759. D. Mould, The Irish Dominicans, 242.
26. Antoninus Kelly, 22 Aug. 1749. From Padua, on finishing his studies, with permission on 27 September to take his examination for faculties there. 217, p. 115.  
There was an Anthony K. at Roscommon in 1756. Hib. Dom. 261.
27. Martin French. 16 May 1750. Recently elected syndic at Louvain. May go to Ireland to assist and perhaps convert his dying father. 217, p. 118. See below, no. 48.
28. Denis Daly S.T.M. 13 May 1750. From Madrid, where he was procurator of the Irish province. 217, p. 118.

- Still at Madrid in May 1751, but reached Ireland by October 1752. 217, pp. 123, 128.  
Died at Clonbrosk near Athenry on 6 July 1753. Coll. Hib. 11 (1968) 52.
29. Laurence Fitzgerald S.T.L. 20 June 1750. From Louvain, where his health had broken down after teaching the full course of philosophy. 217, p. 118.  
The chapter of 1753 said he had preached three years in Ireland. Prior of Mullingar in 1756. Hib. Dom. 219.
30. Thomas (Robert) Browne. 11 July 1750. Had written from Breda, asking for absolution from censures and assignation to Galway. 217, p. 118.  
See above, no. 2. Reached Galway by April 1751. 217, p. 123.
31. Dominic Morrogh S.T.M. 6 Aug. 1750. On finishing his term as first regent at San Sisto. 217, p. 118.  
Also Morragh. At Cork in 1756. Hib. Dom. 216-217.
32. John Reilly. 25 July 1750. A student-priest at Louvain, allowed return to Ireland to sell property of his own at Lacken, co. Cavan, and apply the proceeds to his native convent of Cavan. 217, p. 118.  
Listed as having left Louvain for the mission in 1750. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. Assigned to Naas both in 1756 and 1767. Hib. Dom. 294. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 100.
33. Matthew Higgins. 15 Aug. 1750. 217, p. 119.  
A student of philosophy at Louvain in 1745. See above, p. 192. Listed as having left Louvain for the mission in 1753. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47.  
An M. H. was subprior of Portumna in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 96.
34. Vincent Dogherty. 21 Aug. 1750. 217, p. 119.  
Probably from Italy. On 4 Apr. 1741, assigned as a student of philosophy to the convent of S. Caterina a Formello in Naples. 213, Lombardy, f. 149<sup>r</sup>. Prior of Derry in 1756. Hib. Dom. 283.
35. Luke Armour. 27 Mar. 1751. With a dispensation from his fourth year of theology and permission to take his faculty examination at SS. John and Paul (in Venice). Permitted also to accompany the Venetian ambassador to England and act as his chaplain. 217, p. 122.  
Died at the Venetian chapel in London on 5 Sept. 1764.
36. Hyacinth (James) Shesty S.T.L. 28 Apr. 1751. From Lisbon, after resigning as lector of philosophy on grounds of health. 217, p. 123.  
Also Sheasty, *melius* Cheasty. Listed as James S. of the Waterford community in 1756, with a note of his death on 10 June 1757. Hib. Dom. 209.
37. John Dogherty. 22 May 1751. From Marseilles. 217, p. 123.  
See above, no. 14. Subprior of Derry in 1756. Hib. Dom. 283.

38. Andrew O'Connor. 21 May 1751. « Qui ad omnia est ineptus », 217, p. 123. From San Sisto, to which he was assigned to study philosophy on 17 Aug. 1748. 217, p. 109.  
The chapter of 1761 noted his death at Roscommon.
39. Dominic Allen. 23 June 1751. From Bilbao, at the request of the Irish provincial. 217, p. 123.  
Ineffective. Permitted on 20 July 1756 to serve as chaplain to an Irish brigade in the Spanish service. 217, p. 164. Went from London to St. Croix in 1758.
40. Thomas Dalton. 12 Oct. 1751. From Louvain, on finishing his term as syndic. 217, p. 124.  
See List 2, no. 125. Listed as having left Louvain for Ireland in 1752. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Mullingar both in 1756 and 1767. Hib. Dom. 219. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 99.
41. Vincent Coffey. 3 Dec. 1751. From Rome, on finishing his studies at the College of St. Thomas (Minerva). 217, p. 124.  
Appointed lector of philosophy at Louvain on 7 Oct. 1752. 217, p. 128. See below, no. 55.
42. Francis Cusack. 9 Feb. 1752. At Colorno (Italy). Told to obey the provincial who gave him a *remittimus* to his own province. 221, Lombardy, p. 12.  
See List 2, nos. 49, 117. Colorno is in the diocese of Parma, whence F. C. had been ordered to the mission in 1742. Thanks to the protection of the Duke of Parma, he was still at Colorno on 28 June 1760. 227, Lombardy, p. 25. 231, p. 26.
43. Francis Burke. 15 Mar. 1752. From Louvain, with a dispensation from the remaining five months of his studies. 217, p. 125.  
Listed as having left Louvain for Ireland in 1752. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Burrishoole in 1756. Hib. Dom. 322.
44. Bernard Brullaughan S.T.M. 19 July 1752. On grounds of health. 217, p. 126.  
See List 2, no. 50. From Lisbon. He was actually in Ireland when he heard word of his appointment (25 Aug. 1753) as prior of Louvain. 217, pp. 133-134, 136.
45. Patrick (Archibald) MacAmbrose S.T.L. 23 Aug. 1752. From San Sisto, on finishing his term as second regent. 217, p. 127.  
Working in his native Coleraine from 1760. Hib. Dom. 246. The chapter of 1765 noted his death.
46. Patrick Brennan. 13 Sept. 1752. 217, p. 128.  
From Italy. After studies at Civitavecchia and assignation to Centocelle,

- was permitted on 26 Oct. 1737 to come to San Sisto for his faculty examination. 217, p. 17. His assignation in 1752 was sent to Recanati. 221, Lombardy, p. 94. Seemingly without result, since the general wrote on 8 July 1758 to the subprior of Foiano enquiring by what authority P. B. was living at Livorno. 227, prov. Romana, p. 39.
47. John MacManus. 20 Sept. 1752. From San Sisto, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 128.  
Teaching scripture at Louvain in 1756. Hib. Dom. 448. On 26 Nov. 1757 the general told him to stay at Louvain so as not to deplete the staff. 217, p. 171.  
See below, no. 67.
48. Martin French. 4 Oct. 1752. From Bergues-Saint-Winoc (near Dunkirk) where he was field-chaplain to Lally's Irish brigade in the service of France. Permitted to visit Ireland on business concerning a legacy. 217, p. 128.  
See above, no. 27. Prior of Athenry in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 96.
49. Antoninus Maguire. 27 May 1753. 217, p. 131.  
Either from Vicenza or Recanati in Italy. 213, Lombardy, ff. 159<sup>v</sup>, 171<sup>r</sup>, 216<sup>v</sup>. 221, Lombardy, pp. 63, 76. Was permitted on 29 Dec. 1753 to act as chaplain to General Maguire, his relative, at Znojmo (in Moravia). 217, p. 136.
50. Andrew Smith. 12 Jan. 1754. From Louvain, with a dispensation from the final six months of his studies. 217, p. 136.  
Listed as having gone to Ireland from Louvain in 1754. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Cavan in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 94.
51. Dominic Fitzpatrick S.T.L. 9 Feb. 1754. From Louvain, where he was teaching scripture. Permitted to go to Ireland for four months because of his mother, and to resign his lectureship if he wished. 217, p. 136.  
His resignation was accepted on 17 August. 217, p. 139. Listed as having gone to Ireland from Louvain in 1754. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. Made prior of Galway in 1758. Hib. Dom. 326.
52. Edmund Reilly S.T.M. 23 Feb. 1754. From Louvain, where he had filled every scholastic post and been both prior and vicar *in capite*. 217, p. 137.  
See List 2, no. 94. Appointed master of novices at Louvain on 10 August following. 217, p. 139. Listed as having gone to Ireland from Louvain in 1755. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. Had already left Louvain by 27 Dec. 1755 when appointed rector at Lisbon. 217, p. 158. Died at Dublin on 1 June 1756. Hib. Dom. 197.

53. John Fitzpatrick. 1 July 1754. From San Sisto, on finishing his studies. 217, p. 138.  
Repeated on 23 July 1755. 217, p. 154. See below, no. 72.
54. Thomas (Myles) Burke S.T.P. 4 Sept. 1754. From Lisbon, on finishing his term as regent. 217, p. 139.  
Died at Lisbon during the earthquake on 1 Nov. 1755. Hib. Dom. 551.
55. Vincent Coffey S.T.L. 16 Nov. 1754. From Louvain, where he was teaching scripture. Permitted to go to Ireland for six months about his domestic concerns. 217, p. 142.  
See above, no. 41. Listed as having gone to Ireland from Louvain in 1755. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Trim in 1756. Hib. Dom. 265.
56. Francis Leynagh, *melius* Lynagh. 11 Dec. 1754. From Bordeaux, on grounds of health and at his own request. 217, p. 143.  
The acts of 1761 note his death in the convent of Trim.
57. Dominic Hanly. 21 Dec. 1754. From Louvain. Refused permission to work as chaplain in a French hospital because the provincial chapter complained so much of those who would not return to Ireland. 217, p. 143.  
On 9 February he had been dispensed from the final six months of his studies. 217, p. 136.  
Listed as having gone from Louvain to Ireland in 1754. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Roscommon in 1756 and prior there from 1759. Hib. Dom. 261.
58. John O'Connor. 19 Mar. 1755. With permission to take his lectorate and sit for his faculty examination at San Domenico in Naples. 217, p. 147.  
At Dublin in 1756. Hib. Dom. 198.
59. Thomas Hope S.T.P. 4 Apr. 1755. From San Sisto, where he had been master of students, regent and prior. 217, p. 150.  
Received the mastership from the general's own hands on 9 April following. 217, p. 150.  
At Mullingar, and a pastor in the diocese of Meath, in 1756. Hib. Dom. 219.
60. John (Thomas) Walsh. 23 Apr. 1755. With a dispensation from his fourth year of studies and permission to do his faculty examination at Liège. 217, p. 151.  
Listed as having gone to Ireland from Louvain in 1755. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Glanworth in 1756. Hib. Dom. 336.
61. Denis O'Connor. 31 July 1756. From Louvain, on finishing his term as master of students. 217, p. 164.  
Listed as having left Louvain for Ireland in 1756. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47. At Waterford from 1757. Hib. Dom. 209.
62. Henry Delphin, *melius* Dolphin. 31 Jan. 1757. A member of the province of Lombardy, permitted to go to his native Ireland on business. 217, p. 167.  
From S. Caterina a Formello at Naples. On 8 Feb. 1757, the general



- reluctantly sent him this licence, since his relatives in Ireland requested it, remarking that H. D. had equally valid reasons for going home 14 years earlier but had remained at Naples to please the convent. 227, Lombardy, pp. 4, 7. If in fact he went to Ireland in 1757, he was again at Naples in April 1760. 229, Lombardy, p. 148.
63. Charles Rogers. 6 June 1757. From the convent of S. Caterina a Formello in Naples where he was a student-priest. Issued with a warning to travel home directly and not to wander about. 217, p. 168.  
Repeated on 26 Sept. 1758. 217, p. 168. As a penance for being a "fugitive", C. R. spent most of the interval between these two assignations in the conventual prison at Naples, attached to the wall by an iron band about his neck, his feet in chains, on a diet of bread and water. 227, Lombardy, pp. 103, 111, 40, 68.
64. Hyacinth (Vincent) Berrill S.T.L. 28 Aug. 1757. From San Sisto, on finishing his term as master of students. 217, p. 169.  
Also Berrilly. Assigned to Ancona on 14 December following and remained there for three years. 227, Lombardy, p. 80. 229, Lombardy, pp. 8, 26, 111.  
Appointed second regent at San Sisto on 20 Aug. 1760. 231, p. 6.  
In Burke's list of the San Sisto community for 1756 he is styled Vincent. Hib. Dom. 415. See list four, no. 6.
65. Thomas Ryan. 1 Oct. 1757. From Rome for reasons of health, with a dispensation from one year of theology. 217, p. 169.  
Resident at San Sisto from 1752 to 1757. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 68. After receiving this assignation he made his way as far as Venice. Then, on 23 Aug. 1760, was appointed *lector artium* at Louvain but refused to go there. 231, pp. 6, 8.  
See below, no. 75.
66. John Francis Netterville S.T.M. 18 Nov. 1757. From Rome, having received the mastership from the hands of the general. Permitted to resign his priorship of San Sisto and return to Ireland at the request of the bishop of Meath. 217, p. 171.  
Appointed vicar of the nuns of Drogheda on 12 Nov. 1760. 231, p. 7.  
Resident at Dublin in 1761. Hib. Dom. 198.
67. John MacManus S.T.L. 8 Apr. 1758. Told to leave Louvain and not to trouble the college any further by his pretensions, his two-year term as lector of scripture having expired. 217, p. 174.  
See above, no. 47. Listed as having left Louvain for Ireland in 1757. APF, SOCG 769, f. 47.
68. Michael Commins, *melius* Cummins. 3 Aug. 1759. From San Sisto, after two years of philosophy and three of theology there. On grounds of health. 231, p. 3.

- Stationed at Athy, his native convent, from 1760. Hib. Dom. 257, 415.
69. Patrick O'Hart. 28 Sept. 1759. From San Sisto, on finishing his studies. 231, p. 4.  
In July 1765 he assisted in the parish of Rathmolyon, diocese of Meath, of which he was pastor from 1767 until his death in 1797. A. Cogan, Diocese of Meath, vol. 2 (Dublin 1867) 378. Permitted to transfiliate from Rathfran to Trim on 7 June 1766. 231, p. 41.
70. Laurence Connillan S.T.L. 16 Feb. 1760. From Louvain, where he was regent and subprior *in capite*. On grounds of health. 231, p. 5.  
Postulated S.T.P. by the chapter of 1765. Prior of Sligo in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 94.
71. Thomas (Dominic) Fottrell. 5 July 1760. With permission to take his lectorate and examination for faculties in any *studium generale*. 231, p. 5.  
Probably from Genoa. Resident at San Sisto from May 1752 until he left for Genoa in June 1757. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 68. On 20 Aug. 1757 he was told to stay at Livorno until certain that the convent of S. Maria di Castello in Genoa would accept him. 227, congreg. of St. Mark of Florence, p. 5. Reached Dublin by 1761. Hib. Dom. 198, 415.
72. John Fitzpatrick. 12 July 1760. From Centocelle (Italy) where he did not wish to stay any longer. 231, p. 6.  
See above, no. 53. In January 1760 he was at Iesi, reluctant to accept an assignation to Civitavecchia as an Irish confessor. 229, Lombardy, pp. 124, 128.  
Probably the J. F. who was serving in the parish of Galloon, diocese of Clogher, in 1766. Clogher Record, vol. 2, no. 1 (1957) 215. More likely still, the Dominic Fitzpatrick attached to Gola in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 93. John F. was parish priest of Aghalurcher, diocese of Clogher, in April 1776. Clogher Record, vol. 6, no. 1 (1966) 127-128.
73. Patrick Dalton S.T.L. 20 Aug. 1760. From San Sisto, at his own request, on finishing office as lector of philosophy and master of students. 231, p. 6.  
Permitted on 7 Mar. 1761 to go to Nevis and St. Christophers in the West Indies. 231, p. 8.  
The Irish Dominicans on St. Croix mentioned in a letter of December 1762 that Dalton was on Nevis, with faculties for St. Eustatius too. By May 1763 he had transferred to Montserrat where he was still living in June 1769. Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 105-122.
74. Dominic Cornyn. 23 Aug. 1760. From the convent of Gradi in Viterbo, where the mineral waters had not helped his health. 231, p. 6.  
Permitted on 29 Nov. 1760 to spend six months at Vicenza. 231, p. 7.  
Working in Scotland in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 94.
75. Thomas Ryan. 28 Mar. 1761. Licence sent to the prior of Louvain, ordering Ryan's exclusion from the studentate because he had responded

so badly to the general's kindness and given scandal at Venice. 231, p. 8. See above, no. 65. Repeated on 18 April, 23 May and 15 August in letters addressed directly to Ryan at Louvain. He had remained at Venice until at least November 1760. He left Louvain for Ireland between January and August 1762. 231, pp. 8-14. By 1767 he was serving the cathedral in Limerick. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 97.

76. John Thomas O'Neill. 4 Apr. 1761. From San Sisto, on finishing his term of office as prior. 231, p. 8.  
Prior of Cashel in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 98.
77. John O'Neill. 4 Apr. 1761. From San Sisto, on finishing his studies. 231, p. 8.  
At Drogheda in 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 92.

#### LIST FOUR: 1761-1778

1. John Murphy S.T.L. 17 Nov. 1761. From St. Sixtus, on ceasing to be master of students there. With permission to spend the winter in any Italian convent before pursuing his journey in May 1762. 231, p. 12.  
On 13 Aug. 1763, recalled from the convent of S. Maria, Civitavecchia, to St. Sixtus to be *baccalaureus* there. 231, p. 18. See below, no. 47.
2. Patrick MacMahon. 19 June 1762. From St. Sixtus where he had taken ill while studying theology. 231, p. 12.  
Probably the Dominic MacM. whose obit "in Italy" occurs in the chapter acts of 1765.
3. James Duffy. 23 Apr. 1763. From Louvain, with a dispensation from six months' study because of illness. 231, p. 15.  
By September 1767 a member of the Drogheda community and P.P. Donore, diocese of Meath. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 92.
4. John Daly. 20 Aug. 1763. First regent at Louvain. Permitted on 15 October to spend three months in any convent of France or Belgium. Went to Paris. 231, pp. 19, 23, 25.  
Wrote from Dublin to vicar general on 27 Mar. 1764 refusing priorship of St. Sixtus. 231, p. 29.
5. John Jennings. 27 Aug. 1763. At his own request, on finishing his studies at Louvain, with a formal precept not to leave before Christmas. 231, p. 20.  
On 8 October permitted to remain as syndic (p. 23). Still at Louvain on 20 July 1765 when licensed as a missionary for St. Croix (p. 38). At Esker in September 1767. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 96.
6. Hyacinth Berrill. 27 Aug. 1763. To take effect on 14 Sept. following, when he would finish his term as *baccalaureus* at St. Sixtus. May spend two months *en route* in a French convent. 231, p. 20. See list three, no. 64.

- The chapter acts of 1760 said he had been six years at Drogheda.
7. Francis Dominic Quirke. 11 Sept. 1763. On finishing his studies at St. Sixtus. 231, p. 22.  
Questing for the convent of Mullingar in 1766. Cogan, Diocese of Meath, II, 463.
  8. Michael Kirwan. 23 June 1764. From the convent of S. Domenico in Genoa. 231, p. 31.
  9. Mathias Wynne. 21 June 1765. On finishing his studies at St. Sixtus. To Scotland. 231, p. 37.  
See above, pp. 335-339.
  10. Dominic Hallinan. 22 June 1765. From Louvain to Scotland. 231, p. 37.  
See above, p. 335.
  11. Thomas MacDonagh. 25 June 1765. On finishing his studies at St. Sixtus. 231, p. 37.  
Already at Drogheda by Sept. 1767 and remained there until his death in 1805. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 92.
  12. Hugh Conway. 27 July 1765. To St. Croix. 231, p. 38.  
The chapter of 1765 asked the general: "quatenus ratum habere dignetur gradum magisterii concessum R.P. F. Hugoni Conway in Collegio D. Thomae civitatis Hispalensis a.d. 1753 nunc vacantem in nostra provincia per obitum R.P. F. Nicholai Quinn. Praedlaudatus P. Conway continuo et fructuose a septem annis in hac nostra provincia laboravit; habet actatis annos 43 et professionis 30". Conway did reach St. Croix in 1770.
  13. Denis MacGrath S.T.L. 14 Sept. 1765. 231, p. 38.  
From St. Sixtus where he had been master of students. 231, p. 18. In September 1767 he was both prior and parish priest of Lorrha, the only member of that community. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 97.
  14. Patrick Kirwan S.T.L. 13 Sept. 1766. From Civitavecchia. Refused permission to come to Rome. 231, p. 42.  
From the convent of S. Maria, Centocelle, to which he was assigned on 8 Apr. 1766 (on being deposed as prior of St. Sixtus). 231, p. 40. Prior of Holy Cross, Louvain, by June 1767. 231, p. 44.
  15. John Antoninus O'Dwyer S.T.P. 14 Mar. 1767. From Louvain. 231, p. 44.  
From Louvain, his resignation as prior of Holy Cross having been accepted on 13 Sept. 1766. 231, p. 42. The chapter of 1773 mentioned his recent death at Limerick.
  16. Dominic Bragan. 29 July 1767. To Scotland, on finishing his studies at St. Sixtus. 231, p. 45.  
See above, pp. 339-341.



17. James Langan. 3 Nov. 1768. 240, p. 1.  
Probably from Viterbo where he was ordained in the same year. The chapter of 1781 said he had been twelve years on the mission, probably at Galway where he registered in 1782. Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 50.
18. Bernard Brady S.T.P. 18 Mar. 1769. On medical advice. 240, p. 2.  
From Louvain where he had been teaching. Pastor of Derryvullen, diocese of Clogher, from about 1770. Biographical note by H. Fenning in Clogher Record, vol. 6, no. 2 (1967) 394-95.
19. Michael Diamond. 12 July 1769. 240, p. 2.  
From St. Sixtus where he had lived since 1763. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 69.
20. Dominic Browne S.T.L. 19 Aug. 1769. 240, p. 2.  
From Louvain he had been teaching since 1766. 231, p. 44. Resident at Esker from Feb. 1770 and subprior there from May 1776. TA, Esker account-book (1755-85), under dates.
21. Vincent O'Brien. 30 June 1770. On finishing his studies at the college of Bologna. 240, p. 3.  
Identical with William V. O'Brien, said by the chapter of 1777 to have worked for the last seven years in Dublin.
22. Laurence MacConnin. 23 July 1770. From St. Sixtus, on medical advice, after frequent illness. 240, p. 3.  
Appointed subprior of Drogheda by prior and council on 9 Jan. 1779. Drogheda, St. Magdalen's, account-book (1771-86), under date.
23. Albert Hope. 25 May 1771. A member of the Roman province. To Scotland. 240, p. 3.  
See above, pp. 341-345.
24. Michael White. 8 June 1771. From Louvain, with a dispensation from four months' study because of poor health. 240, p. 3.  
The chapter of 1781 said he had served in Dublin for ten years.
25. Thomas Mullany. 8 June 1771. From Louvain, with the same dispensation. 240, p. 3.  
Perhaps the Patrick M. whose obit is in the chapter acts of 1781.
26. John Stapleton. 2 July 1771. From St. Sixtus. 240, p. 4.  
When he took the civic oath at Marseilles on 12 Mar. 1791 he was said to have been ten and a half years in the convent there. Archives de la Ville de Marseilles, P 2 and P 128. Information kindly supplied by Fr. Benoît Montagnes O.P.
27. Stephen Joseph Taylor. 23 Aug. 1771. From the convent of S. Caterina, Naples, 240, p. 4.  
By 1782 he had long been chaplain to the Neapolitan ambassador at London. Arch. Hib. 8 (1941) 218.



28. Patrick MacGourk S.T.L. 31 Aug. 1771. From Louvain, on medical advice. 240, p. 5.  
On 12 Mar. 1779 he signed a document at Dundalk as ex-prior of Carlingford. APF, SC Irlanda 14, ff. 51-52.
29. John Hughes. 8 Oct. 1771. 240, p. 5.  
A student at Louvain in 1767, but not ordained there. Coll. Hib. 8 (1965) 101.
30. Simon Dominic Strong S.T.L. 13 Dec. 1771. 240, p. 5.  
Probably from St. Sixtus where he received vestimentary-money from Nov. 1770 to Feb. 1771. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 70. Earlier (1766-70) he was at La Quercia, Viterbo, where he worked hard but showed "neither understanding nor memory". AGOP XI. 9050. By August 1773 he had been "maliciously indicted by his own brother, as being a popish priest". R.D. Edwards, *The Minute Book of the Catholic Committee*, in Arch. Hib. 9 (1942) 8-9.
31. James Hope S.T.L. 12 Sept. 1772. On finishing his studies at Rome. 240, p. 6.  
Probably from the Minerva. A student at La Quercia, Viterbo, 1768-69. AGOP XI. 9050. He served the parish of Mullingar from 1772 until his death in 1819. Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, II, 471.
32. Francis Dominic Burke. 28 Oct. 1772. On completing his studies at the Academy of Perpignan. 240, p. 6.  
The chapter of 1781, postulating him as P.G. for Burrishoole, said he had worked in Ireland for eight years.
33. Eugene Coffey. 17 Apr. 1773. On finishing his studies at the college of S. Caterina in Naples. 240, p. 7.  
Died as P.P. Fertullagh on 18 July 1790 and was succeeded in the parish by his Dominican brother Bernard. Cogan, *Diocese of Meath*, II, 220-21.
34. Michael Brennan S.T.P. 24 Apr. 1773. To the convent of Trim on ceasing to be prior of St. Sixtus. 240, p. 7.  
Resident at Donore near Trim by 1 Oct. 1775 when Th. Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, mentioned the fact in a letter to J.T. Troy at St. Sixtus. D.D.A., 29/4.
35. John Nugent S.T.P. 8 May 1773. With permission to resign the priorship of Holy Cross, Louvain. 240, p. 7.  
In 1784, being then P.P. of Leamlara, he was said to have been a pastor in the diocese of Cloyne for ten years. APF, SC Irlanda 15, ff. 483-84, 593-94.
36. Vincent Strong. 16 July 1773. On finishing his studies in the convent of S. Caterina a Formello, Naples. 240, p. 7.  
Usually known by his Christian name, John. Edm. Burke O.P., writing at Esker in 1778, alleged that he spent his time shooting, "and never

- appeared to the provincial or any other superior since he arrived" in Lisbon, Corpo Santo, E 67.
37. Thomas Meylor. 21 Dec. 1773. On finishing his studies at Maddaloni in the province of Lombardy. 240, p. 7.  
The chapter of 1781 noted the death of Nicholas Myler, perhaps identical, in France. The usual form of this rare name is Meyler.
  38. Antoninus Biggs. 13 Aug. 1774. From St. Sixtus where he was *baccalaureus*. 240, p. 8.  
Th. Burke O.P., bishop of Ossory, writing to Rome on 9 June 1775, said: "Biggs is settled in Lorrha district and is mostly at Birr in the King's County". D.D.A., 29/4.
  39. Edmund Burke. 2 Sept. 1774. On finishing his studies at Orazani [Durazzano?]. 240, p. 8.  
Returned to Esker from Naples by 1776. There is a letter of his (Esker, 18 Jan. 1778) in Lisbon, Corpo Santo, E 67. A priest of this name was prior of Esker in 1786.
  40. Denis Ferrall. 2 Sept. 1774. On finishing his studies at Milan. 240, p. 8.  
Living at Denmark St., Dublin, in 1782. Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 62.
  41. John Dominic Magrath. 18 May 1775. On finishing his studies at St. Clement's. 240, p. 8.  
Died at Lorrha on 5 Feb. 1780. L. Taheney, *Necrologium Prov. Hiberniae*, Dublin 1953.
  42. Vincent Berrill. 14 Feb. 1776. A student of theology at Mantua. Sent home for medical and disciplinary reasons. 240, p. 9.  
Probably the John Vincent B., a vagabond, assigned to St. Clement's to study theology on 13 Dec. 1777. Again sent to Ireland, his studies completed, on 29 May 1779. 240, p. 11. See list five, no. 5.
  43. Simon Hood. 7 July 1776. From the convent of S. Maria de Castello, Genoa, with leave to stay in any French convent until he finds money for the journey. 240, p. 10.  
The surname is almost certainly wrong. Simon Toole, who may be intended here, signed a document at Cashel on 20 Sept. 1771. APF, SC Irlanda 11, f. 711.
  44. Vincent O'Donoghue. 20 July 1776. A student at S. Maria Novella, Florence, sent home for misbehaviour. 240, p. 10.  
The chapter of 1793 noted the recent death of Michael Vincent D. of Lorrha, the convent for which Vincent took the habit at St. Clement's in 1769.
  45. Hyacinth Serry. 31 Aug. 1776. On finishing his studies at Milan. 240, p. 10.  
By 1782 a curate at Mullingar where his death was recorded in the parish register on 21 Apr. 1788. Arch. Hib. 8 (1941) 220.

46. Dominic Hugh O'Kelly S.T.L. 17 Oct. 1776. *A campestris iubilatus* at Naples. For reasons of health. 240, p. 10.  
Apparently an army-chaplain and jubilarian, in the sense that he had retired on pension. On 17 July 1743 obtained the general's licence to act as field-chaplain to the Irish regiment of the king of Naples. 217, p. 84. Resident at Esker from 1778, as mentioned by Edm. Burke in the letter cited under no. 36 above.
47. John Murphy S.T.M. 6 Sept. 1777. From Naples to Ireland at the request of cardinal Orsini. 240, p. 11.  
See above, no. 1. The chapter of 1781 noted his death in Italy.

## LIST FIVE: 1778-1785

1. James Vincent O'Dunne. 22 June 1778. On finishing his studies at San Clemente. 240, p. 1.  
The provincial chapter of 1793 said he was then prior of Athy and had been fourteen years in Ireland.
2. Michael Vincent MacEgan. 7 Sept. 1778. On finishing his studies at the college of St Thomas [Minerva]. 240, p. 11.  
Appointed master of students at Lisbon on 3 Oct. 1782. 240, p. 13.
3. Thomas MacKeon S.T.L. 20 Feb. 1779. On completing his studies at Genoa. 240, p. 11.  
By April 1784, he was chaplain to English-speakers at Nizza (Nice). XIII. 11, doc. 8.
4. Thomas Carbery S.T.L. 14 April 1779. From Prato, Italy. 240, p. 11.  
The provincial chapter of 1789 said that he had been preaching for nine years in Ireland.
5. John Vincent Berrill. 29 May 1779. On completing his studies at San Clemente. 240, p. 11.  
He had been assigned earlier to Ireland from Mantua, but proved a vagabond. See list four, no. 42.
6. Richard Dominic O'Kelly. 29 May 1779. On completing his studies at San Clemente. 240, p. 11.  
Again ordered to Ireland on 12 April 1783. 240, p. 13. At San Clemente, his name ceased to appear in the vestiary book from May 1779.
7. James Thomas O'Brien. 18 Aug. 1779. On finishing theology at S. Caterina a Formello, Naples. 240, p. 11.  
Resident in Dublin by 1782. Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 61.
8. Laurence Fottrell. 11 Mar. 1780. On completing his studies in the convent of Reggio. 240, p. 12. Probably from Reggio near Modena in Emilia (Italy).  
Resident in Dublin by 1782. Had received holy orders at Como, Caserta and Naples. Arch. Hib. 1 (1912) 64.

9. Vincent Rourke, a cleric. 30 June 1780. 240, p. 12.  
Apparently the Edmund O'Rourke who came from Genoa to San Clemente as a postulant in 1775 but did not receive the habit there. SCAR, Account-books, under date. He remained at San Clemente, without ever being ordained, until 19 May 1798 when permitted to leave for Ireland with the rest of the community. 240, p. 31. The provincial chapter of 1804 (which contains obits from 1793) noted his death, while still a professed novice, at Rome.
10. Laurence Plunkett. 4 Oct. 1780. 240, p. 12.  
Probably from S. Domenico, Naples, where he was living in 1779. See above, p. 419. Working in Dublin by 1814. C.O., A Letter to the R.C. Priests of Ireland, Dublin 1814, pp. 1-4.
11. Dominic MacDonough. 15 June 1782. 240, p. 12.  
From Urlar, a promising student at S. Marco, Florence in 1775. See above, p. 424.  
Probably the D. MacD. who had been «ten years» at Marseille in 1790. Arch. Dép. Bouches-du-Rhône, 4 Q 47; Archives de la Ville de Marseille, P 128. Dominic McDonough S.T.L. was assigned to SS. Sixtus and Clement on 24 Feb. 1803. 240, p. 34.
12. Thomas Kennedy. 19 June 1782. 240, p. 13.  
Perhaps the Daniel Kennedy who drew vestimentary-money at San Clemente from 1778 to 1796. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 70. Another Daniel Kennedy was P.P. of Fuerty, diocese of Elphin, from Nov. 1789. APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 237-38.
13. Vincent Gibbons S.T.L. 7 May 1783. 240, p. 13.  
Patrick Vincent Gibbons, already a student at Lucca and at the Minerva, Rome, where he took his S.T.L. in 1781. Archives of the Minerva, Acta Coll. D. Thomae, vol. II, ff. 120, 227, 308. The provincial chapter of 1793 mentioned that he was then prior of Dublin and had been on the mission for «twelve» years.
14. Francis Thomas Lynch S.T.L. 8 May 1783. 240, p. 13.  
From the convent of SS. Sixtus and Clement where he was master of novices and students. He left there for Ireland «*ob domestica negotia*» on 24 May 1783. SCAR, a/c book, *recepta*, under date. The provincial chapter of 1793 said he had been working in Ireland for «eleven» years.
15. Sixtus Kieran. 18 May 1785. 240, p. 16.  
Patrick Sixtus Kieran, resident at S. Clemente from 1779 to 1785. Attached to the Drogheda community whose a/c books mention his presence under the year 1786. The provincial chapter of 1793 said he had been preaching in Ireland for eight years.

## LIST SIX: 1785-1798

1. John Vincent Dennison. 16 Aug. 1785. 240, p. 16.  
From S. Clemente where resident from 1778. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 70.  
Died at Genoa on 20 Sept. 1785. SCAR, no. 55, f. 105.
2. Dominic Bodkin. 16 Sept. 1785. 240, p. 16.  
Probably from S. Catarina di Formello, Naples, where he went to study theology in Jan. 1781. Identical with Francis Bodkin who took a parish in "Old Spain" and went to the U.S.A. from London in 1794.
3. Ignatius Hall. 14 Nov. 1785. For two years, because of poor health. 240, p. 16.  
From S. Clemente where resident from 1784. A son of Newtownards, Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 71.
4. Albert Clarke. 9 Dec. 1786. To recover his health. 240, p. 17.  
Edmund Albert Clarke, from S. Clemente where resident from 1784. Son of Clonshanville. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 71. After some years in Ireland, returned to S. Domenico, Genoa, about 1789 to continue his studies. XIII. 68095. Received stipends at Lisbon in 1798. By 1816, when postulated P.G. Strade, had been "20 years" on the mission.
5. Augustine Thomas MacMahon. 10 April 1787. On finishing his studies at S. Catarina di Formello, Naples. 240, p. 18.  
In 1793, secretary of the provincial chapter which said he had been six years on the mission. Identical with Bartholomew MacMahon.
6. Matthias Meayr. 25 Jan. 1788. To Ireland. 240, p. 19.  
Perhaps Meagher, otherwise unknown.
7. Dominic Burke. 20 May 1789. A student-priest, sent home to recover his health. 240, p. 20.  
Edmund Dom. Burke, from S. Clemente where resident from 1783. Coll. Hib. 10 (1967) 71. Perhaps the priest, recently deceased, referred to in the Esker a/c book under date 4 March 1799: "Received from Dr Dillon [archbishop of Tuam] of Fr Ned Burke's assets, £20".
8. Vincent Fagan. 14 May 1791. 240, p. 23.  
Identical with Garret Fagan who died on 1 Oct. 1792 and was buried in his native place, Kilcumney. Cogan, Diocese of Meath, II, 429.
9. Clement Donnelly. 26 Aug. 1792. After studies at S. Clemente. 240, p. 24.  
Henry Clement D., resident at S. Clemente from 1788. The chapter of 1793 noted the recent death of Henry D. of Coleraine.
10. John Maginn. 28 Dec. 1794. A priest of S. Clemente sent to continue his studies at Lisbon. 240, p. 28.  
More correctly McGinn, but Maginn in the records of Corpo Santo where he got 150 stipends in July 1796. Perhaps identical with John M'Ginn, curate in 1821 of the parish of Monaghan, diocese of Clogher. Clogher Record (1974) 215-16.



11. Walter Morris. 12 Feb. 1795. 240, p. 28.  
From S. Clemente where resident from 1792. An earlier W.M. of Urlar died before summer 1789.
12. Paul MacDonagh S.T.L. 24 March 1795. From S. Clemente. 240, p. 29.  
John Paul Luke MacD., a son of Coleraine, resident at S. Clemente from 1787.
13. James Bushe. 28 April 1795. From the province *utriusque Lombardiae*. 240, p. 29.  
As a deacon, left S. Clemente for Lombardy in 1794. 240, p. 24. A missionary in Ireland by 1796. APF, Udienze 35, ff. 41-44. A prisoner at Kilmainham in 1798. Arch. Hib. XI (1944) 5.
14. Edmund Lyons. 7 Sept. 1796. From S. Clemente; a student sent to Lisbon for his health's sake. 240, p. 30.  
No record of his ordination at Lisbon, nor mentioned in the Mass-accounts of Corpo Santo. Chaplain to the English-speakers of Malaga (or, as the document says, Malacca, East Indies) by 1800. APF, Udienze 38, ff. 67-68.
15. Francis Bushe S.T.L. 10 May 1797. After studies at the Minerva. 240, p. 30.  
Repeated on 19 May 1798, when Bushe was at S. Clemente. 240, p. 31. Left Genoa for Barcelona in August 1798. SCAR, no. 107, doc. 3.
16. Matthias Clement Dunne. 19 May 1798, Prior of San Clemente. After the edict of the Roman Republic expelling foreigners. 240, p. 31.  
Assistant-curate at Civitavecchia one month later. DDA 116/7. Died at Rome, still prior of S. Clemente, on 26 Nov. 1802. FLK, Ms. E 14.
17. John Connolly S.T.M. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente, after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Remained in Rome until he left for Ireland in Feb. 1815 as bishop of New York. L. Boyle, San Clemente Miscellany I, Rome 1977, 87.
18. Daniel Kennedy S.T.P. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente, after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Still at the Minerva a month later, at Rome in July 1801, at Narni by Jan. 1802, at Orvieto by Sept. 1802. B. Jennings (ed.), Louvain Papers, Dublin 1968, pp. 525, 541, 587. Ordered to Ireland under formal precept on 20 March 1802. 240, p. 33. On 25 Feb. 1804 named confessor of Bom Sucesso. 240, p. 35.
19. John Thomas Plunkett S.T.L. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Died at Verona in 1806 while attending a hospital during an epidemic. G. Oliver, Collections, London 1857, 465.
20. Mark Nowlan. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente, after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Also Nolan. Was leaving Genoa for Ireland via Germany in Aug. 1798.

- SCAR, no. 107, doc. 3. Stationed at Drogheda in 1817. Coll. Hib. 9 (1966) 81.
21. Daniel McGraith. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Received stipends at Lisbon in the first half of 1799. Already at Coher, Co. Tipperary, by March 1800. Rome, 17 Jan. 1801. Connolly to Rich. Roche O.P. TA, Letters, under date.
22. Thomas Riordan. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente after the edict of the Roman Republic. 240, p. 31.  
Received stipends at Corpo Santo in the first half of 1799. The chapter of 1808 said he had been working in Limerick city for nine years.
23. Vincent O'Rourke. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente, after the edict of the Roman Republic. A novice. 240, p. 31.  
At S. Clemente since 1775, but not ordained because mentally defective. Still at Rome in May 1800, and died there before summer 1804.
24. Joseph McKey. 19 May 1798. From S. Clemente, after the edict of the Roman Republic. A novice. 240, p. 31.  
Professed at S. Clemente on 16 May 1798. SCAR, no. 24, pp. 15-16. Received all sacred orders at Lisbon between Feb. and Dec. 1799. Still at Lisbon in 1801 when the community paid his "salary" there. Named lector of philosophy at Corpo Santo on 28 Dec. 1805. 240, p. 36.
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# Additions and Corrections

- p. 7, line one. Patrick Marshall attended the provincial chapter of 1682 as prior of Kilkenny.
- p. 9, note 34. There is an original letter (22 Oct. 1695) from Cloche on the same subject in APF, SC Irlanda 5, ff. 546-47. Holy Cross appealed even to the king of Spain. B. Curtin, *Irish Material in Fondo Santa Sede, Madrid*, in *Arch. Hib.* 26 (1963) 46.
- p. 17, note 55. There are other copies and editions of these pamphlets in ASV, Fondo Albani 163, ff. 103-150, *passim*; and Nunz. Madrid 23, nos. 89, 90.
- p. 21, note 73. It is most unlikely that the 118 Dominicans who received alms in 1699 were all resident in Paris. The figure probably corresponds to the total number of exiles, or at least to those actually resident in France. Subtracting this number (118) from the total (170) on the mission in 1695, one is left with 52, a figure not far short of the 90 found in Ireland in 1702-1703. Hence it is very probable that at least 52 Dominicans ignored the decree of exile in 1698.
- p. 26, note 93. William Gorman was appointed procurator at Madrid on 6 July 1680. AGOP IV. 159, *pro toto ordine*, f. 2.
- p. 27, line six. Before leaving Madrid for Louvain, O'Connor obtained a letter (23 Sept. 1700) from the king to the regent of the Spanish Lowlands requesting payment of 1,000 florins a year to support twelve friars at Holy Cross, Louvain, then in danger of "annihilation". Madrid, Archivo Historico Nacional, Estado Flandres, leg. 837 (1<sup>a</sup>). Reference supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.
- p. 28, note 102. Humbert Burke was the first to keep the excellent *Liber de Ratione Studiorum* (1701-1743) of SS. Sixtus and Clement, now AGOP XI. 3600.
- p. 37, line eleven. Fr T. S. Flynn found this four-page printed circular letter (Madrid, 8 Sept. 1705) in ASV, Nunz. Madrid 23, no. 91. O'Connor mentioned in it the order of 2 May 1705 referred to above on p. 36, note 123.
- p. 40. Edmund Burke's chief objection may have been, not so much to the *alternativa* as to what he called the "equality" of the provinces. If there were so few Dominicans outside Connacht, what right had they to an equal number of masters of theology, preachers general, etc.?
- p. 41, note 136. The industrious Br Edmund Fitzgerald, professed at Louvain in 1701, fled to Ireland in 1709 with the cash he had collected in Germany, failed to report to his superiors and made his way to the West Indies. Windsor, Stuart papers, vol. 157, nos. 34, 153, 157.

- p. 49, line 23. As early as Jan. 1709, some Dominican complained to cardinal Imperiali that whereas the foreign colleges would admit only Munstermen, no one from Munster would go to Ireland. APF, Lettere 98, ff. 198-99; CP 34A, f. 437.
- p. 51, note 161. On bishop Ambrose MacDermott, see J. J. Kelly, *Diocese of Elphin, 1671-1717*, in IER (1893) 1086; also H. Fenning, *Ambrose MacDermott O.P., Bishop of Elphin, 1707-1717*, in AFP 40 (1970) 231-75.
- p. 55, note 171. The late Fr Godfrey Anstruther OP found the record of Fr O'Connor's burial at St James, Piccadilly, on 22 Feb. 1710 o.s. in the appropriate register (vol. II, 1699-1723) at the Westminster Public Library. On 17 Oct. 1711, the community of S. Sisto in Rome applied to the general for 500 scudi which O'Connor had left at Madrid. SCAR, Codex V, doc. 23. Propaganda never proposed O'Connor for a bishopric, for he was still on their list of "worthy candidates" after his death. APF, CP 34A, f. 548.
- p. 56, line seven. Hugh Callanan took his licence in theology at Paris in 1694, Paris, Irish College archives, 9A.
- p. 98, paragraph one. About 1975, a curious bronze plaque was found attached to the back of the monastery altar at Drogheda. The inscription, composed about 1690, commemorates four generations of the Barnwall family, barons of Crickston.
- p. 103. There was yet another attempted foundation in Spain. Augustine Pipia, master general, issued a formal letter (25 July 1722) accepting for the Irish Dominicans the gift of a house at Madrid from Don Augustin de Palanca. We know nothing of this house except that Edward Fitzgerald was named its life-president and was to permit only Irish, English and Scots religious to stay there. Original letter of Pipia now in AGOP XIII. 68095 (additional).
- p. 126, line 15. Many Augustinians also studied in France where theology in their convents was tinged with Jansenism. The convent library (almost 200 vols.) of the Galway Augustinians in 1731 was well stocked with Jansenist authors. H. Fenning, *The Library of the Augustinians of Galway in 1731*, in Coll. Hib. 31 and 32 (1989-90) 162-195.
- p. 126, note 40. Some of the oldest documents on the Galway dispute, dating from 1551, 1714-1719, were filed by Propaganda under the year 1823 when the ancient quarrel flared again, APF, SOCG 923, ff. 560-598.
- p. 133. On Colman O'Shaughnessy O.P. as bishop of Ossory (1736-48), see W. Carrigan, *Diocese of Ossory, I* (1905) 149-54.



- p. 146. Bernard MacHenry worked for the convent of Drogheda between January and March 1729. TA, Drogheda a/c book (1727-41).
- p. 148. Despite the determination of both provincial and general to clamp down on novices, there was quite a boom in the number of those admitted between 1735 and 1741. This clearly appears from two later lists (1756, 1767) of Dominicans actually in Ireland whose ages and years of profession are supplied. The first is given in *Hib. Dom.*, convent by convent. The second, by provincial Netterville, is in H. Fenning, *Some Problems of the Irish Mission: 1733-1774*, in *Coll. Hib.*, 8 (1965) 92-104.
- p. 155, line five. Novices in Waterford in 1736. Since the original text does not state explicitly that the novices were in Waterford itself, they may have been on the continent.
- p. 166, note 99. What is perhaps a unique copy of Brullaughan's *De Missione* in its first edition (Louvain 1736) is now in TA.
- p. 170, line nine. Bernard MacHenry signed a document in Jan. 1747 as P.P. Drumlane. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.
- p. 170, line twenty-two. John Fottrell received holy orders at Lisbon (subdiaconate to priesthood) between March 1724 and 23 Feb. 1725. Lisbon, Patriarcado, mss. 597, 592.
- p. 179, line twenty-seven. John Fottrell was at London on 10 June 1740 when he signed a testimonial for Pat. Brullaughan OP, already attached for three years to the Sardinian chapel. Windsor, Stuart Papers, vol. 223, no. 95.
- p. 181, line twenty-two. John Fottrell, well before his death, gave large sums (with papal permission) not only to the college in Rome but to his alma mater in Lisbon. It was illegal at the time (1775) to make pious foundations in Ireland; he had already helped the convent in Dublin from time to time; but these foreign benefactions had to be kept secret for fear of greedy relatives and the murmurings of the brethren in Dublin. The two colleges were to pay him a small annuity and say some Masses after his death. SCAR, no. 23, docs. 28, 33.
- p. 194. At the time of his death, bishop Killikelly held the parish of St Theresa, Ardrahan, *in commendam*. His successor applied for it as vacant *per obitum*. APF, Udienze 22, ff. 151-52. The a/c books of Esker show that he was a regular and frequent benefactor of the convent.
- p. 196. "Magister O'Brien" of Cork was John O'Brien STM. Robert Brown of Galway was also styled Thomas.
- p. 233, paragraph two. Better to say "the Dominicans of Coleraine had a

- house", since it may not have been at Coleraine itself, but more likely at Magherafelt where Patrick O'Diamond lived in 1734-35.
- p. 234, note 97. The a/c books of Drogheda are now in TA.
- p. 237, line eleven and following. This legislation was in fact quite logical. The colleges would receive novices and support them *gratis*, but each postulant would have to pay his own passage and outfit.
- p. 256, paragraph two. William Burke, the secular priest mentioned here, was the restorer of St Patrick's college, Lisbon, after the earthquake of 1755. The bishops of Connacht recommended him (15 May 1761) to Propaganda. APF, SC Irlanda 15 f. 255.
- p. 270, paragraph two. The date of archbishop Linegar's death, and consequently of Lincoln's succession, is given as 22 June 1757 in ASV, Fondo Missioni 128.
- p. 276. Charles O'Kelly OP, in an undated memorial of about 1761, gives far more detail of this episode in Athy, completely exonerating the two Dominicans involved and putting the entire blame on archbishop Lincoln. With the removal of the two friars, the convent of Athy temporarily ceased to exist for lack of replacements. APF, SOCG 789, ff. 176-77.
- p. 286, paragraph one. In June 1761, the provincial chapter (*petitio* 3) appealed to the general to use his influence at Rome in defence of the rights of the order respecting the Rosary. "For should the archbishop of Dublin win the case in Rome, the other Irish bishops (not enamoured of regulars) will not hesitate to follow in his footsteps." AGOP XIII. 68095.
- p. 339, paragraph one. Matthias Wynne did not long survive his experience in Scotland. His death "in the convent of Ballindoon", Co. Sligo, was noted by the provincial chapter in July 1773.
- pp. 344-45. Albert Hope, bursar at La Quercia in 1775 and 1776, was still in the convent of S. Domenico, Terracina, in 1796. AGOP XIII, 68095 (additional) and 11132.
- p. 362. Fr Netterville did not *collect* Mass stipends for Corpo Santo, but arranged for 2,500 Masses to be said for the intentions of the college.
- p. 368. Since the nuns of Drogheda then lived in Dyer or Deer Street, the use of the present name "Sienna" is anachronistic.
- p. 395. John Netterville died in fact at Drogheda "of an inflammation in his bowels". So John Fottrell writing at Dublin (30 Nov. 1781) to Francis Levins of Corpo Santo. TA, Lisbon 6.

- p. 421. Bishop Burke's remarks on the singing of Vespers did not refer to Rome but to Holy Cross, Louvain, which he must have reached by 7 March 1769 (St Thomas' day) *en route* to Rome.
- p. 437. Martin French, whose obit "*ab ultimo capitulo*" appears in the printed Dominican *Ordo* for 1797, died between summer 1793 and the close of 1796.
- p. 449, note 28. For other "decrees of 1761" bearing on confraternities, see above, pp. 286-88, though it is hard to see how the bishop of Cork could have misused them.
- p. 479. Dr Plunkett of Meath (29 Sept. 1797) assured the parishioners of Mullingar that he would continue to employ two Dominicans, James Hope and Patrick Halligan, as curates under a pastor named by himself. Full text in Cogan, Diocese of Meath, III, 216.
- p. 520. Fr Duane leased the house in Thomas Street, Waterford, in 1782 and assigned that lease to his confrères in June 1784. Originals in TA, Waterford papers.
- p. 530. Count Dalton of Grenanstown, lieutenant general in the Austrian service, "fell gloriously before Dunkirk in the year 1793". His widow, Mary Countess Dalton of Grenanstown, died 12 Aug. 1815, aged seventy. Funeral inscription in abbey church, Bath. The Edward Dalton of note (116) was more likely the provincial's nephew.
- p. 537. Provincial Dolphin, in 1791, was in correspondence with the prior of S. Pablo, Seville, concerning the validity of the novitiate and profession of Edmund Lyons. Lyons was permitted to leave S. Pablo for his own province on 16 Sept. 1793. AGOP XIII. 68095 and 68098. Lyons was at S. Clemente from early in 1794.
- p. 540. Anthony Caffrey OP in the United States. Mgr Michael Farina of St Patrick's parish, Washington D.C., tells me that Caffrey was already at Philadelphia in 1791 and there met Hoban who introduced him to Robert Morris, financier of the American Revolution. With money borrowed from Morris, Caffrey purchased his first lot at Washington in 1792. Caffrey is mentioned three times in the diary of George Washington, with whom he dined.
- p. 569. Francis Bodkin OP was named Irish chaplain at S. Pablo, Seville, on 24 Feb. 1806 and on 8 March 1808 was permitted to go to Ireland to see his family. AGOP IV. 270A, pp. 9, 25. In Sept. 1813 he escorted two postulants (John Molloy and Patrick Monaghan) from Galway to Lisbon where he was briefly bursar, but returned to Galway by 15 Sept. 1815.

Michael Wallis OP, another missionary not mentioned in the text,

was a student-priest at S. Pablo, Seville, in March 1791 and was already at St Augustine, Florida, by December of the same year. Though virtuous and hard-working, he lost his reason and strayed away into the woods in Oct. 1794. After his immediate rescue, he was sent to Cuba for treatment. M. J. Curley, *Church and State in the Spanish Floridas (1783-1822)* Washington D.C. 1940, pp. 184, 221. The same author has further details on Francis Bodkin. *Op. cit.*, pp. 207-209, 308-309.

- p. 589. John Nugent, being "in a declining state" by 19 July 1806, received permission from the general to give fifty guineas to his nephew. TA, Letters, under date. He died shortly before 25 May 1814 when his recent passing was regretted by Patrick Gibbons OP of Dublin. TA, Russell letters.

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Unless otherwise stated, all personal names, excepting those of prelates, are of Dominicans. The word "priest" indicates a member of the diocesan or secular clergy. Names beginning "O" or "Mac" are given alphabetically under their basic forms, e.g. O'Kelly with Kelly.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Abp. = archbishop; bp. = bishop; card. = cardinal; coll. = college; conv. = convent; dioc. = diocese; m. g. = master general; M.P. = member of parliament; mon. = monastery; O. Carm. = Order of Our Lady of Carmel; O.D.C. = Order of Discalced Carmelites; O.F.M. = Order of Friars Minor; O.P. = Order of Preachers; O.S.A. = Order of St. Augustine; pref. = prefect; priest = diocesan priest; Prop. = Congregatio de Propaganda Fide; Prot. = Protestant; prov. = provincial; secr. = secretary; S.J. = Society of Jesus; v. g. = vicar general; vic. apost. = vicar apostolic; vic. prov. = vicar provincial.

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