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# THE IRISH DOMINICAN PROVINCE 1785-1797

BY
HUGH FENNING OP

This article continues another on the same subject for an earlier period published in the last issue (1985) of this journal. It is also the seventh article of a series, begun in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* (1968) and now concluded, covering the history of the Irish province from 1697 to 1797. As in the earlier articles, successive provincials are used here to maintain chronological order rather than to stress their importance. During this latest period (1785-1797), archbishop John T. Troy OP of Dublin, though not directly concerned in matters Dominican, provides a dominant figure in the background. As the Dominican province declined in strength and effectiveness, the Catholic population achieved in 1793 almost every civil right save that of sitting in parliament. While the Dominicans lost their college at Louvain in 1794, and lost the use of another at Rome in 1798, the diocesan clergy got a national seminary at government expense, thanks largely to archbishop Troy, in 1795. The year 1797 offers a suitable point at which to close this story, since it witnessed the celebration of an illegal provincial chapter, and the illegal election of a provincial: events which greatly influenced Irish Dominican history in the first decade of the 19th 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 "[1]. The " intriguing Flemmings ", also called

[1] 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.

" Louvanists ", 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 [2]. 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 [3]. 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 [4]. 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 » [5]. 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 [6]. He became preacher general for Longford in 1766 and definitor for Leinster at the chapter of 1769 [7]. Whether his priorship of Mullingar

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[2] AFP 42 (1972) 350.

[3] 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. AFP 45 (1975) 461, 497.

[4] Hib. Dom. 219. Dalton's name is also on the list of subscribers to this book.

[5] H. Fenning, The Mission to St Croix, in Arch. Hib. 25 (1962) 90.

[6] Dublin, 12 Jan. 1778. Th. Netterville and other Dominicans recommend him for a bishopric. APF, SOCG 848, f. 206.

[7] AGOP IV. 231, p. 42. AFP 49 (1979) 294.

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 [8]. 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 " Louvanists " 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

[8] 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 "Louvanist" 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 [9].

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 merrit. 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 Conjuration (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 Louvanist, 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

[9] 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[10].

Variis undequaque petor insidiis, ut nomen meum subscribam postulationibus 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

[10] 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 [11].

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 [12].

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 altresi 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 circonstanze 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 [13]. 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 [14].

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, ciamberlano, 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.

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[11] APF, SC Irlanda 11, ff. 612, 615, 618-20; Lettere 220 (1772), ff. 35-36. AGOP XIII. 68095.

[12] APF, SOCG 841, ff. 329, 331.

[13] Loc. cit. ff. 353, 356, 370-71.

[14] 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[15]. 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[16]. 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[17]. 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[18].

Undiscouraged and maybe undeceived by the promises and sweet excuses of Propaganda Fide, 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[19].

His tribus et viginti jam elapsis annis mihi optime notus est Rev. P. Dalton, nam toto hoc ferme tempore munere capellani et confessarii apud conventum

[15] APF, SOCG 844, ff. 267-68, 276, 280.

[16] 8 and 18 June 1776. Secretary to cardinal Albani. APF, Lettere 229, ff. 80, 82.

[17] 13 Sept. 1776. APF, SOCG 848, f. 205. Eugene Geoghegan, coadjutor bishop of Meath, and Philip Philipps, bishop of Achonry, also signed the document.

[18] APF, SC Irlanda 12, ff. 558, 594.

[19] 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 glorietur. Hoc autem certum est, eum studiis incumbendo, aut libros evolvendo, parum aut nullum tempus conterere: 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 duco, quod cum nuperus 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 judicium 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 [20], 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 [21]. 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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[20] 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.

[21] 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 [22]. The archdeacon of Meath, with two vicars forane, assured cardinal Albani that " they knew no one better suited for the bishopric than Thomas Dalton " [23]. 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 [24]. 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 [25]. 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 " [26].

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[22] 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.

[23] Loc. cit., f. 323.

[24] Loc. cit., ff. 324-25.

[25] 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 ".

[26] 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 [27]. 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* " [28]. 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 praevalebit !* ". This reference may be to the Dominicans of Rathfran, but whatever Dr Bellew did for them they were all dead by 1789 and the " convent " itself extinct [29].

The letter of the regular superiors, which Thomas Dalton signed in a large unsteady hand, is as follows [30].

Eminentissime ac Reverendissime Princeps,

Sub ipsum funus Illustrissimi Domini Archepiscopi de Tuam, parentis ac patroni nostri specialis, prodit haec superiorum regularium Eminentiae

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[27] AFP 49 (1979) 298-99.

[28] 29 Aug. 1785. Bellew to card. Antonelli. Italian original. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.

[29] 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.

[30] 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 majoris. 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 certiorem 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 oblati, 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 5ª 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 [31].

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 occurre qui dipingere quel rinomato fanatico, essendo gia 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 caprici 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 vorra costi 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

[31] 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 [32].

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 [33].

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 judicio 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 [34].

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[32] For a sympathetic account of the earl-bishop see John R. Walsh, Frederick Augustus Hervey, 1730-1803, Maynooth 1972, especially pp. 33, 57.

[33] APF, SOCG 877, ff. 522, 525.

[34] 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 condidates 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 [35]. Letters from Ireland about the vacancy were duly filed, as though discussed on 27 November, but since the dates of the various 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 " [36].

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[35] 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.

[36] 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 [37].

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 tems 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 [38].

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[37] Dublin, 11 Nov. 1786. Latin original. APF, SOCG 874, ff. 298, 303.

[38] Ross, 20 Dec. 1786. Caulfield to Antonelli. ASV, Fondo Missioni 117.

De praestantissimo episcopo Ossoriensi apud nos conclamatum est. Episcopi provinciales aliique quam plurimi, clerus, populusque Dublinensis universus, omnes per totum reghum ipsum iam veluti archiepiscopum Dubliniensem constitutum respiciunt. Faxit Deus, ut communibus votis et religionis vono 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[39].

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-

[39] 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 " [40]. To balance matters, James Butler of Cashel warned Propaganda against putting a regular bishop into Ossory [41]. 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 enemis 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 an faveur des Catholiques, on parlait de les bannir tous du royaume, si dans l'intervalle qu'on delibère 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'allarme 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 suject de l'*Hibernia Dominicana* et son *Supplément* écrits par le Docteur [Thomas] Burke de l'ordre

[40] 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).

[41] 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 ancient couvent de Dominicains situé dans la ville de Kilkenny contre l'avis de Protestants et Catholiques de la ditte ville, et en opposition directe à un acte de Parlement qui défend expressement 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 [42].

Praeiudicia enim et odiosas distinctiones clerum secularem inter et regularem, in hac provincia, aequitate, moderatione et prudentia nostri illustrissimi et reverendissimi Metropolitani 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 visitator 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 [43].

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[42] Ross, 13 April 1789. Caulfield to cardinal Antonelli. APF, SOCG 883, ff. 27, 30.

[43] 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"[44]. 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[45]:

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[46].

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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[44] V. Leahy, The Dominicans of Newbridge, in Newbridge Quarterly (Christmas 1946) 8, quoting almost the full text from the college archives.

[45] 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.

[46] 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 [47].

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 [48]. 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 [49].

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[47] Lisbon, 23 May 1787. To Dr. Troy, congratulating him on his translation to Dublin. DDA 29/7, no. 220.

[48] M. Quane, Aspects of Education in Ireland, 1695-1795, in JCHAS (July-Dec. 1968) 132.

[49] H. Fenning, 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 [50].

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 " [51]. 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

[50] From J. Brady (ed.), Catholics and Catholicism, Maynooth 1965, p. 264.

[51] 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 [52]. 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 [53].

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 [54]. 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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[52] 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) ".

[53] M. Coen, The Wardenship of Galway, Galway 1984, 24. This excellent book has no footnotes. Hib. Dom., 86. AFP 42 (1972) 284-85, 289. 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.

[54] 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 chaple 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 chaple, on pretext of their having no other means of being paid their mortuary dues. Them 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 chaple (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 gett 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 gett 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 [55]. 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,

[55] 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 [56].

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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[56] 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 [57]. 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 [58].

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 [59].

## 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 [60]. The first of these attempts was an edict of 13 May 1771 forbidding religious

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[57] 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.

[58] M. Coen, The Wardenship of Galway, Galway 1984, 31. No source indicated.

[59] 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".

[60] Their names and dates of ordination are in A. M. Bogaerts, De Dominikanen 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 [61]. 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 [62].

DÉCLARATION DE L'EMPEREUR

*Concernant les Récolets & 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 Récolets & 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-

[61] 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. Fenning, The Undoing of the Friars, pp. 311, 358-59, 370-72.

[62] 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 deputé 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 consulteurs, lequel visiteur sera revêtu de toute la jurisdiction du provincial / l'exercera dans l'ordre / selon la marche prescrite par l'édit susmentioné, 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 emploiés de ces maisons pour le terme & intervalle de quattre 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 missionaires & leur rappel pour passer dans les missions à l'effet d'y être emploiés au st. ministère; tout autre pouvoir & jurisdiction 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 opèrera de même à l'égard de la communauté des Dominicains & de celle des Récolets 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'election d'un visiteur de chacune d'elles, auquel toute la communauté sera subordonée comme au supérieur majeur religieux, y faire choix d'un vice visiteur qui sera en même tems consulteur, ce qui devra se renouveller de quatre en quatre années; & y élire le prieur ou gardien & autres emploiés 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 missionaires, 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. *vt.* 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 visitator, a vice-visitator and a prior. For the following four years, the visitator 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 " [63]. As for the Dominicans, all one can say at the moment is that they did have a " visitator general ", Pius Mullanny, in 1788 [64]. 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 [65].

## 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 [66]:

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

[63] A. A. Wijffels, Calendar of Documents relating to St Anthony's College, 1782-85, in Coll. Hib. 24 (1982) 82.

[64] Mullanny to Hyac. Keelty, sending him from Holy Cross to Reims on 10 Apr. 1788. TA, Letters, under date.

[65] Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume, 14976. On 14 folio pages.

[66] 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 [67].

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 [Portugueuse] 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 Sancto 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.

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[67] 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 [68].

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 Melcior Cano quando avrá 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 [69]! 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 "

[68] 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.

[69] 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 [70]. 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 [71]. 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 " [72]. 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;

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[70] Lisbon, 9 May 1788. Michael Daly, rector of St Patrick's college, to Troy. DDA, 117/7, under date.

[71] La Rochelle, 1 and 28 Sept. 1740. Banks to James III. Windsor, Stuart Papers 226, nos. 139, 154.

[72] 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 [73].

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 [74].

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.

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[73] Byrne, 52-57.

[74] 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[75]. 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[76]. 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[77]. 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[78]. 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,

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[75] Both statements seem to depend solely on M. F. Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland, Boston 1888, 183. All one can say is that Fr Sheehy's sister Catherine did in fact marry a Burke.

[76] 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. Flynn, The Dominicans of Rosbercon, Tallaght 1981, 31-32.

[77] The printed texts were recently found by Antonio do Rosario OP at Lisbon, Torre do Tombo, serie Preta, 3562, nos. 44, 66.

[78] 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 [79]. 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 [80].

> 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 [81].

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[79] 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.

[80] Byrne, 58-61, 92-93.

[81] 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 troublemaker 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 [82]. Despite such unpleasant distractions, Bourke's mission flourished [83].

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 [84]. 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 [85]. 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 [86].

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[82] Byrne, 110-11. This document pays touching tribute to O Donel.

[83] The quotation is from R. J. Lahey, as in note 79.

[84] Byrne, 116-17, 122.

[85] 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.

[86] 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 [87].

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 [88].

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 [89]. At Newfoundland his brief career

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[87] R. J. Lahey, as in note 79. Lahey also describes Bourke's later career.

[88] 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 [90].

Lonergan 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 Renews, 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 Lonergan again, in a letter of 10 November 1787, that unfortunate priest was already dead [91].

The apostate Lonergan 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 Lonergan 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 [92].

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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[89] 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.

[90] Byrne, 60, 360.

[91] Byrne, 63-64. Byrne also gives (p. 360) the actual date of death: 25 Oct. 1787.

[92] 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 " [93]. 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 [94].

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 became bishop of Baltimore in 1789 and therefore the first bishop in the United States [95]. In the meanwhile, Congress had sanctioned religious freedom, but

[93] Rome, 16 Jan. 1796. DDA 116/6, no. 116.

[94] Biographical note in T. S. Flynn, The Dominicans of Rosbercon, (Tallaght 1981) 38-39.

[95] 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 [96].

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 " [97]. 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

[96] 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 ".

[97] E. MacLysaght (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 [98]. 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 [99]. 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 [100]. 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 [101].

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 [102]. So it was at " Caizo " (Caiazzo ?) in Naples that he received all sacred orders between 1767 and 1768 [103]. Soon

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[98] W. Harper Bennett, Catholic Footsteps in Old New York, (New York 1909) 378-79.

[99] Simancas, Hacienda, Avisos de la Segretaria de Gracia y Justicia, legajo 19 (1772-89). Reference kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.

[100] AFP 55 (1985) 353.

[101] 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.

[102] Coll. Hib. 14 (1971) 26; 10 (1967) 69. SCAR, no. 55, f. 32.

[103] 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 [104], 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 [105]. 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 [106]. 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 [107]. 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" [108].

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 [109]. This was a delicate and important assignment, for Charles

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[104] AFP 49 (1979) 364.

[105] AFP 49 (1979) 290.

[106] Dublin, Deeds' Office, King's Inns, vol. 376, p. 258, no. 250680. Information kindly supplied by F. J. Litton SSC.

[107] As in tote 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".

[108] V. F. O'Daniel, Dominican Province of St Joseph, (New York 1942) 124.

[109] 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 " [110].

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 " [111]. 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*) [112].

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 [113].

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[110] Guilday, op. cit., 311.
[111] Ibidem, 285.
[112] Philadelphia 1789, 28 pp. There is a copy in APF, SOCG 892, ff. 516-31.
[113] 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[114]. 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"[115]. 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[116].

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[117]. They thus joined the "appellants" whom the other vocals

[114] Cogan, Diocese of Meath, III, 676, though the identification is not certain.

[115] M. V. Ronan, Priests in the Independence Movement, 1796-98, in Irish Eccles. Record (Aug. 1946) 96.

[116] 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.

[117] 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 [118]. 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 [119].

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 visitt 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.

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[118] 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.

[119] 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[120]. 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[121], 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[122]. John Dolphin, to

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[120] AFP 49 (1979) 322-23.

[121] 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. AFP 49 (1979) 286.

[122] 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[123].

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[124]. 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[125].

> 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[126].

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

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[123] AFP 55 (1985) 367-68.
[124] AFP 49 (1979) 351-57.
[125] Undated English original. APF, SOCG 873, ff. 12, 15.
[126] 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 [127]. 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 [128].

While Propaganda Fide was at this time biassed 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 [129].

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[127] On 3 Dec. 1785. Latin original. APF, SC Irlanda 16, f. 167.

[128] APF, SOCG 873, ff. 3-10.

[129] Belanagare, Castlerea, 22 May 1790. O'Connor to cardinal Antonelli. Italian original. APF, SOCG 889, ff. 61-62. The translated text is from H. Fenning, 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 though 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 bovices, 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 [130]. 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

[130] 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[131]. 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 possimus utiles esse. Igitur fratres nostros hortamur in Domino, ut tamquam servi boni et fideles, pro collatis unicuique a Domino talentes 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 Eyers 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[132].

One wonders what a provincial of sixty-seven, taking his part in the ordinary work of a remote country convent, actually contributed to

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[131] Election confirmed on 5 Aug. 1789; S.T.M. conferred on 13 Feb. 1790. AGOP IV. 240, pp. 21-22.

[132] 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[133]. 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 visitator, Patrick Bartly of Esker[134]. 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[135].

There was an unnamed visitator 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[136].

The visitator 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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[133] Thomas Howe and Pat. McArdle in 1790. Howe again and Pat. Rush, prior, in 1792.

[134] Bartly's original sealed appointment is in TA, Coleman letter-book I, 57.

[135] 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.

[136] 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, Corpo Santo, no. 31.

provincial Dalton in 1786[137] 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[138].

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-

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[137] Text on p. 237 supra.

[138] 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 appartment 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 Visitator.

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 [139].

[139] 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 [140]. 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 [141].

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 " [142]. No wonder Nicholas left for the New World, as Edmund Burke too had

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[140] 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.

[141] 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.

[142] 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 " [143]. 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 [144]. Lisbon remembered him well, for even fifty years later one of his successors could write [145]:

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[143] St John's, 13 June 1790. O Donel to Troy. DDA 116/5, no. 21.

[144] 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.

[145] 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[146].

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[147]. Even with this problem out of the way, he still had to settle

[146] Baltimore archives, Case 9[a], G. 2.

[147] 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[148].

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[149], 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 "[150]. 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[151]. 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

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[148] TA, Lisbon 6, pp. 20-21.

[149] Lisbon, 4 Sept. 1789. Nuncio to Carroll. Baltimore archives, Case 8ᵃ, S. 5.

[150] J. G. Shea, History of the Catholic Church in the United States, II (New York 1888) 357.

[151] 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[152]. 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[153].

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[154]. 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

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[152] Lisbon, Corpo Santo, no. 31. The same volume notes stipends given to Keating as alms in May 1790, probably on his departure.

[153] London, 23 July 1790. Spic. Ossor. III (Dublin 1884) 507-08.

[154] 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[155]. 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[156]. 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[157].

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

[155] Baltimore, 24 Aug. 1791. Spic. Ossor. III, 510.

[156] 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 Gazete* on 12 Oct. 1793.

[157] 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[158]. " The bishops ", he wrote:

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[158] 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" [159].

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,

[159] 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 [160].

## 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 ".

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[160] 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 Midleton 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 [161]. In later years, he was to ask permission to say Mass " for those of my family who belong to the Protestant communion " [162]. 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 [163].

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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[161] Hib. Dom., 448, styling him simply " Galfridus " or Geoffrey, most likely a baptismal name.

[162] Louvain, 19 Sept. 1769. Writing as regent to the master general. AGOP XIII. 68095.

[163] 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[164]. 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[165]. 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[166]. 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[167]. 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[168]. 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,

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[164] 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.

[165] AGOP IV. 231, pp. 18, 38, 40, 44; 240, p. 2.

[166] AGOP IV. 240, pp. 3, 6.

[167] AFP 49 (1979) 304-05.

[168] Burke of Ossory claimed that Nugent planned his own election as definitor in 1773, but failed. Op. cit., 305, 327-28, 365.

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[169]. 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[170].

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[171]. 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 Ballycranna 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.

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[169] 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.

[170] Arch. Hib. I (1912) 54. For clergy-lists see J. Wilson, The Clergy of Cloyne Diocese, Cloyne 1959.

[171] 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 [172].

... 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, examinatorem 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

[172] 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 [173]. 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 [174].

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.

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[173] J. A. Dwyer, The Dominicans of Cork, Cork 1896, 47. Lisbon, Corpo Santo, no. 31.

[174] 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 [175].

The lack of documentation for Nugent's provincialate does not

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[175] 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 [176]. 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 inventorium 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 verentur, trepidare debeant ne criminis contra votum paupertatis rei ex hac vita discedant, ac in altera sibimetipsis damnationem aeternam asciscant.

3. Ordinamus ut nullus ex libris bibliothecae conventus in posterum alicui commodatur: cum experientia compertum sit, huiuscemodi 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 significent.

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 mutuum adhibeant concilium, nec aliquis nequidem praelatus in his aggrediendis vel exequendis, posthabitis aliorum consultationibus, suo proprio utatur.

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[176] Cork, 4 July 1795. Original in TA, Sligo records, marked " reg. pagina 21ª 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 cuivis 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[177]. 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[178].

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.

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[177] 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.

[178] 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 [179].

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 [180].

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

[179] Cork, 31 Oct. 1793. APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 123-24.
[180] 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 [181].

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

[181] 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[182].

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[183] ". " 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[184] ".

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[185]. 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[186].

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[182] Cork, 9 Aug. 1794. APF, Fondo di Vienna 28, ff. 162-63. The other papers quoted are on ff. 123-24, 139-40.

[183] Minerva, 27 April 1796. DDA 116/6, no. 117.

[184] 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.

[185] FLK, R. L. Browne notebook, pp. 102-03. Information kindly supplied by A. Faulkner OFM.

[186] 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 Carrol, Father May sailed for America with the Augustinians Michael Ennis and John Rossiter [187].

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 [188].

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.

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[187] Dublin, 18 Oct. 1794. Baltimore, Case 8, M. 1. Guilday, Life of Carroll, 507, note 6, gives the year 1795 for Ennis' departure.

[188] 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[189]. 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[190]. 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 "[191].

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

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[189] P. Ó Móráin, 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.

[190] A. C. Clark, Greenleaf and Law, Washington 1901, p. 93.

[191] Baltimore, Case 8ª, 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[192]:

> 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[193].

Christopher Keating, the only priest at Philadelphia to survive the

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[192] Georgetown, 27 Jan. 1804. Baltimore archives. Reference taken from the notes of Fr O'Daniel OP at Washington.

[193] 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[194].

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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[194] 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[195].

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 "[196].

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 Castletowndelvin in the diocese of Meath on 7 January 1802[197].

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[195] Concanen to Troy. DDA 116/6, no. 116.

[196] Baltimore, 25 May 1796. Carroll to Troy. Spic. Ossor. III, 520-22.

[197] 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 [198]. 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 " [199]. Eventually, in September 1785, the master general told him to return from Italy to Ireland [200].

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 [201].

> 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

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[198] 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.

[199] SCAR, no. 55, f. 40.

[200] AGOP IV. 240, p. 16. " Italy " is not mentioned, but by this date the general did not send anyone home from anywhere else.

[201] 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 [202]. 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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[202] 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 [203]. 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

[203] 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 [204]. 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 [205]. 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 [206].

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[204] 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.

[205] V. F. O'Daniel, in Souvenir of the Golden Jubilee of St Antoninus Parish, Newark N.J., 1875-1925, p. 16.

[206] 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 " [207]. 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 bequeathe to them what little he might leave on his death [208]. 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 [209].

> 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

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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.

[207] O'Daniel, Province of St Joseph, 125-27, on which the rest of this paragraph is based.

[208] APF, Udienze 35 (1796), ff. 341-42. The petition mentions his constant exposure to death from the plague.

[209] Rome, 25 March 1808. DDA 121/7, ff. 361-62. Guilday, 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 [210].

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Patrick Duffy<br>John Kennelly<br>Patrick Rice<br>Peter Crodden | Subdiaconate and priesthood | 1790 |
| 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 [211]. " 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 [515].

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

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[210] A. M. Bogaerts, De Dominikanen in de Wijdingsregisters ... Mechelen, Brussels 1965. H. Fenning, The Undoing of the Friars, 372.

[211] 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 31 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.

[212] 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 [213].

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 [214]. 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 [215].

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

[213] Athy, 10 Feb. 1834. Original in TA, Ryan 5, pp. 117-18.

[214] 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 ".

[215] 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 pludered 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 [216].

## 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

[216] 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 [217].

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 [218].

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[217] 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.

[218] J. Healy, 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 " [219].

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 [220].

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[219] 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.

[220] 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 [221]. 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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[221] 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 [222]. 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 " [223]. 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 [224].

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[222] Undated Italian original. AGOP XIII. 68095. The weary general endorsed the letter: " non si risponde ".

[223] 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 Secretaria de Gracia y Justicia, leg. 20 (1789-99), nos. 25, 40. Information kindly supplied by T. S. Flynn OP.

[224] 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 *cedolas* 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 Killaloe] 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. Quiñones 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$^{do}$* at the low rate of 91 scudi per *luogho* [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 necessaries 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 MacGraith, 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[225]. And yet, in point of fact, only the

[225] 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 [Casanatensian] 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 [226].

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 Barcelona. Between 18 and 20 crowns is the common price for the passage and maintenance. Brother McKey must remain here

[226] 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 [227]. 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 " [228].

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 [229]. 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

[227] AGOP IV. 240, pp. 29, 32.

[228] Lisbon, 4 Dec. 1797. Fran. Levins OP to Troy. DDA 116/7, no. 37.

[229] 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 [230].

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 [231].

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.

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[230] 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.

[231] DDA 117/7, 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 visitator, 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 [232].

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

[232] 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 [233].

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 appartments. 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 corridores 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.

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[233] 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 inseperable from a crowded auditory, expecially 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 [234].

[234] Rome, 20 Jan. 1798. Connolly to Rich. Roche OP of Cork. TA, Letters, under date. The fact that Nugent was a "Louvanist" 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 Mullanny 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 [235]. 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 [236].

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 Quiñones. If he hasn't convened the chapter, it belongs to Prior Gibbons 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

[235] APF, Udienze 36, ff. 428-29.

[236] Rome, 10 June 1797. DDA 116/7, no. 11.

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 [237].

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.

## APPENDIX

### *A List of Dominican Missionaries sent to Ireland by the Masters General* 1785-1798

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 continues an earlier list for the period 1778-1785 published in AFP 55 (1985) 387-88. Whenever possible, some details have been supplied from other sources to indicate a missionary's point of departure or the effectiveness of the assignation he received. Unless otherwise stated, all references are to AGOP IV.

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

[237] 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 series 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.

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.