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The Role and Influence of the Irish Missions of the Society of Jesus on the Implementation of a Counter-Reformation among the Old English in Ireland, 1542-1633

Brian Stewart Jackson

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Dublin, 2007

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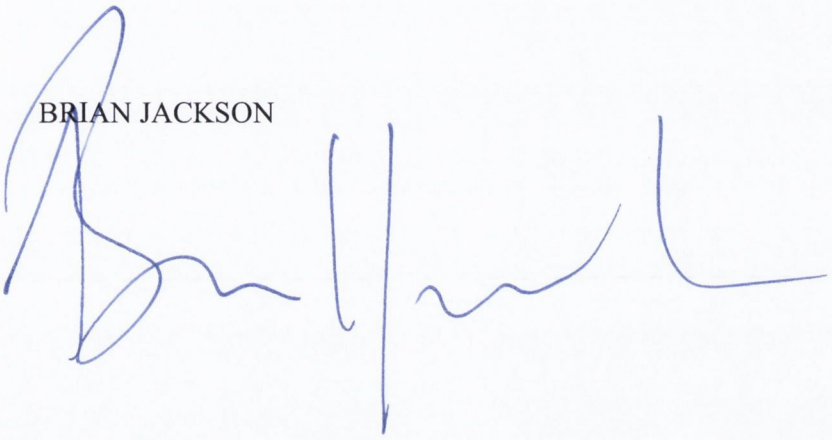

BRIAN JACKSON

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A special debt is due to two people, Professor Aidan Clarke, who set me on course for what has been a rewarding voyage of discovery and to Professor Ciaran Brady whose humour, guidance and intellectual rigour brought the project to safe harbour.

Above all I owe a special thanks to my wife Sally for her patience, endurance, support and practical advice.

SUMMARY

This thesis seeks to present a study of the activity of the Society of Jesus and its engagement with Ireland. The study will look at the period from 1542 when Jesuits first came to Ireland, until 1633, when Wentworth arrived as viceroy. The study seeks to make a contribution to our understanding of the nature of the Counter-Reformation in an Irish context.

The study is organised in three parts. The introduction deals with some broad themes in Counter-Reformation and Jesuit historiography and explores the conjuction of the two terms in historical scholarship. Part One explores the first context for the Counter-Reformation in Ireland, a papal initiative, sponsored by Rome and driven by currents operating within the papal court and the Italian peninsula. Chapter Two examines the first Jesuit intervention in Ireland, the papal mission undertaken by Alphonsus Salmeron and his companions Broet and Zapata who travelled to Ulster 1542. Although this mission was, *prima facie*, a failure, the lessons learned from it were to profoundly influenced future Jesuit strategy towards Ireland. Chapter Three examines the turbulent career of David Wolfe, also sent as a papal emissary to prepare for the reconstruction and reform of the Irish Church in anticipation of a reconciliation of the English state to Rome. But this was a false hope, and Chapter Four examines the consequences for Irish Jesuits and for Irish Catholics, of the excommunication of the Queen which effectively ended any hope of a restoration or of liberty of conscience.

Part Two examines the institutional development of the Society of Jesus. Within the space of a few decades the Jesuits were transformed from a close knit group with a primarily missionary ethos into a teaching order of almost 6,000 members working across Europe. Theses changes in organisational structure, ethos and strategic direction played a significant part in determining the recruitment and training of Irish Jesuits and on the manner in which their activities were managed and funded.

Part Three examines the role that the Jesuits played in the formation of a specific Catholic ethos in Ireland. Chapter Eight examines the process by which the Jesuits built upon the raw foundations of recusancy and crafted an identity for the Old English community which was founded on a functional conjunction of Catholicism and loyalty to the crown. This was quite distinct from the traditional missionary mandate of the colony of the Pale. Chapter Nine examines how the Jesuits fostered a specific devotional regime, how it functioned in a community setting and how this distinctive ethos could provoke unexpected sectarian responses in a uniformly Catholic community.

Together, these elements aim to show that the Counter-Reformation was a complex and subtle phenomenon quite distinct from the persistence of a traditional Catholicism and independent of a failure of Protestant proselytism. Jesuit endeavor represents a very specific and important strand within that movement and it played a significant part in shaping Irish Catholicism

ABBREVIATIONS

The Bibliographical abbreviations used follow the conventions set out in the revised "Rules for contributors" in *Irish Historical Studies,* supp. 1 (1968); in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin and F. J. Byrne, eds., New History of Ireland, iii (Oxford, 1976); and ix (Oxford, 1984), with the following additions:

A.P.F.	Archivio Storico de Propaganda Fide
A.R.S.I.	Archivium Romanum Societatis Iesu
A.S.V.	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
B.A.V.	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
Hogan, *Ib. Ign.*	E. Hogan, *Ibernia Ignatiana* (Dublin, 1880)
I.J.A.	Irish Jesuit Archives
M.H.S.I	*Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*
TNA: P.R.O.	The National Archives of the United Kingdom

INTRODUCTION

What is the Counter-Reformation?

The objective of this thesis is an attempt to make a contribution to our understanding of the history of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland through a study of the missionary activity of the Society of Jesus in Ireland. The history of the Counter-Reformation has been afflicted by layers of conceptual confusion and ambiguity. The term is used, often subconciously and uncritically, as a catch-all to describe developments within the institutional Catholic Church from about 1500 to 1700.

Within the framework of Irish historical writing this confusion and ambiguity is heightened by a tendency towards "exceptionalism". Historians looking at the Counter-Reformation in Ireland have tended to make a number of pre-suppositions. The first of these is that Ireland was a "special" case: as an island, isolated on the western litoral of Europe, its experience of the Counter-Reformation would be "different". This is, in part, bolstered by the notion that the Counter-Reformation "succeeded" in the unique circumstance of an officially non-Catholic state. Paradoxically, this is somewhat contradicted by the assertion that Irish Catholicism had its own rich, "unique", enduring yet fundamentally orthodox popular traditions.[1]

There are strong pedigrees for the notion of exceptionalism, some of them dating from sixteenth and seventeenth century controversial literature. Much of the canon of Irish historical writing about both Reformation and Counter-

1 It would be invidious to single out particular examples in the "exceptional" genre. Perhaps it will suffice at this point to say that John Bossy was probably the first to seriously question the position. J Bossy, 'The Counter-Reformation and the people of catholic Ireland, 1596-1641', *Hist. Studies*, VIII, ed. T. D. Williams, (Dublin, 1971), pp 155-69.

Reformation movements flows directly from a mould fashioned by actors who feature in this story: Henry Fitzsimon, James Ussher, David Rothe, Luke Wadding, Meredith Hamner and John Rider.

There are also threads within the historiography of early modern Ireland that view individual events within the context of a particular view of what the Counter-Reformation meant. For example, there is a strong tradition disposed to view the Kildare rebellion of 1534 as a manifestation of the Counter-Reformation in action in Ireland. Likewise both the Baltinglass revolt of 1579-80 and Hugh O'Neill's career of resistance and withdrawal have been bathed in this sanctifying aura. But this reflects the readiness of historians to accept the claims of the protaganists for legitimation of their actions. These positions do not reflect any attempt to tackle the conceptual, theological and thematic issues implied in the use of the term Counter-Reformation.[2] In one respect, many Irish historians have allowed themselves to become, sub-consciously or otherwise, effective cheer leaders for pre-determined positions. And on close inspection, the representations of Silken Thomas, Baltinglass or O'Neill as Counter-Reformation champions do not bear scrutiny.

These events are not at the heart of the matter. To grasp the essence of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland we need to establish what the Jesuits did and,

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2 J. W. O'Malley, *Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Harvard, 2000) provides a lively introduction to the problem; H. O. Evennett, *The Spirit of The Counter-Reformation,* edited with Postscript by J. Bossy (Cambridge, 1968). Although originally delivered as the Birkbeck lectures at Cambridge in 1951, Evennett's account remains without peer.

equally important, what they believed they were doing. They believed they were doing the Pope's bidding and that their work in Ireland was part of a wider calling to ensure the salvation of God's people through doing good works, living good lives and regularly observing and participating in the sacraments.

This work can be charted through their interventions in Church organisation and politics, their initial work in scoping the condition of the Irish Church and their preparations for a planned reconstruction and reformation of the institutional organisation. It can be traced through their interactions with the laity, their role as teachers of the young and their contribution to the shaping and developing of a particular Irish Catholic ethos through sodalities, preaching and polemical and devotional writing. And in all of this they conducted themselves in similar fashion to their colleagues in much of the rest of Europe. At its heart, the Jesuit mission was about advancing a papalist and universalist view of the Church at the expense of localist exceptionalism.

To place this in its proper context it is helpful to consider the development of the Counter-Reformation and the Society of Jesus as historical phenomena. Both of these are central and their origins, character and purpose have been hotly contested by commentators and historians since their first incarnation.

I

The etymology of the term Counter-Reformation suggests that it gained common currency in the English language during the middle years of the nineteenth

century[3]. This is not a coincidence and is both symptomatic and illustrative of an historiographical tradition which determined the way in which the history of the phenomenon we now know as the Counter-Reformation came to be written.

Linguistically and emotionally, those who first came to write this history were pre-disposed to view the Counter-Reformation as a reactive or responsive phenomenon. This served to obscure the essential long-term, evolutionary adaptation of Catholicism, a process which pre-dated "official" or institutional Protestantism and had its roots in the late fifteenth century devotional efflorescence. This evolution was not without institutional and spiritual tensions and many of these conflicts were often made manifest and played out in individual lives and experiences.

Conceptually, the notion of a Counter-Reformation emerged in the German historical canon in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries where it was used to denote the localised phenomenon of a reversal of Protestant control. Its wider potential as a movement in its own right, and the role played by the Society of Jesus in that grand design, was introduced by Ranke and brought to the early notice of the English speaking world, first by Macaulay[4] and was developed sometime later by Froude[5]. At this point it was a negative idea that

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3 *O.E.D.*

4 T. B. Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays* (Everyman edition) 2 Vols., (London, 1907) Vol. II p 38-72. This essay is a review of Ranke's *Geschichte der Päpste*, the first volume of which appeared in 1834.

5 J. A. Froude, "The Oxford Counter Reformation" in *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, Volume IV (London, 1882) p 231-360; *Lectures on the Council of Trent delivered at Oxford, 1892-3* (London, 1901).

had emerged from Protestant historical minds and was conceptually rooted in that tradition. It is not until the end of the nineteenth century that Pastor[1] gave currency to the notion of a distinct Catholic Reformation, although the periodisation around individual popes and the achievements of their reigns served to concentrate the emphasis of the narrative on defensive or aggressive political stratagems.

The phenomenon we know as the Counter-Reformation took on a greater depth and complexity in the hands, first of Jedin[2], then of Evennett[3] who broadened the parameters of investigation, both of terms and of usage, and thus revealed a process by which the outcomes of the religious regeneration of the later fifteenth century pervaded the evolution of religious and social values and religious behaviour throughout the developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The Counter-Reformation had initially been perceived, intellectually and linguisitically, by eighteenth and nineteenth century commentators as a retrograde institutional reaction to progressive Protestant advances. This is hardly surprising as it was the perspective of a Protestant, Whig or Weberian tradition of scholarship. Those writers, looking at the contemporary conditions of Northern and Southern Europe had formed a clear view as to moral rights and

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1 L. von Pastor, *Geschicthte der Päpste* (Frieburg, 1891): English translation (40 Vols.) (London, 1891-1953).

2 H. Jedin, *Katholische Reformation oder Gegenreformation?* (Luzern, 1946)

3 H. O. Evennett, "The Counter-Reformation" in J Hurstfield (ed.) *The Reformation Crisis* (London, 1965); H. O. Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation*, edited with postscript by J. Bossy (Cambridge, 1968)

wrongs, or at the very least, of winners and losers in the game. The issue of success or failure is also a question that has recently occupied Irish historians. Here too, the variation in the answers has inevitably been contingent upon where the viewers stand, the direction they look and what they think they might see.

From the Catholic perspectives of Jedin and Evennett the Counter-Reformation is revealed as a pilgrimage of inner renewal and of outer adaptation. And this was a long journey: it had commenced at Windesheim in the dying days of the fourteenth century and would only pause for rest in the years after the suppression of Port-Royal.

More recently, A D Wright has dubbed the Counter-Reformation an "Augustinian moment"[4]. This Augustinian moment spanned three centuries. It was characterised by an obsession with individual salvation and the relative efficacy of and relationship between the means of achieving it, grace, justification and predestination. The search for salvation was at the heart of the matter and it had become for many a personal rather than an institutional quest. And that is why the personal pilgrimage of Ignatius Loyola exemplifies (but does not typify) the Counter-Reformation experience.

Of course the phenomenon of the Counter-Reformation was formed, to an extent, by its encounters with institutional Protestantism. In that respect some of its

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4 A. D. Wright, *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World* (London, 1982) p 6. Diarmuid MacCulloch also devotes considerable attention to the rise of neo-Augustinianism, D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490-1700* (London, 2003).

theological positions were overtly denominational or sectarian in that they were defined by what they were not. The Council of Trent had articulated a position on Justification, establishing a balance between faith and works in the scheme of salvation. However, while this served to draw a line in the sand with Lutheran Protestantism, it left a substantial space for discussion within the church. In that sense, Trent failed to silence internal debate. And whilst the conduct of this dialogue reveals a Counter-Reformation that was intellectually rich and vibrant, it also reveals an institution that was increasingly manifesting sectarian or denominational modes of behaviour within its internal organisational development. What began as a discussion on abstruse points of doctrine was to become a bitter dispute over jurisdiction.

The Council of Trent was not a monolithic formulation of doctrine. Ironically it is its ambiguity on many issues rather than the rigour or cohesion of its pronouncements that was its true legacy. Conciliar decree established the principle that the operation of divine grace was not incompatible with free will. However, what remained ambiguous was the question of the degree of help that grace afforded free will.

Essentially the problem was as follows: in the standard Thomistic schema, God bestows efficacious grace in order that the performance of an action obtains (infallibly) man's consent and that the action occurs such that man acts of his own free will. However, the revival of interest in and pervasiveness of St. Augustine's views on free will had served to bring to the fore the issue of how an infallible outcome was reconciled with liberty of action.

The Thomistic formulation held that God was the prime cause and mover and every act of contingent secondary cause emanated from the prime cause. However God also respects free will but because divine influence precedes all actions, in order of causality, it is the pre-motion, or predetermination, of the free act. Furthermore, God infallibly forsees all future acts and therefore efficacious grace works in consensus with the predetermined act.

Obviously this limited the scope of free will and, for commentators who endorsed the principle of active engagement in good works as part of the scheme for salvation, a man's freedom of action in influencing outcomes played a significant role. This principle of active engagement was central to Jesuit ideology and the theologians within the society sought an alternative formulation.

One Jesuit solution to the problem was the notion of mediate knowledge, most fully articulated in the writings of Luis de Molina.[10] In this formulation, God knows in objective reality what a man will do in any situation and therefore bestows the necessary efficacious grace for the action to be taken freely. However, as this notion was interrogated, refined and re-formulated, difficulties arose where the Jesuit schema moved the boundary away from grace and firmly in the direction of free will.

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10 Luis de Molina (1535-1600), Jesuit Theologian and author of *De Liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divinae preascientiae, preadestinatione et reprobatione concordia* (Lisbon, 1588).

Dominican sensibilities were affronted. That order had secured the elevation of St Thomas Aquinas to the status of Doctor of the Church in 1567. The implicit rejection of the Thomistic schema was an apparent slur to the status and reputation of one of their own. Dominican commentators also affected to be appalled (in deference to the Augustinian preoccupations of the time) by the Pelagian overtones of the Jesuit formulation.

In our own more secular age, this argument may seem jejune and obscure. However, it was significant theologically and fundamental in terms of Jesuit relations with other religious orders who adopted a more Thomist or Augustinian line on the issue. These were principally the Dominicans and the Franciscans, numerically the two most significant religious orders in Ireland throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Jesuits, for their part, accused their opponents of adopting an overt Calvinist position.

The debate on the nature and degree of the help afforded by grace rumbled along throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century. It surfaced in a number of incidents, for example, the Jesuit inspired condemnation of Baius[11] and a retaliatory witch hunt for suspect errors in Jesuit student work. What began as a debate on an intellectual point had become a vicious battle ground on which academic careers and reputations were being destroyed and which would ultimately become a struggle for control and jurisdiction over the universities of Europe. In an effort to diffuse this situation, a special congregation "De Auxiliis" was convened in 1598 to determine the issue. It deliberated for nine

11 Michael Baius (1513-1589) was Professor of Theology at Louvain.

years, finally concluding, in 1607, that both the Jesuit and the Dominican positions had validity. However, in 1611, the Holy Office also ordered the suspension of publication of any works on the issue of efficacious grace, a prohibition that remained in force for most of the century. Rather than reach any determination on the issue, the Church sought to sweep it from sight and silence the dispute. But it did not go away. It emerged in other contexts and became enmeshed in other issues of jurisdiction and control, confirming the mainstream credentials of prima facie local disputes.

The Congregation "De Auxiliis" had not endorsed the particular positions of protagonists, but neither had it condemned them. Therefore, successive Jesuit Generals, first Aquaviva, then Vitelleschi, felt at liberty to adopt a modified version of Molina's formulation, refined by Bellarmine and Suarez, on to the Jesuit curriculum. Here it formed an essential element in the training of Jesuit novices and determined the outlook of the products of Jesuit schools.

This notion of an active, mediative grace operating through the sacramental system to achieve individual salvation was central to the Counter-Reformation ethos. Spiritual refinement and the regeneration of self was at the heart of the matter. This is what set Counter-Reformation Catholicism apart from a Medieval system centered upon the corporate mystical body of the church and a notion of sin which was essentially social in its hierarchy and predicated upon communally disruptive transgressions of the spirit: pride, anger, envy and avarice. In this scheme of things the sins of the flesh (lust, gluttony and sloth) were considered offences of subsidiary rank. "Caritas" and a sense of moral

brotherhood that maintained the peace of the parish had been the corporate goal of Medieval Christendom.

A re-ordering of focus and priority towards individual salvation and the achieving of this end is evident in the realignment and personalising of a hierarchy of sin. The seven deadly sins were superseded by the ten commandments.[12] Chastity rather than Charity became the focus of concern. This shift from the social to the individual can be seen in the transformation of aspects of the liturgical calendar and in changes made to the sacramental system and the elements within the liturgical framework of the mass itself.[13]

In the Counter-Reformation scheme of things, the sacramental system offered channels to mediative grace. Central to this was regular reception of the eucharist, which had become the agent for the acquisition of merit, rather than a badge of it. But in order to receive the eucharist regularly, the individual had to be prepared. This meant regular confession. Regular penance required skilled confessors and this emphasis on confession and penance led to the development of a careful, scientific definition of sin and a sophisticated moral theology.

Members of the Society of Jesus were much in demand as confessors: after all the spiritual examination and regeneration of the self was at the heart of Loyola's

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12 J.A.Bossy, "Moral Arithmetic: Seven Sins into Ten Commandments" in E. Leites (ed.), *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1988) pp 214-34. J.A. Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985) pp 35-42 offers a more general context.
13 J.A. Bossy, "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700" *Past & Present* 100 (1983) pp 29-61.

legacy. But this was not a passive, contemplative or cloistered pursuit. Loyola's pilgrimage took him out of his retreat at Manresa on a journey to Paris, where he gathered his first disciples around him.

The Jesuit mission was one of active engagement with the wider world and this was the overriding raison d'être of the Society and of its subjects. Jesuit training paid great attention to issues of moral theology and the scientific dissection of cases of conscience. This was a key instrument in instilling a broad culture of spiritual regeneration. In this they were aided by the doctrine of probabilism which allows that where there is a question solely of the lawfulness or otherwise of an action, it is permissible to follow a solidly probable opinion in favour of liberty, even where the opposing view holds a more likely outcome.

For some, Jesuit moral theology confirmed the reputation of the Society for a pragmatic and rational approach to the human condition. However, in other circles it only served to fuel the growing myth of intellectual duplicity and sophism.[14] This confluence of reputation and a sacramental regime tied to a particular notion of salvific activism meant that Jesuit confessors and Jesuit confraternities were hugely popular, with the laity at any rate. As far as other religious orders were concerned, this popularity served to create contexts in which other issues of contention emerged around matters of jurisdiction,

[14] As a manifesto for confessors it brings to mind Macaulay's quip that people "found in the Jesuit an easy well-bred man of the world, who knew how to make allowance for the little irregularities of people of fashion", Review essay on Ranke's *The Ecclesiastical and Political History of the Popes of Rome* in T. B. Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays* (New York, 1907) Vol. 2 p 52.

traditional rights and benefits, and in the particular circumstances of the Irish Church, unwelcome competition for income and for patronage.

II

The theme of Jesuit sophistry has occupied a significant place in the the popular imagination and in the literary canon for most of the Society's existence.[15] The theme also has a distinct place in a wider historiographical tradition that is as varied and nuanced as that surrounding the notion of a Counter-Reformation.

One element of the historiographical canon are those works produced from within the Society of Jesus itself. There are many of these: Carlos Somervogel's edition of Augustin and Alois de Baker's *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus,* a bibliography of writings by members of the Society from its foundation up to its suppression in 1773, runs to 11 volumes and contains over 10,000 bibliographical entries of writings by Jesuits.[16] These works include histories of the Society and accounts of members' activities. This historigraphical tradition dates back to the earliest years of the Society when Juan de Polanco and Pedro de Ribadeneira produced the first of many Jesuit histories of the Society and lives of

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[15] P. Burke, "The Black Legend of the Jesuits: An essay in the History of Social Stereotypes" in S. Ditchfield (ed.), *Christianity and Community in the West: essays for John Bossy* (Aldershot, 2001) p 165-182.

16 C. Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus,* 11 Vols. (Brussels and Paris, 1895-1930).

members of the founding circle.[17] These works, and those by writers with a Jesuit pedigree, tend to an unapologetically sympathetic view of the Society and the activities and motivations of its subjects.

This could not be said of the other pervasive tradition of historical writing. This genre portrays members of the Society as fanatical, sinister, manipulative and regressive. The Jesuits of this tradition are stormtroopers in Roman collars. They pursue winding, devious political and intellectual paths to achieve a spiritual end. This tradition tends to place the activity of the Society within an overtly political or narrow national context and the result can obfuscate rather than clarify events.

This second strand is illustrative of a rich linguistic tradition that has, in part, determined the direction of much contemporary historical perception and investigation of the Society produced outside the order. This linguistic richness is not peculiar to an English language or even a Protestant cultural ethos. It has parallels within the romance linguistic tradition and is apparent across a variety of languages, reflecting the historical range and scope of the Society's activities, the pervasive tradition of anti-clericalism in European culture and the rivalry and hostility of competing religious providers within the Catholic tradition.[18]

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17 J. de Polanco, *Chronicon Breve* (Rome, 1549), J. de Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Laiolae* 2 Vols. (Rome, 1550-1552) P. de Ribadeneyra, *Vida del P M Ignacio de Loyola* (Madrid, 1594), P. de Ribadeneryra, *Vida del P M Diego Laynez* (Madrid, 1594),

18 The Latin form "Jesuita" first appears in late fifteenth century texts indicating a good Christian or a follower of Jesus. However, "Jesuita" was soon used to denote a hypocrite. Even before the foundation of the Society its very name had attracted a mystique, J. O'Malley, "The

In the English language, the noun *"Jesuit"* has a number of meanings[19]. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the principal meaning is *"A member of the Society of Jesus"*. However, its subsidiary meaning *"A dissembling person; a prevaricator"* has become inextricably linked in popular parlance as a necessary qualification of the first definition rather than separate from it. Indeed, both meanings are conflated in the adjective *"jesuitical"*[20], defined as *"having the character ascribed to the Jesuits; deceitful, dissembling, practising equivocation, prevarication or mental reservation of truth, often used in the sense of "hair-splitting", keenly analytical"*. And in context, it seems clear that this final characteristic is not viewed as a positive trait.

What is interesting is the sequencing of citations given for the earliest usage of these definitions. While the use of the word "Jesuit" to denote a member of the Society is firmly rooted in the sixteenth century, the widespread use to denote dissembler has a more recent pedigree. This use achieved general currency during the nineteenth century and parallelled the general currency of Counter-Reformation as a term with retrogressive, repressive and negative associations.

The conceptual conjunction of these two terms "Counter-Reformation" and "Jesuit" in the work of H Outram Evennett introduced a different perspective. That which had hitherto a largely negative general currency was revealed as

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Society of Jesus" in R. Po-chai Hsai (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World* (Oxford, 2004) p 223.

19 *O.E.D.*

20 Ibid.

more complex and nuanced, no more so than at those points where they were co-joined. For Evennett, Counter-Reformation Catholicism was the product of a profound shift away from the mysticism of the corporate body of the church. In its essence, it was a faith of individual asceticism: sacramental in focus and practice, Christo-centric in devotion, demanding of self discipline, humanistic in its emphasis on individual good works and apostolate in its active rejection of cloistered contemplation. And this was the essence of the Society of Jesus itself.[21]

A loss of confidence in the traditional clerical caste characterised many late medieval religious initiatives, many of which enjoyed the active participation of the laity. This found expression in a desire for an active yet ordered religious life. In this respect, Savonarola might be seen as a precursor of Loyola. But the personal interior journey, coupled with the call to action, struck a deep chord and impelled young men to abandon conventional careers and to follow the distinquished example set by Ignatius and his companions. It was this sense of excitement that brought the earliest native Irish men to join the Society.

It was this same distinction that aroused the deep suspicion of other, established religious orders. Their unease was further provoked by the Society's (largely) self appointed status as foot soldiers of the papacy. Military metaphor and association have been commonly invoked by commentators and detractors of the Jesuit "cult" of papal obedience. But military metaphor played little part in the deliberations of Ignatius and his original companions. The common analogy

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21 H. O. Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation* (Cambridge, 1968) p 41.

drawn by Jesuit subjects and commentators was of a commercial company of merchants or guild engaged in an enterprise and the style of dress adopted reflected their active engagment with the world[22].

The style and title General was short hand for *Praepositus Generalis*, (literally the leader, the person placed in front, commonly used to denote a Provost or Abbot within the church). It was used to distinguish the office holder from the growing ranks of lesser Praepositi or leaders within the Society.

The tension inherent in the Jesuit structure of hierarchical subordination and authority was evident from the beginning, with Ignatius himself urging his subjects that sometimes it was necessary to forget about the rules and to exercise prudence and judgement themselves. From a practical perspective, when communication from the centre by letter could take months, indecisiveness or unwillingness to exercise initiative were not welcome. For example, letters to and from Ireland to provincial superiors or to the General in Rome typically took three or four months, often longer, to arrive. As the organisation grew and developed, Loyola's successors regularly complained that their subjects were prone to insubordination and were inclined to meddle in local issues. This was in part due to slow communications. But it was also due to an impulse from the centre, particularly under Mercurian and Aquaviva, who sought to manage closely the activity of members of the Society. There were instances where Jesuits in Ireland simply ignored unwelcome instructions from Rome. But the central objective of Jesuit activity, in Ireland as elsewhere, was to pursue the

22 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 2.

missionary enterprise and to achieve the spiritual renewal of all God's people through the inculturation of the core values of the Society among the general population. To do this they used their schools, their sodalities, preaching, writing and the influence they might exert upon their social peers.

Jesuit life was characterised by an active engagement with the world and with good works. This is reflected in the position that the theologians of the Society formulated on the nature of grace and its relationship with free will. This formulation was adopted as a core element in the curriculum of Jesuit colleges and seminaries. It is fundamental to our understanding of the nuanced diversity and underlying tensions within the Counter-Reformation church. Their opinions on the operation of grace, essentially the means of salvation, dramatically impinged on relations between the Jesuits, their congregations and confraternities and the religious of the established and numerically superior orders of Dominicans and Franciscans in Ireland and across Europe.

III

Much of the tradition of historical writing surrounding the Counter-Reformation and the Society of Jesus has looked at these phenomena in discrete national settings which appear to offer a manageable conceptual context. However, there is always a risk that too much attention to local circumstance and the burden of local history may obfuscate motivation. What appears to have been going on is, as often as not, something else entirely.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the history of the Irish mission of the Society of Jesus and its role and influence upon the implementation of a Counter-Reformation in Ireland during the period from 1542-1633. I am not a member of the Society, nor a product of its schools. This study will not sit within the "Jesuit" historiographical tradition described above. Nor is it my intention that it should sit within the second, hostile, genre. Rather, it is my objective to take the history of the Society in Ireland out of these conventional frameworks and to distance it from the intellectual strait jacket of Irish exceptionalism and from received notions of the "special", "different" or "unique" nature of Irish Catholicism. I would seek to frame the Irish mission in an unapologetically mainstream setting, at that point where "Counter-Reformation" and "Jesuit" are co-joined. By setting the history of the Irish Jesuit mission in its wider context, within the wider framework of the "Augustinian moment", a number of issues become apparent and take prominence. And these are essentially the issues of central importance to understanding the Counter-Reformation: the struggle to achieve liturgical uniformity, regular and widespread participation in the sacramental system, widespread and regulated confraternity devotion and a functioning diocesan regime, adequately resourced with seminaries, staffed by clergy who had received a standard of training and led by an episcopate that was Roman and papal rather than local or regular in its outlook and loyalties. These are the true benchmarks of success or failure of the enterprise. To focus on whether or not the population of Ireland were inclined to become Protestant or predisposed to retain a residual and emotional loyalty to an "old" religious tradition is to miss the point.

There is an extant tradition of writing about the Jesuits in Ireland. This tradition has been well served by the Irish Jesuit province. The most notable contributions have been made by Edmund Hogan S.J., James Corboy S.J., Thomas Morrissey S.J., Fergus O'Donoghue S.J. and most recently by Thomas McCoog S.J., archivist of the English province of the Society.[23]

Hogan's major contribution was to present extracts of original documents and texts illustrative of the history of the Society and the activity of its members in Ireland, and of its Irish members elsewhere. In this respect he is part of a wider historiographical tradition exemplified by Theiner.[24] But he is also an early representative of the "Faith and Fatherland" tradition of Irish historigraphy, casting his material in the context of a righteous struggle to nationhood in the face of alien, Protestant intrusion. Corboy, Morrissey and O'Donoghue, to varying degrees, all stand on Hogan's shoulders. McCoog presents the Jesuit story in a different context, that of "Three Kingdoms". McCoog has done a great deal to advance the current state of scholarship on the Society of Jesus in early modern Britain. His approach draws on a wide range of scholarship and historical method and the result is sophisticated, intelligent and challenging. However it is still rooted firmly within in a geo-political context. The result is,

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23 A selection of Jesuit writings about the history of the Society in Ireland includes, Hogan, *Ib. Ign.*; E. Hogan, *Distinguished Irishmen of the Sixteenth Century.* (London, 1894); J. J. Corboy, "The Jesuit Mission to Ireland, 1596-1626" unpublished M.A. Thesis: University College Dublin, 1941; T. J. Morrissey, *James Archer of Kilkenney: An Elizabethan Jesuit* (Dublin, 1979); F. O'Donoghue, "The Jesuit Mission in Ireland 1598-1651" unpublished Ph.D. thesis: The Catholic University of America, 1981; and T. M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588 "Our Way of Proceeding?"* (Leiden, 1996).

24 Theiner, *Vetera Mon.*

in its own way, as unsatisfying as the "Faith and Fatherland" approach. And this is because the Jesuit project was extra-territorial. The goal was primarily focused on spiritual renewal through an active campaign to achieve the salvation of God's people. To view the project through the prism of a national journey to self-determination or the micro politics of the archipelago is to obscure its wider salvific context.

The Jesuit presence in Ireland was small. For much of the sixteenth century it was, despite government claims to the contrary, non-existent. Even during the relatively peaceful and prosperous years of the 1620s and 30s, Jesuit numbers in Ireland never rose above forty. By comparison with the secular clergy, the Franciscans or the Dominicans, they were insignificant in number. But that is neither an adequate or an appropriate measure of the important role the Society played in the development of the Catholic church in Ireland or its influence upon the course of the Irish Counter-Reformation. The true essence of the Counter-Reformation was not a matter of numbers, nor was it a matter of official "confessionalisation". A recent assessment of the Church in Spain concludes that there was an unwillingness or a failure to embrace the Counter-Reformation there.[25] So to ask questions as to numerical strength or public ritual performance is to underestimate the nature of the phenomenon which cannot be satisfactorily addressed in exclusively quantitative or formal behavioural contexts. The appropriate measure must be the manner in which fundamental cultural change was initiated, implemented, nurtured and sustained. And one measure of this

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25 A. D. Wright, *Catholicism and Spanish Society under the Reign of Philip II, 1555-1598 and Philip III 1598-1621* (Lampeter, 1991).

change was the development of a distinctive and coherent Irish Catholic sensibility.

The "Institute" of the Society of Jesus, the way members of the Society lived and worked, was set out in the *Consitutions* and congregational decrees. This was regarded as the concrete implementation of the Ignatian principles set out in the *Spiritual Exercises.* And this was the Jesuit "way of proceeding". They would bring this experience to bear in Ireland and would follow a very specific path. Their focus on this "way of proceeding", their spiritual programme and the degree of influence that they brought to bear on the course of a Counter-Reformation in Ireland will be the subject of the following chapters. The first two parts of this thesis approach the history of the institution of the mission. These look at its strategic direction and intent, structure, organisation, funding, the nature of recruitment, training and the character of its personnel from a largely chronological perspective. Building upon this structural framework, Part III will explore several broad themes. This section will examine the Jesuit contribution to the development of a Counter-Reformation in Ireland and the fashioning of a new historical tradition and an identity for Catholicism. It will also examine the role of Confraternity organisation, devotional reform and liturgical practice in the dissemination of a distinctive form of spiritual regeneration and Catholic sensibility in Ireland.

This is not, nor is it intended to be, a traditional narrative history of the Society in Ireland. The reasons for this are twofold. First, the organisation of the Society and the activities of Irishmen who belonged to it during the period with

which this study concerns itself extended throughout Europe. An exercise in narrative history would, of necessity, have to address itself to the affairs of the Society in practically every country in Europe throughout the ninety odd years or so covered in this study and this could yield an unsatisfactory, even incomprehensible result. It is therefore very much a study of the Jesuits in Ireland rather than of Irish men in the Society of Jesus.

The generally accepted view of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland sees that movement as developing toward the end of the Sixteenth century. This outlook accepts the establishment of a Jesuit missionary enterprise under the superiorship of Christopher Holywood and the emergence of the Society as a major force in the reform of the Irish church as the significant factors in the movement.[26] Although this interpretation has much to recommend it, the underlying assumption seems to be that there was no development of any significance within the Catholic community prior to the arrival of Jesuit priests at the end of the 1590s.

And this was not the case. The efforts of the earliest Jesuit interventions, first under Salmeron and Broet, and later under David Wolfe and his associates, had a significant effect on the formulation of papal policy toward Ireland and the reform of the church there. The experience of these interventions also had a major influence on the shaping of Jesuit strategy for the future and determined the nature of the seventeenth century mission. The mechanics of recruitment and

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26 J. Bossy, 'The Counter-Reformation and the people of catholic Ireland, 1596-1641'. In *Hist. Studies*, VIII, ed. T. D. Williams, (Dublin, 1971), 155-69.

of financing are explored in the second part of this study. This part of the Jesuit story might lack glamour or heroism but it had a very profound effect on the development of the Society in Ireland, and determined its ultimate reach and influence.

And in all of this the reach of the Jesuits was far greater than the modest numbers would suggest it ought to be. This was achieved by means of the provision of education, by the promotion of a popular and accessible devotional regime, and by close alignment to and collaboration with episcopal authority. In this respect the Society of Jesus are truly representative of the spirit of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland.

PART I

The Counter Reformation as Papal Project: 1542-1598

CHAPTER ONE

"Spirituali" or *"intransigenti"*?: the Counter-Reformation as papal project

The Counter-Reformation has been characterised by a re-assertion of papal control over the institutions of the church. This is certainly a feature of the period, but the control exerted by the institution obscures the role of individual peculiarities and enthusiasms in determining the twisting narrative of events. Successive popes and their advisers implemented policy, pursued new initiatives and settled old scores. And as they did this, they displayed a diversity of approach, of opinion and, at times, individualism that bordered on capriciousness.

When Henry VIII first sought an annulment of his marriage from Katherine of Aragon the request was seriously considered, and a document granting the request was prepared. However, after the sack of Rome by the Imperial army in 1527, Pope Clement was the prisoner of Charles V, Katherine's nephew. Rome was forced to play for time and ultimately to refuse Henry's request. Undaunted, the King turned to the Church of England to be the chosen instrument of his will. Not even the threat of papal interdict would deter him from his course and so Clement was forced to excommunicate the King. His successor, Paul III repeated the sentence, twice, in 1535 and again in 1538. But it had no effect, short of entrenching the king in the position he had adopted and demonstrating the practical constraints on papal authority. With hindsight, it is surprising that this strategy would also be employed against Elizabeth some forty years later.

But here, the long perspective of history obscures from us what was apparent to Pius V; providence had already intervened to restore official Catholicism.[1]

Alessandro Farnese (Paul III), who succeeded Guilio de' Medici (Clement VII) as Pope, was a Roman aristocrat and diplomat whose career had not suffered from his sister's liaison with Roderigo Borgia (Alexander VI). His reign has been characterised by his lavish entertainment of family, court and the people of Rome. Yet it was he who overcame opposition, gave the drive for internal reform of the Church impetus and support and convened an ecumenical council at Trent. Paul III also promoted the careers of a number of significant, yet very different, figures within the church. These included humanist intellectuals like Contarini, Pole, Giberti and Sadoleto, dubbed "spirituali", as well as more ideologically austere characters such as Giampietro Caraffa (Paul IV), Marcello Cervini (Marcellus II) and Michele Ghislieri (Pius V), sometimes known collectively as the "intransigenti". And the course of Paul's papacy has been characterized as a battle ground between these two different outlooks, one that sought conciliation with Protestants and their views on justification and salvation through good works and another that would prefer to hunt them down and eliminate them.

For Italian historians in particular, this struggle has been seen as central to understanding the essence of the Counter-Reformation church. In this narrative

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1 The lessons of the cases of Henry and Elizabeth were apparent to Urban VIII who refused to excommunicate Louis XIII and Richelieu, citing the damaging futility of the English cases. L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* Vol. XVIII (London, 1929) p 223.

there are a number of key events. The first sequence of events occurred during the year 1542. Talks at Regensburg collapsed and Contarini, the figurehead of the "spirituali" died. Some of his disciples, notably Ochino and Vermigli renounced Catholicism and fled north. Although Pole, another significant figure in this group, had been appointed Papal Legate to the Council of Trent in October 1542, the establishment of the Society of Jesus and the setting up of the Roman Inquisition under Caraffa are accepted as the key indicators of the direction that Papal policy was taking.

For some Italian historians, and Delio Cantimori in particular, 1542 was the critical watershed date in the war for control of the Church[2]. That war continued to be fought openly and bitterly at a succession of papal conclaves. Paul III had expanded the College of Cardinals. The conclave following his death in November 1549 was one of the longest and most contentious of all papal elections, characterized by intense external maneuvering on behalf of the French and the Imperial camps. Reginald Pole emerged as an early frontrunner, supported by the Emperor but his candidacy failed to gain sufficient momentum. Following an attack on his character and his orthodoxy by Guise, Pole was no

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[2] D. Cantimori, "The Problem of Heresy: The History of the Reformation and of the Italian Heresies and the History of Religious Life in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century- The Relation Between Two Kinds of Research" and "Submission and Conformity: 'Nicodemism' and the Expectations of a Conciliar Solution to the Religious Question" in E. Cochrane (ed.), *The Late Italian Renaissance 1525-1630* (New York, 1970) pp 211-225 and 244-265. A. J. Schutte, 'Periodisation of Sixteenth-Century Italian Religious History: The Post-Cantimori Paradigm Shift' *Jn. Mod. Hist.* Vol. 61(2) (1989) pp 269-284.

longer a credible candidate. The conclave decided on a compromise, the worldly but unremarkable del Monte, who took the name Julius III.[3]

The first conclave of 1555 followed a similar pattern to that of 1549. The election of an early frontrunner, the preferred candidate of the French, was blocked in favour of the compromise candidate, Cervini. But Cervini survived for only a few months as Marcellus II. Pole was absent from both of the conclaves in 1555 and this worked in favour of Caraffa. Although feared by many, Caraffa was not identified with any political group or family faction and he was elected on 23 May 1555.

By the time of the election of Paul IV, the "spirituali" had been decisively routed and the character of the Counter-Reformation church was determined.[4] According to this account, 1555 marked the triumph and consolidation of the primacy of a particular view of the church.[5] Apart from the brief rehabilitation of Morone under Pius IV, this was to remain the dominant ideology of the Counter-Reformation. This situation was consolidated under Michele Ghislieri

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[3] Pastor's *History of the Popes* remains the best account of the maneuverings around the various conclaves.

[4] P. Murphy, "Between *Spirituali* and *Intransigenti*: Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga and Patrician Reform in Sixteenth Century Italy" *Cath. Hist. Rev.* Vol. 88 (2002) pp 446-469 gives an impression of the practical consequences of this struggle in the case of Gonzaga and members of his household and circle.

5 See J. W. O'Malley, *Trent And All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Harvard, 2000) pp 78-91, P. Simoncelli, *Il Caso Reginal Pole: Eresia e Santità Nelle Polemiche Religiose del Cinquecento* (Rome, 1977), S. Zoli, *La Controriforma* (Florence, 1979), P. Prodi, *The Papal Prince: One Body and Two Souls, The Papal Monarchy in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987).

when the reformist impulses inspired by Pole, Morone and their circle were finally suppressed.

At first glance there is a certain concurrence of events in Italy and events in Ireland. The first apostolic legation to Ireland, staffed by Jesuits, was sent out by Paul III in 1542. The next intervention occurs in 1560 during the brief "thaw" under Pius IV. David Wolfe, the first Irish born Jesuit to work in Ireland, did so as an apostolic legate. But this apostolic authority was not extended into the next reign. Papal enthusiasm for Ireland under Pius V and his immediate successors was more inclined to military projects (however far fetched) and it was not until the election as Pope of the pragmatic Ippolito Aldobrandini (Clement VIII) in 1592 that another Jesuit missionary venture was considered feasible. But it would be stretching a point to place the Jesuit mission as the initiative of the "spirituali" camp, not least because the sequence of Jesuit activity in England continued throughout the 1580s and 1590s. The focus on Ireland was an issue of priority.

The view of the dominant strand within the Counter-Reformation as a fundamentally repressive phenomenon was informed by a strong anti-clerical streak within an Italian intellectual community moving out of the long shadow of Mussolini. In spite of the best efforts of a number of Hispano-phobe popes, notably Caraffa, Peretti (Sixtus V) and Barberini (Urban VIII), Spain's "benevolent hegemony" over Rome also determined the character of and

direction in which the Counter-Reformation developed.[6] And this gets to the heart of the matter. A D Wright's most recent assessment of the Counter-Reformation in Spain concluded that the movement was a failure there.[7] Reforming initiative was suppressed and control and constraint was institutionalised. In Spain this resulted in royal rather than papal control of the church. Within the Papal States it resulted in the bureaucratisation of the machinery of Church government. This made the running of the Papal States more effective. But the initiative for spiritual reform and renewal was coming from elsewhere, from bishops working on the ground, such as Carlo Borromeo in Milan, or from missionaries working in different, often difficult, circumstances that freed them from the constraints of official Catholicism.

But the initiators of spiritual reform could also be agents of the intransigent tendency. The machinations surrounding the conclave following the death of Pius IV in 1565 worked against the last remnants of the "spirituali". Morone was initially championed as a candidate by Carlo Borromeo. But the taint of heresy and the implacable opposition of Ghisleri cast a long shadow. To avoid a protracted conclave and to conclude the election before the arrival of the French representatives, Borromeo dumped his candidate in favor of Ghisleri. And in so doing he determined the essence and the future course of the Counter-Reformation church as an institution.

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[6] T. J. Daudelet, *Spanish Rome 1500-1700* (New Haven, 2001) p 215.

[7] A. D. Wright, *Catholicism and Spanish Society under the Reign of Philip II, 1555-1598 and Philip III 1598-1621* (Lampeter, 1991).

And yet, there may be something of the "badly put question" about this analysis of events. Although the struggle between the two factions within the church is an important element in determining the flavour of Counter-Reformation Catholicism, both strands shared many characteristics. Both were united in a determinedly Papalist view of church government. Representatives of each side worked together to reform administrative abuses, to improve clerical discipline, to streamline and systematise the running of the Papal States and to improve the administration of individual diocese by resident bishops. In Italy, this process of state building transformed the institution of the papacy. It was no longer conceivable in medieval terms. The concentration of spiritual authority in the person of the pope post-Trent accelerated the accretion of sovereign power and the fusion of both aspects of the papal persona and provided a proto-type for the absolutist state. But it also provided a template for episcopal reorganisation of diocesan administration.[8]

For many of the bishops and for the established religious orders the concentration of power and authority at the centre was not universally welcomed. But, prima facie, the Society of Jesus was purpose-built to serve and support a system focused on the person of the pontiff. The *compañia* or *congregación* as Ignatius and his subjects had designated it, was conceived as a structure of super- and sub-ordination. It was organised unlike any other religious community.

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8 P. Prodi, *The Papal Prince. One body and two souls: the papal monarchy in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1982); "The Application of the Tridentine Decrees: The Organization of the Diocese of Bologna During the Episcopate of Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti" in E. Cochrane (ed.), *The Late Italian Renaissance 1525-1640* (New York, 1970) pp 226-243.

Authority was concentrated through a strict hierarchy in one Superior General who, in turn, owed absolute obedience to the Pope.

The traditional religious orders adhered to the "conciliar" values of confederation, localised autonomy, general assembly, delegated, elected and rotated office holders. By contrast, the Jesuits espoused a monarchial principle which reflected their support for the concept of a divinely ordained papal monarchy.

Although much has been made of the Jesuit adherence to obedience and authority, intellectually they sought to contain any further proliferation of the notion of divinely pre-ordained structures within the church because they wanted to preserve scope for action and initiative. Diego Lainez, who would succeed Borgia as the third general of the Society, served as a papal theologian at Trent and argued vigorously for the subordination of bishops to the papacy. Similarly, Alphonso Salmeron, one of Loyola's original companions, and one of the first Jesuit missionaries in Ireland, also argued vigorously in favour of a system of papal monarchy at the expense of the episcopate.[9]

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9 H. Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State c 1540-1650* (Cambridge, 2004) p 39. Salmeron provides an interesting account of the management of proceedings at the working sessions of Council of Trent. In a letter to Loyola he sets out the daily routine for Council business. First, Salmeron as a Council theologian would explain the "text book" position on a particular point of doctrine to the delegates. Contributions from the floor would follow and finally, another Council theologian would sum up by refuting some of the "less correct" opinions advanced by the assembled bishops. Salmeron did not have a high opinion of the theological competence of some of the participants at the council. L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* Vol. XII (London, 1912) p 81.

The defence of absolutism may be an apparent contradiction of the desire to preserve initiative. However, in championing papal monarchy, Lainez, Salmeron and their colleagues and successors, were implicitly undermining the notion of any divinely ordained intermediate hierarchy with layers of episcopal and metropolitan jurisdictions impeding the missionary imperative of the church. Similarly, they rejected the notion of an implied gradation or a pre-ordained hierarchy of orders, which valued contemplative, enclosed and mendicant communities over active engagement in the community. For the Society, the Church was in a state of mission, and the purpose of that mission was the inculturation of the spirit of the Counter-Reformation.

The object of Jesuit activity was to pursue the missionary enterprise of a world-church led by one papal monarch. In Ireland, the emergence of this Papalist Counter-Reformation is apparent from Jesuit interventions. The first mission of the Society to Ireland, in the spring of 1542, was technically a mission carried out by Papal legates who happened to be Jesuits. Their brief was essentially to establish the true state of the Irish church on the ground and to assess what needed to be done to implement reform, in both spiritual and structural domains.

The second intervention, the mission of David Wolfe and his companions, was also a Papal legation. Wolfe was appointed as an Apostolic Nuncio. Both of these missions had been endowed with specific and far-reaching faculties that gave the legates, in theory at any rate, extraordinary jurisdiction over the Irish church and its personnel. This suggests a number of possibilities. The first is that Rome had no idea of what was going on in Ireland and, in order to cover the

ground, issued general purpose faculties to the nuncios to deal with all and every eventuality. This is possible, but it is not probable. The volume of day to day correspondence that flowed from Ireland into the Papal Chancery throughout the first decades of the sixteenth century indicates that Papal officials would have had a reasonable grasp of what was happening, in general terms, within the Irish Church (and what might be done to remedy it should an opportunity present itself).

The general picture that emerges from the petitions that found their way to Rome was of a local clergy and laity prone to litigiousness and adept, if necessary, at sidestepping the local bishop. The sheer volume of business from Ireland (which in terms of clerical personnel and population is out of all proportion to the volume of business from the Scottish or English Churches in the same period) meant that Rome did have some sense of what was going on in Ireland.[10]

The problems were similar to those alluded to by Salmeron and identified by Wolfe. Apart from the usual difficulties encountered in the regulation (or more precisely the unraveling) of unsatisfactory marriages, most of the issues encountered were to do with clerical property and the regulation of an appropriately qualified, continent clergy. These were staple fare for the papal chancery in the early decades of the century and similar cases occupy the bulk of

[10] For example, in the period 1513-1521, almost twenty percent of material calendared (a total of 1,530 items) related to the Irish church, A. P. Fuller (ed.), *Calendar of Papal Letters relating to Great Britain and Ireland Volume XX 1513-1521* (Dublin, 2005).

Pole's legatine register (again the material for Ireland is disproportionately high).[11]

The defence of papal prerogative of appointment to diocese (and therefore to individual livings) was also a significant issue for Wolfe. This brought him into direct conflict with Shane O'Neill: at Shane's behest, a smear campaign was mounted in Rome by Miler McGrath (who was at that point on the O'Neill payroll).[12] Salmeron had not remained in Ulster long enough to grasp the O'Neill view of the church. This was not, in its essence, very different from that of Philip II. Neither was in keeping with the spirit of the Counter-Reformation.

Salmeron and Broet were compelled to abandon their undertaking. Wolfe, with the advantage of local knowledge and connection, set about his task, establishing capacity, assessing strengths and weaknesses and planning for the day that the inevitable reconciliation between the Crown and the Papacy would permit him to implement his commission. But Wolfe's status as an Apostolic Nuncio was extinguished on the death of Pius IV and the next pope, Pius V, changed utterly the basis of any relationship between the Catholic Church, its personnel and the Crown.

Encouraged by a clique of exiles (including Thomas Goldwell, the Marian Bishop of St Asaph's and a close confidant of Pole) he declared Elizabeth heretic, her supporters excommunicate and her crown forfeit. A missionary

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[11] T. F. Mayer, *Reginald Pole: Prince & Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000) p 268-272.

[12] A.S.V. Arch Arm XI Vol. 91 f 357.

strategy that had been predicated on the premise of rapprochement and restoration was thrown into chaos. Recusants, who had hitherto been tolerated under an effective "don't ask don't tell" policy, came under increasing pressure to declare for the Queen. The prevailing atmosphere was increasingly oppressive and hysterical, as the new dispensation under Cecil rendered priests traitors and provided a convenient pretext for persecution. In Ireland, this persecution was sporadic and so random but also apparently vindictive in its application. And this, probably more than the work of any priest, had a significant role to play in the development of the character of Irish Catholicism.

CHAPTER TWO

The Advent of Papalism: the mission of 1542

The first Jesuit intervention into England has always been regarded as a moment of pivotal significance in the course of the history of the English Catholic community. Its significance has been embellished by personal charisma and by the dramatic sequence of events surrounding the mission. The principal actors were held in high esteem by a small influential group who had been their Oxford contemporaries. The arrival of the missionaries had been preceded by complex negotiations and maneuvering, in Scotland, with the French, and at court, among various factions whose fortunes could rise or fall on the turn of the Queen's marriage negotiations. The course of the mission was marked by the reckless theatricality of Edmund Campion's actions, the distribution of his "Decem Rationes" before the University Act in St Mary's Church, Oxford, his arrest, the subsequent furore surrounding the Tower debates and the culmination in the final spectacle at Tyburn[1].

Recent commentary on the mission of Edmund Campion and Robert Persons to England has focused on the issue of political motivation behind Jesuit intervention. There are two strands of opinion: the first holds to the view that the mission can only be properly understood in a political setting, and in particular

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1 Campion was acutely aware of theatrical effect. His speech from the scaffold began as a self conscious rendering of 1 Corinthians 4:9, "Spectaculum facti sumus Deo, angelis et hominibus, these are the words of St Paul Englished thus, 'We are made a spectacle unto God, unto his angels and unto men', verified this day in me, who am here a spectacle unto my Lord God, a spectacle unto his angels and unto you men". W. Allen, *A Brief History of the Glorious Martyrdom of XII Reverend Priests* (Rheims, 1582) p 47.

within the framework of a scheme to engineer a Catholic successor to Elizabeth.[2] In this context, the course of events within, and contacts with Scotland are presented as a critical element in the planning of the mission. However there are those who are quick to reject, or at least downplay, this overt political engagement. This strand of interpretations reinforces the spiritual or doctrinal aspect of the mission.[3] And this point of view is underscored by the explicit instructions issued to the missionaries and by the apparent political naivety of many of the protagonists.

This divergence of interpretation may in part be understood by the emphasis placed on the personalities and preoccupations of the individual actors, in this instance the complex, subtle and polemical Robert Persons and the seductive charismatic Edmund Campion. But it also reveals a real tension inherent in the Society. A religious order with a mission of active engagement would inevitably become emeshed in events. However, unraveling and teasing out motivation and action can often offer explanations that are more satisfying and comprehensible than simple short-term political opportunism. As the order expanded, its governing hierarchy was increasingly focused on directing and regulating the

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2 M. Carrafiello, *Robert Persons and English Catholicism, 1580-1610* (London, 1998), M. Carrafiello, "English Catholicism and the Jesuit Mission of 1580-1581" *Hist. Jn.* Vol. 37 (1994) pp 761-774.

3 Christopher Haigh rejects Carrafiello's view of Persons and of the 1580 mission in withering fashion in "Catholicism in Early Modern England, Bossy and Beyond" *Hist. Jn.* Vol. 45 (2002) pp 481-94. Thomas McCoog tends to the view that Campion and his companions were not concerned with politics and that the mission was itself the result of a mis-read of the shifting signals around the marriage negotiations with the Duc d'Anjou and a premature expectation of success inspired by Possevino's mission to Sweden. T. McCoog, "The English Jesuit Mission and the French match, 1579-1581", *Cath. Hist. Rev.* Vol. 87 (2001) pp 185-213.

attention of subjects toward the core mission of the society. The distraction of local politicking, whether secular or ecclesiastical, was best avoided and this was a recurrent theme in instructions emanating from the generalate. This was particularly so under Mercurian and Aquaviva, who fashioned the institutional society in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The current state of interpretation of the English mission has a bearing on the relevance and importance of Jesuit activity in Ireland, even though the two are rarely considered within the same context. Unlike the first Jesuit foray into England, the first Jesuit intervention in Ireland has been relatively neglected. This is surprising for a number of reasons. The mission of Salmeron and Broet, the first Jesuits who came to Ireland, was the earliest missionary endeavour undertaken by members of the recently constituted Society of Jesus.[4] Ignatius Loyola had a considerable degree of involvement in the selection and deployment of the men who went to Ireland. The missionaries were senior figures within the Society and within the church. Salmeron was a leading papal theologian at Trent and Broet was instrumental in establishing the Society in France. And yet, this episode has been consistently down-played by commentators who do little more than mention it in passing.[5]

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4 Jesuit commentaries referred to the Irish endeavour as the "Missio primogenita". Faculties for the mission were granted on 13 March 1540. The faculties for the Xavier and Rodriguez mission to Goa were granted on 2 August 1540. The Jesuits arrived in Ireland on 23 February 1542, Xavier reached Goa on 6 May 1542.

5 For example, Edwards, *Church & State* p 97, 117-8. M. V. Ronan, *The Reformation in Dublin 1536-1558* (London, 1926) pp 289-92. Even the most recent Jesuit commentator on the mission presents it as something of a curiosity and a non sequitur. T. M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588 "Our Way of Proceeding?"* (Leiden, 1996) pp 14-21.

This may in part be explained by the unsatisfactory outcome of the mission. In contrast to the first English Mission (and so many other Jesuit endeavours) the first foray into Ireland was not glamorous, it was not heroic and it was not effective. But it was important for a very particular reason: it was the key factor in determining the direction and nature of Jesuit engagement with Ireland for the next one hundred years.

In one of the more recent works on the history of the Society of Jesus in Ireland, Fergus O'Donoghue maintains that *"the study of the Irish Jesuits begins in 1598 when they first established an organised mission in Ireland"*.[6] This outlook certainly diminishes the significance of the efforts of Salmeron and Broet (admittedly not strictly speaking "Irish" themselves). It also sidelines the role that David Wolfe and his associates may have had in determining the form and structure of the missionary apparatus that was constructed in the early years of the seventeenth century. O'Donoghue viewed the efforts of the early years as, at best, exploratory or experimental in nature.

In order to evaluate the role and influence of the Society of Jesus on the Counter-Reformation in Ireland, it is essential to grasp what the leadership of the Society believed they were doing when they agreed to send men to Ireland. The decisions made in selecting personnel, in granting faculties, in determining the routes they traveled and the places they stayed all give clear signals and help us

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6 F.M. O'Donoghue "The Jesuit Mission in Ireland 1598-1651", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1981, p. i.

to understand what the Jesuit leadership, and the Irishmen therein, believed to be the essence of the Counter-Reformation. It also helps illuminate our understanding of what they understood to be their missionary goals and how they thought they would best be achieved.

The mission of 1542, an enterprise in which both Ignatius Loyola and Pope Paul III took a direct and personal interest is a good place to start. There are several contexts within which the events surrounding the first Jesuit mission rest: political, ecclesiastical and spiritual or pastoral.

The first and most familiar of these contexts is political. The decision to send Jesuit emissaries to Ireland was made at an eventful time. From the geo-political perspective of the papal court it was, potentially, another move in the complex diplomatic game that constituted the traditional web of relationships with the English, French and Spanish courts. It also represents an early manifestation of a new political dimension, that of the three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland. In the context of politics on the ground in Ireland, the mission also represented an opportunity for local players. The lack of any political grasp displayed by the emissaries would suggest that, for them at least, this was not primarily a political or diplomatic mission. But their presence served as a catalyst for others.

Rome's initial response to the reformation efforts of Henry's administration in Ireland came with a sudden surge of resolution in 1538-9, some two years after the Reform Parliament had recognised Henry's position over the church. A

number of vacant Irish sees were filled with papal nominees and where practical, action was taken against offending prelates.[7] Robert Blyth, Bishop of Down and Connor, was deprived of his see and replaced by Eugene Magennis, formerly Archdeacon of Down. Action was taken against the primate, George Cromer, who was suspended as Archbishop of Armagh in 1539. However the administration of his see was not entrusted to a local grandee like Magennis in Down but to Robert Wauchop, a foreign priest living in Rome.[8] Wauchop was a Scot who had lectured at Paris in the 1520s. He had a reputation as an erudite teacher and among his pupils was Peter Faber, one of Loyola's original companions.[9] The bond between Wauchop and the founding circle of the Society was established early and remained strong. It was also an important factor in precipitating Jesuit involvement in Irish affairs in the 1540s and governed the geographical scope of their activities.

The appointment of a Scottish cleric to the primatial see aroused the interest of the Edinburgh court and may have encouraged Scottish ambitions in Ulster. James V had already shown himself willing to become involved in the affairs of

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7 F.X. Martin, "Confusion Abounding: Bernard O'Higgins O.S.A. Bishop of Elphin 1542-1561", in A. Cosgrove and D. McCartney (eds.), *Studies in Irish History Presented to R. Dudley Edwards* (Dublin, 1979) p 59.

8 Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh* p 238-9. Brendan Bradshaw sees these administrative changes as the beginning of a Counter-Reformation movement in Ireland but without any significant support from the laity, they were to make little impact by themselves. The rejection of the reformer Bishop Bale in Ossory can be ascribed to localised hostility to an outsider as much as it can be ascribed to any deep repugnance of the reformation movement as a whole. B. Bradshaw, "Sword, Word and Strategy in Reformation in Ireland", *Hist. Jn.* xxi (1978) pp 475-502.

9 B. Millet, "The Pastoral Zeal of Robert Wauchop" in *Seanchas Ardmhacha* Vol. 11(i) (1956) p 33.

the Irish church, particularly in the north. In 1536, and again in 1538, he had petitioned the Holy See in favour of the preferment of Art O'Gallagher to the see of Raphoe.[10] By 1541 Rome was prepared to exploit this interest.[11]

Since Henry's break with Rome, the Curia had endeavoured to retain the loyalty of the Scots monarch, lest he follow the example of his uncle. James had exploited the unease of the papacy and used his new found influence in Rome to appoint, virtually as a matter of royal prerogative, his own nominees to Scottish benefices. In a letter to Paul III dated 5 January 1536/7, the King stressed the historic allegiance of Scotland and her Kings to Rome, but hinted darkly at the attempts of Henry to lure him into schism. Such constancy, suggested James, should be rewarded with papal honours and favour.[12] A sword and cap of maintenance, traditional tokens of Rome's esteem, were duly dispatched and the title of "Defender of the Faith" once bestowed upon Henry was now offered to James.[13] But the real price of James's loyalty was high; virtual control over appointments to the church in Scotland, which he lavished on his illegitimate sons and the nominees of his favourites, causing scandal in Scotland.[14]

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10 R. K. Hannay and D. Hay (eds.), *The Letters of James V (*Edinburgh, 1954) p 321 and p 348

11 On 24 February 1540/1, Pope Paul III wrote to James informing him that Ireland had a claim on the King's loyalty, and that he should follow the advice of David Beaton, who had already been briefed as to the Pope's wishes in Irish matters. Ibid., p 420.

12 Ibid., p 327-8

13 Ibid., p 328; A. Belleshiem, *History of the Catholic Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1887) Vol. 11 p 156.

14 G. Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation* (Cambridge, 1960) p 19.

Rome obviously expected some return for this indulgence and an indication of what the curia had in mind can be gleaned from a letter of Paul III to James of 15 February 1536/7.[15] The King was informed that Reginald Pole was being sent to press for peace between the Empire and France in order that a crusade against heresy might be organised. James's active support was sought for this English Enterprise.

On the ground in Ireland, the local grandees were also aware of the geo-political opportunities that external maneuvering afforded them. The northern chiefs, particularly O'Neill and O'Donnell, who had not as yet been forced to make submission to Henry's authority in Ireland, were weighing up their options. While the Scots had long been a traditional enemy, the incursions of the crown presented a more pressing threat to local autonomy.

In Ulster, Con O'Neill sought to bolster his own position by securing concrete support from Paul III and the Scottish Court in 1540. O'Neill sought aid from the papacy to protect the Catholic faith from the depredations of the English. At the same time, O'Neill's secretary was pressing James V for aid in Edinburgh.[16] Thomas Cromwell received reports suggesting that the Irish chiefs were prepared to offer submission to James V and recognise him as their lawful overlord.[17]. As early as 1536 an O'Donnell-Geraldine union was being projected with the marriage of Eleanor MacCarthy and O'Donnell. In 1538 Rory O'Donnell, the

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15 Hannay and Hay, *Letters of James V,* p 329.

16 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.* p 2.; Bagwell, *Tudors* Vol.1 p 247.

17 Ibid.

bishop of Derry, was seeking military aid in Scotland on behalf of the Geraldines, O'Neill and O'Donnell, who had by then composed a peace with each other.[18] In August 1538 the authorities in Dublin claimed messengers had gone to Scotland to obtain battery pieces.[19] There was a real sense that a military operation against the authority of the crown was being planned, and it was hoped that external support from Rome and Scotland would be forthcoming. It was also widely reported that the friars were preaching against the King's authority in the North and this had been one of the reasons put forward in favour of Henry's assumption of the title King of Ireland in 1541.[20]

None of these developments explains the preferment of Wauchop. In the context of geo-politics and indeed the local scene, the candidacy was unusual. Appointing trusted local figures into key Episcopal positions might have been more advantageous on the ground. This would have explained the preferment of an O'Donnell, an O'Gallagher or a Magennis. The best gloss that might be put on the decision is that a reforming Catholic impulse rather than political considerations drove the appointment. In any event, papal strategy appears to have been insensitive, to the point of indifference, to local considerations.

Reginald Pole, an early associate of Ignatius and his companions, was among those who had lobbied on behalf of Wauchop.[21] Pole believed Wauchop to be a

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18 *L. & P. Hen. VIII,* Vol. XIII Pt.1 No. 1429

19 *L. & P. Hen. VIII,* Vol. XIII Pt. 11 No. 159

20 Bagwell, *Tudors* Vol. I p 259.

21 David Beaton was also supportive: M. Sanderson, *Cardinal of Scotland: David Beaton, c 1494-1564* (Edinburgh, 1986) p 114.

cleric of proven learning and orthodox doctrine and as administrator of Armagh would promote the Counter Reformation cause in Ireland.[22] The extent of Wauchop's support for reform can be seen from his career on the continent. A papal representative at Worms and at Ratisbon, he also attended the early sessions of the Council of Trent and contributed to the debates on clerical residence, the sacraments of marriage, confirmation and the Eucharist. At Trent and Bologna, Wauchop spoke out against abuses of holy orders, and the evils of clandestine marriage and promoted the desirability of frequent communion.[23]

However, within Ireland, Wauchop had no patron. He had no political hinterland from which to promote his cause and as a result of radical changes to ownership of church property, he had no income. The rule of the crown might not extend throughout the diocese of Armagh, but it was certainly not "business as usual" for the church. Rome tried to obtain an income for Wauchop, but only succeded in souring relations with the Scottish crown, thus rendering him ineffective and unable to perform his functions.[24] The curia had failed in the detailed execution of its strategy. But the incompetence of the execution should not blind us either to the clarity or the strength of purpose of the reforming intent. Wauchop had to abandon any notion of a visitation of the diocese in person. Instead, he

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22 Millet, "Pastoral Zeal", p 35.

23 Op. cit., pp 48-53

24 Op.cit., p. 35; G. Donaldson, *Scottish Reformation* p 37; J. Durkan, "Robert Wauchope, Archbishop of Armagh" *The Innes Review*, Vol. 1 (1950) p 51; Hannay and Hay, *Letters of James V,* pp 400 and 405-6.

approached his friends in the newly formed Society of Jesus to act on his behalf in Ireland.[25]

The choice of Wauchop and of the Jesuit nuncios, and the influence exercised by Pole and Loyola over appointments, indicate that this initiative was not an exercise in seeking to roll back the clock. The first point to note is that this was not an exclusively Jesuit affair: Wauchop's agents were receiving their authority from the papacy rather than from the Society and so they were apostolic legates and agents of a papal initiative.[26] Rome was anxious to explore the possibility of promoting a Catholic Reformation in the Irish church. The appointment of Wauchop may not have been handled with finesse, but the episode, and the subsequent appointment of Jesuit legates, indicates that the course of events in Ulster and Scotland played a key part in papal strategy to counter the progress of any Henrician Reformation in Ireland.

The episode also reveals a degree of unpreparedness and lack of support for reform within the local churches, in Ulster and in Scotland, and it also points to serious infrastructural deficiencies, both of personnel and of fabric. On the positive side, however, it does demonstrate that a coterie of influential figures, grouped around Pole, Loyola and their respective circles, a group that wielded considerable influence within the curia in the early 1540s, were anxious to

25 Durkan, "Robert Wauchope" p 51.

26 A legate (*legatus missus*) was the personal representative of the Pope sent to undertake a specific task or mission.

pursue a reforming agenda within Catholicism and were prepared to bring that agenda to Ireland.

This is important in that it demonstrates a willingness by one party to engage with reform as an organic issue concerned with sacramental reception, catechesis and education. This group at any rate did not view the Counter-Reformation as an exercise in rolling back the clock. This is important for two reasons. First, it established a very particular character and tone for this mission. Secondly, some of the personnel associated with the episode later played key roles in the church in the middle years of the 1550s. The 1542 mission therefore offers an important and critical perspective on the strategic thinking and organisational priorities of one group associated with the Marian restoration. That they were not the only, or indeed the dominant, group driving change within the Marian church in Ireland was also to play a part in bringing the first Irish recruits into the Society of Jesus.

The reforming agenda was made clear in the instructions and faculties issued by Paul III on 13 March 1540 to John Codure and to Francisco Marsupino as apostolic nuncios to Ireland.[27] Codure was one of the initial companions of Loyola. Marsupino was not a member of the Society but a Doctor of Laws and diocesan priest from the diocese of Evora in Spain and a close friend of Codure.[28]

The faculties were very broad in scope. They covered most eventualities and suggest that it was assumed the fabric of the institutional church had either

27 *M.H.S.I Epistolae Broeti, Iaii, Codure et Rodericii* (Madrid, 1903), p 204-5

28 Letter of Dionysius Fernandez to John McErlean, 3 May 1927. I.J.A. McErlean, File 1(1)

collapsed or no longer existed in a recognisable form. An alternative view might be that the nuncios had carte blanche to implement change in the face of local opposition. The faculties issued to Codure and Marsupino included dispensation to read heretical and suspect books, license to preach, license to administer the sacraments, to hear confession and to restore Catholics to the church. They were also issued with additional faculties to grant absolution in circumstances where marriages had been unknowingly contracted within prohibited degrees of consanguinity and affinity but they were prohibited from granting absolution in cases of homicide or bigamy. They were also instructed to be on the look out for suitable clerical recruits, specifically legitimate sons of good families.[29].

Despite an initial sense of urgency, over a year was to elapse before any further moves were made towards the launching of an Irish mission. Wauchop's involvement in the project inhibited Scottish cooperation. Moreover, illness and death necessitated a change of personnel.

On 1 February 1541 missionary faculties were re-issued to Codure and Alphonsus Salmeron. In addition, in order to speed up the reception of the Irish back into the faith, the nuncios had permission to delegate their faculties, whilst in Ireland, to assistants of good birth and reputation.[30] But by the time the mission finally got off the ground there had been yet another change of personnel: this unusually high turnover demonstrates the degree of commitment to the idea of the mission. The individual missionaries were ultimately

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29 *M.H.S.I. Broeti,* pp 421-23

30 *M.H.S.I Broeti,* p 419-20

expendable, or at the very least interchangeable but the overall strategy of the mission had been carefully planned, considered and had commitment at the highest level. That it appears with hindsight to have "failed" can obscure that reality.

A desire to reconcile Catholics and promote a reform initiative within the Irish church must be seen as the broad concern of the projected mission. However, it is difficult to determine more than this from the specific instruction issued. The amendment and addition of faculties on a number of subsequent occasions after the initial commission would suggest that the curia, far from knowing anything concrete about the current Irish situation, wished to cover all the bases.[31] But what was apparent was the cultural gulf that separated Loyola and his circle of urbane Sorbonne theologians from the realities of the social, fiscal and dependency structures of sixteenth century Ulster. For example, the missionaries were instructed to establish grammar schools and monti della pietà.[32]

This arrangement might have worked in an ordered civil society where the laity operated sophisticated banking systems through confraternity organisations. In Ulster, such specie as was in circulation was customarily held by the Church within fortified monasteries, on behalf of, and under the protection and patronage of local chieftains. This instruction simply was not going to translate. Similarly, the injunction to distribute all fees and other sums received to relieve poverty, to

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31 *M.H.S.I Broeti*, pp 423-26 and 426-7

32 T. M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588 "Our Way of Proceeding?"* (Leiden, 1996) p 16.

set a suitable example and to avoid the necessity of handling or holding money had little practical application in a largely barter economy.

By the end of February 1541 the mission was ready to set out. On February, Paul III wrote to David Beaton and to James V asking them to assist the nuncios on their mission in Ireland.[33] On 24 April the Pope also wrote to Con O'Neill, informing him of the mission.[34]

The death of John Codure necessitated yet another change of personnel and a further delay. On 3 July 1541, Paul III re-issued faculties to Alphonsus Salmeron and Paschasius Broet.[35] Included in their terms of reference were instructions to attempt to re-locate displaced regular clergy to areas of Ireland where monastic communities had not been suppressed. The missionaries were also instructed not to offend bishops or vicars-general by attempting to overrule their authority within their own dioceses. A recognisable ecclesiastical structure was to be supported. Even in a region where the church had been severely disrupted, the idea of Episcopal supremacy (within diocesan boundaries) was to be maintained and members of the Society were to be scrupulous in their observance of this norm.

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33 *M.H.S.I Broeti*, pp 427-9.

34 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, pp 2-3.

35 *M.H.S.I. Broeti*, pp 206-212.

Salmeron and Broet were accompanied on their journey by Francisco Zapata, a member of a noble Toledo family. An official in the Apostolic Chancery, he was described as a raw recruit to the Jesuits.[36]

On 10 September 1541 the three missionaries were briefed by Loyola and set out from Rome.[37] They were instructed to proceed to Paris, and to make contact with Hieronymous Domenech and Francisco d'Estrada of the Jesuit community there. They were ordered to move with caution and to keep their identity secret. This discretion is marked by comparison with the very public progress that Campion and his companions made across Europe some forty years later. The men were forbidden to go to the University area where they would be recognised. From Paris they were to proceed to Scotland. There they were to seek an audience with King James V and present their credentials. It was suggested that the two priests might hear confessions and say mass. Salmeron was to preach a Latin sermon to the Court in Edinburgh (none of the missionaries spoke either English or Irish). Broet was appointed spokesman in all negotiations: Cretineau-Joly contrasted his persuasive temperament with that of the more volatile Salmeron by way of explanation for this choice.[38] In all matters of doubt, the three men were to consult each other and the opinion of the majority was to prevail.

It is clear from the vague nature of his instructions that as far as Ignatius was concerned, the missionaries were heading into the unknown. One of the first

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36 G. Schurhammer, *Francis Xavier* (Rome, 1973) Vol.1, p 500; Hogan, *Ib.Ign.,* p 4.

37 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 4.; *M.H.S.I. Ignatiana*, Vol. 1, p 174-9.

38 J. Cretineau-Joly, *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jesus* (Paris, 1844-6), Vol.1, p 137.

tasks of the mission was to report on the state of Ireland and on progress in restoring people to the church. The stipulation that monthly reports were to be sent to a fixed address in Edinburgh suggests that a fairly long-term engagement had been envisaged. Further instructions from Rome were to be dispatched by way of an intermediary as required.

From Paris the missionaries travelled to Dieppe and then moved to Canfer, a port in Zeeland. From here they sailed to Scotland.[39] They arrived in Edinburgh on 31 December 1541. The violence of the North Sea had forced the party to seek haven in an English port for ten to twelve days, where they aroused some interest among the locals. In spite of their own fear of the English, they were left unchallenged. On arrival in Edinburgh the nuncios gained an audience with James V where the king gave the missionaries letters of commendation to the Irish chiefs and an escort to Ireland. Although the nuncios had almost reached their goal, the advice now being offered to them by leading Scots was disheartening. David Beaton, who had met them en route at Lyons, advised them that the English held all the ports in Ireland and would prevent their entry (in any event, he maintained that they would be wasting their efforts on the Irish who were a rude and barbarous people). Within Scotland, Gavin Dunbar, the Archbishop of Glasgow, Hector Farquharson, the Bishop of the Isles, and the French ambassador had all urged the party not to set foot in Ireland for their own safety. These alarmist reports were unsettling and unhelpful. But of more

39 Details of the Mission given here are taken from the reports that Salmeron and Broet made to Loyola on 2 February and 9 April 1542. These are published in *M.H.S.I. Salmeronis*, Vol. 1, pp 2-14. A more accessible version of the letter of 9 April sent to the Cardinal Santa Crucis (Cervini), is published in *M.H.S.I. Broeti*, pp 23-31.

immediate concern for the nuncios was the news, brought by three Irish priests en route to Rome, that O'Donnell and O'Neill had made their submissions to King Henry.

Although chastened by this turn of events in Ireland, the missionaries determined to establish for themselves the true state of affairs. Broet travelled west to Glasgow where he came into contact with members of the Irish community, mainly merchants and students at the university there. At the port of Irvine he was assured that conditions in Ireland were not as bleak as was suggested by their informants at Court in Edinburgh. Heartened by this news, the missionaries arranged passage to Ireland and informed Rome, as instructed, of their arrangements for the transmission of letters and reports.

When the three men finally arrived in Ireland on the second day of Lent, 23 February 1542, they discovered that their mission had been overtaken by events. Their plans had been undermined by the submission of the northern chieftains to the crown. Edmund Hogan's picture of the Jesuits "penetrating into an island, the shores of which were swarming with soldiers and spies" and "sleeping in the shadow of the gibbet" is far fetched and coloured by his own nineteenth-century nationalist perceptions of penal Ireland. Whatever reservations the nuncios may have had for their personal safety, the Dublin authorities presented no direct risk to them. However, the fact that the Crown had succeeded in securing the submission of O'Neill and O'Donnell underlined the futility of their task. Indeed, they themselves were potential bargaining chips as hostages in the game

of securing local political advantage with the crown.[40] Conscious of this risk, they quit Ireland after thirty-four days, observing that there was no strong citadel or fort where they could reside safely. Apart from considerations of security, the nuncios felt strongly that it did no honour or credit to the Apostolic See that they should be reduced to hiding in forests or other secret places.[41]

The sudden change in the political complexion of the north had upset the operating environment of the mission. The men reported to Cardinal Cervini that circumstances no longer permitted them to undertake their task in Ireland.[42] Without support or protection from the local magnates they could not function effectively and they decided to cut their losses and withdraw to Scotland.

Salmeron and Broet grasped the futility of attempting to initiate any Catholic revival or reformation within the church in Ulster. The lack of any physical infrastructure to speak of was bad. But the absence of a recognisable social infrastructure made conditions intolerable. The nuncios appear to have been staggered by the lawless conditions that prevailed among the Irish, exacerbated by the predilection for feud among the chiefs and their followers. They were also scandalised by the prevalence of incest, murder and robbery, which neither the ecclesiastical nor civil authorities, such as they were, made any attempt to suppress. For Salmeron and Broet, Ulster was a bizarre and alien environment.

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40 O'Donnell sought, through the mediation of his kinsman the Abbot of Derry, a meeting with the nuncios. Fearful of their safety, they declined to meet with him. T. M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588 "Our way of Proceeding"*, (Leiden, 1996) p 20.

41 Ibid., p 21.

42 *M.H.S.I. Broeti*, pp 27-8.

Their testimony to the lawlessness of the Irish countryside is remarkably similar to that of another outside observer, the Spaniard, de Cuellar, who survived the trials of the wreck of the Armada and the wild Irish almost fifty years later.[43] And their response, like that of de Cuellar, was a symptom of their own preconceptions and prejudices, the outlook of comfortable, cultured Spanish and French gentlemen. Their reaction to conditions in any isolated rural community in Spain or France would probably have been similar. In Ulster their experience had been compounded by shattered expectation.[44]

In spite of their obvious culture shock, Salmeron and Broet attempted to bring some spiritual comfort to the Ulster Catholics. They said mass, heard confessions and dispensed indulgences as provided by their faculties. How the priests, one French, one Spanish, overcame the language barrier is an interesting question - it is probable that they used Latin as a common language to communicate through an interpreter (probably Farquharson, their escort) who might then translate into Irish. This technique was apparently used by Wauchop on his visit to Ulster in 1550.[45]

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43 B. Allingham, *Captain Cuellar's Adventures in Connaught and Ulster 1588, along with Captain Cuellar's narrative of the Spanish Armada and his wanderings and adventures in Ireland,* (London, 1897).

44 In the light of Salmeron's opinion of the assembled princes of the church at Trent it is not surprising that his assessment of the state of the church in Ulster was bleak. L Pastor *History of the Popes* Vol. XII (London, 1912) p 81.

45 J. Leslie, *The Historie of Scotland*, edited by E.G. Cody (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. II, p 344.

The Jesuit mission of 1542 has been dismissed as "dangerous and pointless".[46] Dangerous it undoubtedly was for the unfortunate individuals sent to Ulster but the charge of utter futility is unjust: had the priests reached Ulster before the window of opportunity closed when O'Neill and O'Donnell swore fealty to the Crown, events might have taken a different course.

The missionaries themselves were clearly disappointed at the outcome and felt that a large portion of blame rested with James V. According to William Paget, the two "Spanish freres said that they had done no good in Ireland for the Scottish King kept not his promise".[47]

The mission was a shambles. Unable to secure patronage or protection in Ulster, any projected reform of the Church's infrastructure could not take place. Even simple preaching or catechising was not practical. Defeated, the priests returned to Scotland where they found growing divisions among the nobility,[48] as rifts opened up between between the Francophile Catholic and the reformist Anglophile factions. Paul III had extended the nuncios' faculties to encompass the realm of Scotland, intending that they should assist in the work of the Counter-Reformation there but before notification arrived they had left the country.[49]

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46 J. Aveling, *The Jesuits*, (London, 1981), p 121.

47 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 8.

48 J. Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolae et rerum Societatis Iesu Historia; Chronicon Societatis Iesu, M.H.S.I. Vol. XI (i)* (Madrid, 1894) p 99.

49 *M.H.S.I. Broeti*, pp 215-16.

The first mission appears to have been a comprehensive failure, politically, ecclesiastically and spiritually. Its immediate effect was indeed negative: the experience of Ulster turned the authorities within the order away from involvement in the Irish church for a long time. Ignatius was convinced that Ireland was a lost cause and was loath to squander any resources there. When Wauchop again approached the Society for assistance for his 1550 visitation, Loyola blocked the request, despite pressure from Cardinal Cervini.[50]

Yet it is easy to underestimate the importance of this mission for the development of the Jesuits in Ireland. It had been part of Loyola's plan to staff an Irish mission with Irish Jesuits. He had instructed Salmeron and Broet to be on the look out for suitable candidates when in Ireland. And this strategy remained constant and it was implemented when the Jesuit mission was revived and a presence was re-established in the country. But Salmeron and Broet did not find any suitable candidates and ultimately contact with the Society was made by Irish priests or students who had travelled to the continent on business, for reasons of conscience, for advancement, for their education, or a combination of all of these.

The experience of these thirty-four days, at the end of the winter in 1542 determined the future form of the Jesuit mission to Ireland and served to refine the shape and future direction of Jesuit engagement with Ireland and the Irish. It was the key defining moment in the history of the Society in Ireland.

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50 J. Polanco, *Vita Ignatii Loiolae et rerum Societatis Iesu Historia; Chronicon Societatis Iesu, M.H.S.I. Vol. XI (iii)* (Madrid, 1894) p 198-9.

Salmeron and Broet travelled to Ireland with a brief to report on the state of the Church there. Of necessity, they had to engage with a number of key players on the wide political stage. But at its heart their mission was to spread the gospel of frequent communion, exsanguinous marriage, social amity and ecclesiastical discipline. They were cultural engineers and social therapists, arguably even cultural subversives, but they were not political schemers. The principal reason their mission failed was the cultural dissonance that existed between these urbane Parisian scholastics and the plain people of North Antrim. Simply put, the journey was too great a distance to travel. Over the next fifty years, a campaign of recruitment, of education and culturation would ensure that that distance was bridged. The debacle of 1542 made the future progress of Society in Ireland a reality: it was an enabling, disjunctive moment.

And in this respect at least it shares a curious commonality with the heroics of Edmund Campion, Ralph Sherwin and Alexander Bryant. But the most concrete legacy of their mission was a harsh and restrictive regulatory regime that delimited English Catholicism for three centuries.

CHAPTER THREE

Ecclesia Resurgens: the Marian interlude

and the project for restoration of the Church in Ireland

Convention holds that there is a point from which the success of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland can be dated. The choice of date betrays as much, if not more, about the attitudes and outlook of the commentator than it does about the course of the history of Catholicism in Ireland. And the view that commentators might adopt about the Jesuit mission will also be shaped by their perceptions of the Counter-Reformation.

For some, the Counter-Reformation has a seamless progression from the first stirrings of Protestant reform that provoked Kildare into rebellion. They, like Robin Dudley Edwards, will see 1534 as the crucial turning point[1]. For other commentators, events in the 1580s in the aftermath of the Baltinglass revolt have a particular significance, and this would suggest a downplaying of the contributions that Walsh, Leverous, Creagh or Wolfe may have made to the formation of a Counter-Reformation ethos[2].

Both of these interpretations place the Counter-Reformation in a reactive frame. Like the plain man's definition of "Art", it has an essentially negative identification. Recent studies of the Marian restoration in the English Church have shifted the focus of attention from a traditional view that had been dominated by the pyres of Smithfield and the polemic of John

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1 Edwards, *Church & State.*

2 For example, C. F. Brady "Conservative Subversives: the community of the Pale and the Dublin administration, 1556-86" in P. J. Corish (ed.) *Radicals, rebels and establishments: Hist. Studies XV* (Belfast, 1985) pp 11-32.

Foxe.[3] The Marian Church demonstrated a devotional and spiritual vitality that may have been a more significant aspect of the restoration for the majority of the Queen's subjects.

From our own retrospective standpoint, the period can appear as a curious interlude and this may, in part, explain the absence of any significant attention paid to it in the context of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland. For the majority of commentators it appears either as part of a strong tradition of resistance that commenced in 1534 or as an event that pre-dated the Counter-Reformation proper (which is conceived as an essentially political resistance movement).

But the Marian period attracted attention from at least one early modern commentator. Looking at the recent history and development of the Irish church Henry Fitzsimon set out in the dedication to his study of the liturgy of the Mass an intriguing case for the role of the Marian restoration in the Counter-Reformation. He argued that it was from that time (1555 is identified as the key

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[3] There has been a significant revival of interest in the Marian Church. Pole in particular has received a lot of attention. This was an area of study pioneered by Dermot Fenlon *Heresy and Obedience in Tridentine Italy: cardinal Pole and the Counter reformation* (Cambridge, 1972) and taken up more recently by Thomas Mayer *Reginald Pole: Prince &Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000) and *The Correspondence of Cardinal Pole* (3 Vols.) (Aldershot, 2002-2004). Eamon Duffy has pointed to the spiritual vitality of the Marian Church in *The Stripping of the Altars Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (London, 1992), a theme that was taken up by Lucy Wooding *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000) and explored by a number of scholars in E. Duffy and D. M. Loades (eds.) *The Church of Mary Tudor* (Aldershot, 2006) and J. Edwards and R. Truman (eds.) *Reforming Catholicism in the England of Mary Tudor: The achievement of Friar Bartolomé Carranza* (Aldershot, 2005).

date) that Irish students were forced to go abroad for a proper Catholic education, and in so doing laid the foundations of Irish Catholicism. Fitzsimon asserted that they were not going to get such training in Ireland because of a lack of facilities and a shortage of doctrinally reliable teachers.[4] His argument was certainly polemical, but within it there lies a particular perspective on the restoration period in Ireland that illustrates how successive Jesuit projects might sit within the general situation in Ireland. Fitzsimon's analysis follows the narrative of William Allen[5] and is confirmed some three hundred and fifty years later by John Bossy's insistence that the foundation of the college at Douai was the real starting point of a Counter-Reformation of any substance in England.[6]

In making his case for 1555, Fitzsimon certainly demonstrates the Jesuit perspective on what they thought they were doing in Ireland and serves to clarify the nature of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation project and distinguish it from the rest of the church during Mary's reign and the first decade of Elizabeth's reign when an effective policy of *laissez faire* governed official policy on matters of religion in Ireland. This policy was not dismantled until the removal of Hugh Curwen as Archbishop of Dublin and was only comprehensively abandoned with the publication of the papal bull excommunicating Elizabeth in the spring of 1570.

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[4] The argument is set out at the beginning of the Epistle Dedicatory of H. Fitzsimon *The Justification and Exposition of the Divine Sacrifice of the Masse* (Douai, 1611) p a2r-v.

5 W. Allen *An Apologie and True Declaration of the Institution and endevours of the two English Colleges* (Rheims, 1581).

6 J. A. Bossy *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London, 1975) p 12. For a more recent appraisal of the enduring validity of this proposition see C. Haigh "Catholicism in Early Modern England: Bossy and Beyond", *Hist. Jn.* 45 (2) 2002 pp 481-494.

This chapter seeks to place Jesuit activity within this restoration era, to understand the Society's apparent lack of enthusiasm for the Marian regime and to chart initiatives to plan and rebuild the church in a different fashion during the relative calm of the first Elizabethan decade.

I

1555 was indeed an eventful year in the history of the Irish church. It witnessed the appointment of Hugh Curwen as Archbishop of Dublin and Lord Chancellor of Ireland. It was the year that Cardinal Pole granted absolution to George Browne, Curwen's recently deposed predecessor as Archbishop and the agent of St Leger's programme of reform in Ireland. Browne was promptly installed as a prebend of the newly restored cathedral of St Patrick in Dublin.[7] The Henrician reform legislation was reversed, much as it had been introduced, by vice-regal decree. By contrast to England, the un-picking of the Henrician and Edwardine religious settlements was not a contentious legal or constitutional problem. The formal reconciliation of England was held up by contentious negotiation, requiring the consent of "possessioners" in parliament. In Ireland, much of the groundwork had been initiated by George Dowdall, Archbishop of Armagh, using synodal decree to implement change.[8] The end of the year saw the recall

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7 M. V. Ronan "Cardinal Pole's absolution of George Browne, Henry VIII's Archbishop of Dublin", *I.E.R.* Series Five Vol. 72, iii (1949) pp 193-205.

8 J. Murray "The Tudor Diocese of Dublin: Episcopal government, ecclesiastical politics and the enforcement of the reformation, c 1534-1590" unpublished Ph.D. Thesis: University of Dublin, 1997, Chapters 4 and 5.

of St Leger. He was replaced by Thomas Radcliffe, Earl of Sussex, a "new broom" Lord Lieutenant. Sussex was sworn in in the spring of 1556, promising a radical shake up of the Irish administration. But the high point of 1555, from the point of view of any historically minded Irish Catholic, must have been the publication throughout Ireland of the bull *Illius*, issued by the new Pope Paul IV, conferring kingly title to Ireland upon Mary and Philip. This document, which had been specifically requested by the clerical elite of the Pale, effectively restated the missionary mandate implicit in the bull *Laudabiliter* and so validated the bona fides of the old English in Ireland. But it did more than this: *Illius* bestowed absolution on Philip and on Mary from ecclesiastical penalty consequent upon the exercise of the kingly title and prerogative assumed *de facto* by Henry VIII and by Edward VI. At the same time, the bull raised the island of Ireland from the status of Lordship (as provided by *Laudabiliter*) into that of Kingdom.[9]

On the surface then, 1555 would appear to have been a "good" year for Irish Catholicism. Yet, writing only fifty-five years later, Fitzsimons adopted a contrary position. He was a skilled controversialist and polemical writer who actively propagated a particular reform-minded universalist Jesuit view of the Catholic church. It would appear that he did not share the view, propagated by Dowdall, Curwen and the clerical elite of the Marian church in Ireland, that the validation of a papal bull was adequate underwriting or justification for the position of the Old English Catholic community. *Laudabiliter* was deeply

9 The full text of the bull is published in *Bullarum Diplomatum et Privilegiorum Sanctorum Romanorum Pontificium: Adrianus IV-Paulus IV, 1522-1559.* Vol. VI (Rome, 1860) p 489-490.

embedded in the political and social consciousness of the Pale and this was intimately connected to the "Catholic" identity of the Old English. *Laudabiliter* remained for many the key iconic cultural text and Fitzsimon utilised it to good effect, marshalling arguments against Dempster and Rider as he asserted the authority, tradition and historical bona fides of the Irish church.[10]

It is clear that by 1599, Fitzsimon had moved on from the traditional world-view of the Old English elite - and this was true for his view of the church as much as of the political and social elites in Ireland. What Fitzsimon was doing in the dedication of his book on the Mass, a text that expounds, prayer by prayer, line by line, a thoroughly Counter-Reformation view of the sacrament and its salvific power, was rejecting the official version of the Marian restoration in Ireland, composed by Dowdall and St Leger, and dressed up with a papal seal of approval, issued by Caraffa and brought to Ireland by Curwen in 1555. From Fitzsimon's perspective, forty years on, the official settlement was little more than a grubby political fix. Its concern was not so much the evangelisation of society as the conservation or re-establishment of the pre-existing order, an intransigent *preoccupazione restauratrice* which prevailed over any interest in the problems, spiritual, sacramental or structural, of the time. For Fitzsimon, the Counter-Reformation was about a thorough going reform of the spiritual and institutional structures of the church focused on the papacy - it was not about local politics, whether civil or ecclesiastical.

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10 Fitzsimon would later use *Laudabiliter* to marshal arguments in defence of the pedigree and antiquity of the Irish Church. H. Fitzsimon *A Catholike Confutation of M John Riders Clayme of Antiquitie* (Rouen, 1608).

The historiography of the Marian regime has, for a long time been overshadowed by the emotive and polarising issue of religious persecution. However, much recent work on the Marian church in England has focused on a broader appreciation of its spiritual vitality. The Marian Episcopate was in many respects a mixed bag of canon lawyers, administrators and diplomats, many of whom were inherited from the previous regime. This goes a long way towards explaining the approach adopted in unpicking the Edwardine religious project, a strategy that has been criticised for its excessive legalism. But there was another strand, a positive religious initiative on the part of the Marian regime characterised by spiritual renewal, active catechesis and material transformation of worship. For example, England was the first country to implement widespread use of the tabernacle into churches. Much of the impetus for this initiative came from figures such as the Spanish theologians Bartolome Carranza, Juan de Villagarcia and Pedro de Soto[11], whose intellectual contribution to the Marian regime was not unlike the "international" contribution of Peter Martyr Vermigli, Bernardino Ochino and Martin Bucer[12] to the Edwardine

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[11] Villagarcia, a Spanish Dominican, was appointed to the Regius Chair of Theology at Oxford. De Soto also held a chair at Oxford. Carranza, was subsequently appointed Archbishop of Toledo and fell victim to the inquisition, he was imprisoned for over seventeen years. A significant mark against him had been his association with Pole: he was one of his closest advisors during his stay in England. All three friars played a prominent role in purging the Universities of reformers and were instrumental in proceedings against Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer.

[12] Bucer, a German who had begun his career as a Dominican friar was Regius Professor of Theology at Cambridge. Vermigli, a former Augustinian and associate of Pole's at Viterbo, held the Regius Chair at Oxford. Ochino, another confidant of Pole's and a former friar was appointed to the Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral.

establishment. And both of these strands, the canonists and the theologians, converged in the person of Reginald Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury and Papal Legate.

Pole is a complex and enigmatic character and he represents an important but ambiguous strand within the Counter-Reformation church. Pole, Morone and their circle at Viterbo had also been associated with Vermigli and Ochino before the latter two broke with Rome. This, coupled with his own ambiguous performance at Trent during the debate on justification rendered him, and those associated with his household, suspect in the eyes of the party around Caraffa. For some, Pole represented a strand of Catholicism that looked beyond tradition, and this energy found expression within the Marian church in England. But Pole's legatine authority also extended to Ireland and the conduct of the Marian project there suggests a very different set of circumstances.

The first point of distinction is the absence of prosecutions for heresy in Ireland. It may be the case that Bishop Bale[13] felt that he was no longer welcome in Kilkenny and there may have been some unpleasantness in Limerick where, in an incident curiously suggestive of the spoliation of the tombs of Bucer and Vermigli's wife in Oxford, the corpse of Edmund Sexton was mutilated.[14] However, unlike the Oxford incidents, the mutilation was not a public act and it remained undetected for three years. The Limerick episode was not so much a

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[13] John Bale (1495-1563) Edwardine Bishop of Ossory.

[14] C. Tait "A trusty and wellbeloved servant": the career and disinterment of Edmund Sexton of Limerick, d. 1554" *Archiv. Hib.*, 56 (2002) pp 51-64.

ritual cleansing of sacred space as a curious incident in the night. There was no significant or systematic persecution of Protestants in Ireland for the simple reason that they were very thin on the ground. In contrast to the fate of some of his fellow bishops in England, George Browne, the leader of the reform movement in Ireland, received a reprimand and a generous pension in the form of the Prebendary of Clonmethan.

It is clear that what has been termed the Counter-Reformation in Marian Ireland was very different from what was happening within the church in England. Dowdall, the main driver behind the restoration of the Marian church, has been described by various commentators as a traditionalist and a thoroughly medieval figure.[15] If there was a reform impulse within the Catholic church in Ireland, it was not going to be found among its domestic leadership. But there was an alternative source of authority in the Irish church, the Papal Legate, Cardinal Pole.

Ireland attracted significant attention from Pole. In terms of its size, population and number of clergy, Ireland looms large in the legatine register.[16] An analysis of the acts recorded by region indicates a significant concentration of activity in the four dioceses of Limerick, Meath, Kilmacduagh and Kildare. By contrast, only a handful of acts are recorded for Dublin and the other dioceses under Dowdall's metropolitan authority hardly feature at all. Almost half of the acts

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15 J. Murray "The Tudor diocese of Dublin" p 160 et. seq.; H. A. Jeffries *Priests & Prelates of Armagh in the Age of Reformations 1518-1558* (Dublin, 1997) p 170.

16 T. F. Mayer *Reginald Pole: Prince & Prophet* (Cambridge, 2000) p 268-272.

relate to regularising marital arrangements, the rest relate to clerical status and discipline. Pole was inclined to rely on a close circle of associates. Some of these men had been with him in exile and in Ireland he had some scope to place them in positions of trust. William Walsh was appointed to Meath and Thomas Leverous to Kildare. Both of these men officiated at the restoration of the Priory of the Knights of St John at Kilmainham and the installation of Oswald Massingberd as Grand Prior of the order in Ireland.[17] These two bishops, together with Christopher Bodkin and Hugh Lacy appear to have been instrumental in conducting a Counter-Reformation in a different manner and with a different emphasis than the project being pursued by Dowdall, Curwen and their circle.

The acts recorded in Pole's legatine register demonstrate a legalistic concern with legitimacy of faculties, simony, concubinage and the legitimacy and suitability of clergy.[18] In that, they do not stray far from the concerns outlined in Dowdall's synodal legislation. However, there is a distinction to be made. The source of authority for this reform project is papal, via the legate Pole, and implemented by resident episcopal action within individual dioceses. Dowdall's reforms relied on his metropolitan jurisdiction, a source of authority which was being assiduously eroded by the Tridentine church. It is also important to note the stance that Leverous and Walsh adopted in opposition to the Elizabethan Church settlement. In this they stood apart from their colleagues. Curwen and

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17 T. F. Mayer (ed.) *Correspondence of Cardinal Pole* (Aldershot, 2004) Volume III p 418 No 1970.

18 For example, these concerns are illustrated by a series of acts relating to Walsh's diocese of Meath, Ibid., Nos. 1217, 1215, 1271, 1284, 1323, 1334a, and 1340.

the majority of Ireland's Marian bishops acquiesced and conformed (outwardly at any rate) to the demands of the next regime. In this respect the Irish Church distinguished itself: in England the Bishops were implacably hostile to the Elizabethan regime. [19]

From this, it would seem that Fitzsimon's assessment of the Marian church in Ireland may not be as bizarre as it might at first appear. For those churchmen who had been exposed to the reforming impulses within the Catholic church in Europe, the experience of the Marian restoration in Ireland must have been something of a disappointment. Some sense of this comes across in Richard Creagh's account of the occasion on which he preached, before the Lord Lieutenant, Bishop Hugh Lacy and the assembled dignitaries of Limerick and its hinterland. The scene Creagh sets brings to mind another great Marian sermon, Pole's St Andrew's Day address before the court and the civic dignitaries of London.[20] However, the devout and reform-minded Creagh merely succeeded in offending his audience. So much so that he felt inclined to leave Limerick and return to Louvain. And he was not alone. Another reform minded Limerick churchman, David Wolfe, a member of the cathedral chapter, had journeyed to Europe to lodge a protest about the scandal of the concubinage of John Quinn,

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19 J. Murray "The Tudor diocese of Dublin" Chapters 5 and 6; H. A. Jeffries "The Irish Parliament of 1560: the anglican reforms authorized". *I.H.S.* xxvi (1988) pp 128-41.

20 C. Lennon *An Irish Prisoner of Conscience of the Tudor Era Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523-86* (Dublin, 2000) p 46-7.

Hugh Lacy's predecessor as Bishop of Limerick.[21] Wolfe resigned from his post and signed up to the new Society of Jesus.

From this a number of points arise. The Marian restoration in Ireland, whether that pursued by Dowdall and Curwen or implemented on foot of Pole's authority by Bodkin and Walsh was essentially about attempting to make good the formal damage done to the fabric of the church and civil society by schism. It was not in any sense an attempt to reform the spiritual life of the country through education or catechesis. In this respect it bears little relationship with the missionary agenda established by Loyola, confirmed in the Legatine powers and authority bestowed on Salmeron and Broet and subsequently vested in David Wolfe and Richard Creagh. However, what appears to have happened is that in the attempt to retro-validate doctrinally *ultra vires* acts and compose consciences with papal dispensations, the Irish church establishment provoked the beginnings of a fundamental ideological shift. This shift would ultimately move the Old English from a sense of their special papally-sanctioned mission to a sense of being part of a wider community, an Irish Catholic nation. And the Society of Jesus, and Henry Fitzsimon in particular, played a significant role in this process.

Fitzsimon suggested that the initial signs of such a shift could be tracked from the movement of students to the Continent in search of an education.

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21 T. M. McCoog *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588 "Our Way of Proceeding?"* (Leiden, 1996) p 34.

"From about the year 1555. as is wel knowen, thefe late herefies by force, neuer by voluntarie allowance, oppreffed religiõ in our contrie, banished teachers, extinguished learning, exiled to forrain contries al inftruction, and inforced our youth either at home to be ignorant, or abrode in pouertie rather to gleane eares of learning then with leafure & commoditie to reap anie abundance thereof."[22]

Fitzsimon's argument is complex, layered and subtle. In advancing the key role of the exodus to overseas colleges, he is in effect condemning the papal constitutionalism that characterised the official Marian establishment under Dowdall and Curwen. And he was also articulating what was to become the central tenet of the Jesuit approach to the Counter-Reformation; that a properly structured and supervised, doctrinally sound education was at the heart of the matter. Fitzsimon asserts that this was not available in Ireland. It would have to be provided elsewhere.

II

The initial enthusiasm that Loyola and his advisors had shown for the Irish project was dampened by the painful lessons of the first mission. But the experience had been instructive. It became clear that the future success of the Jesuits as a missionary order in Ireland depended on developing a corps of Irish members of the society outside of Ireland. But this activity during the Generalship of Loyola, or his immediate successors, was hampered by the less than wholehearted support of the hierarchy of the Society, and the conflicting

22 The text is taken from the opening sentence of the Epistle Dedicatory of H. Fitzsimon *The Justification and Exposition of the Divine Sacrifice of the Masse* (Douai, 1611) p. a2r-v.

demands of the European provinces. A number of superiors and provincials felt they had a prior claim on resources and manpower, which could be utilised to some profit in the schools and colleges run by the Society in Europe, rather than squandered on a missionary project that had already been tainted by apparent failure.

This ambivalence on the part of the hierarchy of the Society was reinforced by other pressures. As the order expanded rapidly, particularly after Loyola's death, the resources of the society were now directed toward the running of hundreds of schools and colleges which had become its principal concern. For many provincials, providing resources for missionary activity in areas outside their jurisdiction or responsibility was not a priority. Furthermore, the assignment of key personnel to serve alternative strategic priorities (usually university teaching) meant that the pattern of Jesuit activity in Ireland was erratic.

After the return of Paul III's legates in 1542, there were no Jesuits in Ireland until David Wolfe returned to Limerick as Apostolic Nuncio with a commission issued by the recently elected Pius IV.

David Wolfe was born in Limerick, around 1520. He came from a prominent family who were active in civic government. Given his command of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese it is possible that, like Richard Creagh, he received some of his formal education in Europe. He began his career within the church in Ireland and, while on business in Rome (presenting a complaint against his bishop, John Quinn) he joined the Society of Jesus. By 1558 he was Rector of

the Jesuit college in Modena. He also undertook missionary work in the Valtelline and Fossano regions in the Alpine territories where he worked with Possevino (subsequently appointed papal legate to Sweden and to Russia). Cardinal Morone had been rehabilitated after the death of Paul IV and was now a close advisor to Pius IV. He was also the patron of Modena and had a watching brief over the Irish Church as Cardinal Protector of Ireland. Morone determined that Wolfe would be a suitable candidate to undertake a mission to Ireland.

Wolfe's faculties were similar in many respects to those accorded Salmeron and Broet and included instructions for establishing grammar schools and monti della pietà. This indicates the strong commitment on the part of Rome to a particular vision of the Irish missionary project, and Wolfe was going to Ireland in order to implement it.

A number of Jesuits were subsequently sent to Ireland to work in tandem with Wolfe's apostolic mission. William Good, an Englishman from Glastonbury, was a graduate and fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, a canon of Wells Cathedral under the Marian regime and a former master of the grammar school at Wells. He was part of the earliest exodus of English churchmen and academics from England shortly after Elizabeth's accession. He joined the Jesuits in 1562. He would later serve as assistant to Possevino in Sweden and would be instrumental in recruiting Robert Persons to the Society.

Good was to be assisted by Edmund Daniel, a Jesuit scholastic from Limerick who was a protégé and a relative of David Wolfe. One of the first students

picked by Wolfe to join the Society when he returned to Ireland, [23] Daniel was nineteen years old when he joined the novitiate in 1561. But the Italian climate had not agreed with his health, and for his physical well being as much as for the assistance he would offer, he was sent home.[24]

In spite of limited resources, financial and human, there was a clear rationale and a road map for the activities undertaken by Wolfe, Good and Daniel in the first decade or so of Elizabeth's reign. Wolfe arrived with a brief to conduct what was in effect a visitation of the Irish Church. He was to assess the quality of the clergy and the infrastructure and having completed this scoping exercise he was to set about building capacity. This was to be done in a number of stages. Once the support of local grandees had been secured, the incumbent bishops were to be involved as key stakeholders in the process. Where there was no bishop, Wolfe was to make recommendations for appointment. Local grammar schools were to be established, monastic structures overhauled and hospitals and *monte di pieta* established to administer charitable work (hitherto the traditional domain of the monasteries).

Wolfe's initial reports suggested that he was making some headway and stand in sharp relief to the pessimistic assessments of Salmeron. Encouraged by this, Rome proceeded to implement the second stage of the road map for reform of the Church in Ireland. In 1564, Pius IV issued the bull, *Dum Exquisita*, authorizing Wolfe to set up a University in Ireland. This document identified a serious skills

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[23] A.R.S.I. Germ. 143 f 82r; Rom. 170 f 94.

[24] A.R.S.I. Germ. 105 f 139r; Germ. 145 f 186v.

deficit in the Irish Church. Ireland had no university offering training for doctoral candidates. Cost and distance made study abroad an unattractive or unfeasible option for many. There were estimated to be 6 to 8 Bachelors of Theology, one or two Doctors of Theology and no Doctors of Laws in the entire country. This was inadequate. What the Church needed were more skilled and appropriately trained personnel to implement its reform strategy. In order to deliver these personnel, a university was needed and this institution was to be modelled on and benchmarked against the faculties of the Universities of Paris and Louvain.[25]

That this initiative might not meet with universal support is implicit in the provision for resources contained in the Bull. Wolfe was authorized to utilize, as he saw fit, monastic property and benefices, to finance the project. The Bull explicitly recognizes that this is made possible by the statute enacted in 1557. This effectively enshrined in Irish law the substance of Pole's general dispensation[26] that gave effect to the reconciliation of England in November 1554 (and confirmed by the papal decree *Praeclara Charrisimi* in 1555). In practical terms this effectively drew a line under the proprietary claims of religious orders to abandoned or appropriated monastic sites and livings. In Ireland, Wolfe was now empowered to utilize any such available properties (or income derived from them) in realizing this project.

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[25] Moran, *Spicil. Ossor.*, pp 32-38.

[26] T. F. Mayer *Correspondence of Cardinal Pole* Vol. 3 (Aldershot, 2004) No.1971.

It is clear that this project was not a short-term shoring up of the *status quo ante.* It was intended to be part of a root and branch reorganization of the Irish church, more radical than anything hitherto contemplated by the crown. Wolfe was, in effect, leading a change management team and he encountered the most implacable and insidious opposition from within his own organization.

The road map for the reform of the church was ambitious and it was long term. It was predicated on a number of suppositions. The first of these was that the current *modus vivendi* with the Crown would continue, or improve, thus enabling the local administrative apparatus of the church to operate effectively. The second assumption was that Papal will would be sufficient to overcome local resistance and that the nuncio would be in a position to implement reform and that the long term project would bear fruit.

On arriving in Ireland, Wolfe was greeted by the local magnate, the Earl of Desmond. Wolfe journeyed north from Cork to Limerick, via Kilmallock. People flocked to hear him preach. But the local clergy were far from enthusiastic about his arrival and some refused to recognize his authority[27]. Not only did Wolfe represent the prospect of unwelcome change for some, he also presented an immediate threat to income for many as he insisted on issuing dispensations for marital irregularities free of charge to the laity. At an early stage, Wolfe began identifying appropriate church and monastic properties in Limerick, the income from which could be used to fund a school. The citizens

[27] A.R.S.I. Germ. 143 ff 80r-82r.

supported this initiative with enthusiasm. But the clouds of future difficulty were already gathering.

By the end of June 1561, Wolfe had identified a portfolio of properties, previously held by Cistercian, Hospitaller and Augustinian communities. These orders no longer maintained an effective presence in the region. But he also encountered opposition from the Franciscans and from diocesan clergy who, determined to undermine his authority, had mounted a technical challenge to the terms of his brief. Wolfe was forced to seek clarification from Rome. The wording of his commission was phrased in the past rather than the future perfect tense and appeared to place a technical restriction on his authority over marital cases.[28]

These initial issues aside, Wolfe set about his task according to plan. He identified a number of candidates for the Jesuit novitiate who were dispatched and entered the novitiate in Rome on 11 September 1561. They were drawn from families in Munster where Wolfe initially operated.

By October 1561, Wolfe had sent an initial assessment of the state of the Western diocese and personnel to Morone with a number of recommendations for appointment to Episcopal vacancies. It is apparent that he relied on the support of Christopher Bodkin, Archbishop of Tuam, who also appears to have served as Pole's principal agent in the region. In his report, Wolfe also noted that fourteen people were en route to Rome seeking appointment without letters

[28] A.R.S.I. Ital. 120 f 386v-387r.

of recommendation from him and asked that their requests should not be considered.[29]

Initially, Wolfe operated relatively effectively in Munster. In the West, he relied on the authority of Bodkin, and in Leinster he delegated his faculties to another priest called Thady Newman.[30] But the church in Ulster was operating outside his sphere of influence. It is clear that Wolfe found the state of the Church in Ulster (and the degree of control exercised by local magnates over it) every bit as bizarre and alien as Salmeron had done. And when, in September 1563, Pius IV delegated to Wolfe the determination of a dispute over the relative claims of Hugh O'Carolan and Con MacArdle to the see of Clogher, he effectively passed him a poisoned chalice.[31] This case was symptomatic of the sort of issues Wolfe was embroiled in and illustrates the potential conflicts and confusion of jurisdiction thrown up by the recent history of the Irish church. O'Carolan had been the legitimately ordained Bishop of Clogher but in 1542 he had conformed to the Henrician settlement. Dowdall deprived him and appointed Redmond MacMahon to the see in 1553. MacMahon died in Rome in 1560 and the then Primate, O'Teig, appointed MacArdle as his successor. But O'Carolan was still alive and Pius IV was inclined to recognize the legitimacy of his status and entertain the validity of his claim to the diocese (in his instruction to Wolfe he referred to "frater noster Odo episcopus Clochorensis"). Whatever determination he made, Wolfe would, potentially, cut across local interests with the "wrong"

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29 A.S.V. Arm LXIV Vol. 28 f 118-119v.

30 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire.*, 1547-1557, (ed.) p 129.

31 A.S.V. Arm. XLII Vol. 19 f 147.

decision. MacArdle was part of Shane O'Neill's entourage (and O'Teig, who died in 1562, had been). In the event MacArdle retained possession of the see. But Wolfe would cross O'Neill on other occasions.

It is clear from the letters that he sent back to Lainez and to other colleagues, that Wolfe found his task demanding and isolating. He appears to have suffered from periodic bouts of depression as the enormity of his task hit home. In addition, he found that a chronic shortage of money was making his task difficult.[32] Various sums had been allocated for Wolfe.[33] But the funds had to be physically taken to him and in the absence of suitable couriers he was frequently forced to borrow money using the prospect of its arrival as his collateral. Richard Creagh was entrusted with bringing substantial funds to Wolfe, but by the time of his arrest in Drogheda all his goods and money had disappeared[34].

The appointment of Creagh as Archbishop of Armagh was intended to provide a focus of papal authority in Ulster. Creagh was more acceptable to Rome than the local candidates and his presence would also give a boost to Wolfe's mission. But Creagh was intercepted shortly after his arrival in Drogheda. He was apprehended as he was leaving after mass at the Friary in the town. His copy of the bull *Dum Exquisita* together with his faculties and a number of letters to O'Neill were taken and sent, with Creagh, to London. Creagh was held in the

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[32] A.R.S.I. Germ. 144 f 142r.

[33] A.R.S.I. Germ. 105 f. 169r; Germ. 105 f. 182r.

[34] A.R.S.I. Epp. Ext. 10 f 252r.

Tower for a short time, but he escaped and returned to Louvain.[35] Here he waited for further instruction, but without any money, or without any idea of what he was going to be asked to do, he became increasingly restless.[36]

William Good and Edmund Daniel had also set sail for Ireland with Creagh. However, when their ship diverted to Dover the group split up. Creagh travelled via London and Bristol to Drogheda. Good and Daniel travelled overland to Chester and sailed for Dublin. From there they attempted to re-connect with Creagh at Armagh. But by then the Archbishop had been apprehended so they set out for Limerick to join Wolfe.

Good had a mixed reputation within the order. Everard Mercurian regarded him as a liability and had suggested to Lainez that he was unstable and disobedient. He felt that Good would not be much help to Wolfe (nor do a lot to improve his state of mind either).[37] And this may account for the overall tone of the reports that Good sent from Limerick. They are generally negative, complaining and pessimistic.

Good's first report to Lainez, written at the end of September 1565 indicates that setting up a school had enabled the Jesuits to integrate themselves into the civic fabric of Limerick. Good was quick to highlight language difficulties (he had no Irish), the fickleness of the citizens, Daniel's frequent disappearances to stay

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[35] C. Lennon *An Irish Prisoner of Conscience of the Tudor Era: Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523-1586.* (Dublin, 2000) pp 68-69.

[36] A.R.S.I. Germ. 146 f 124r.

[37] A.R.S.I. Germ. 145 f 185r.

with his family and the almost permanent absence of Wolfe. But he also conceded that if conditions in England were less tense, their work in Ireland would be much easier.[38] Good reported that he sometimes preached in the Cathedral in Limerick, using a mixture of Latin and English. However, he doubted that he could do much to advance the spiritual ministry of the Society. When he exhorted his congregation to observe a sacramental regime of frequent penance and communion they responded by complaining that the local clergy were accustomed to charge a fee for hearing confession.[39]

The Jesuit school was enthusiastically supported by the citizens, who maintained it with the equivalent in goods and services to the value of £10 per annum. Good reported that there were a number of schools in the city and there was stiff competition for pupils. As a result, if the curriculum offered by the school placed too much emphasis on a religious regime, parents removed their sons from his care. Good was ultimately obliged to drop disputation and other traditional elements from the curriculum and stick to teaching grammar.

By the summer of 1566, the situation in Munster was deteriorating rapidly for the Jesuit mission.[40] The school was inspected by officials on a number of occasions. Good had temporarily relocated to Kilmallock. But it was no longer feasible for the Jesuits to maintain a fixed residence. Good and Daniel were

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[38] I.J.A. II/G/25.

[39] A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 8v-12r.

[40] For an account of the general context of events in Munster following Sidney's removal from office see C. Brady *The Chief Governors: The rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland 1536-1588.* (Cambridge, 1994).

forced to abandon the house in Limerick.[41] Their property was confiscated and without the school they were utterly dependent on the charity and good will of the people. Wolfe was also in some difficulty. He had borrowed heavily on the strength of an allowance awarded by Rome and had been relying on Creagh to bring some of this money to pay off his creditors. But that money was taken when Creagh was arrested.[42] To add to Wolfe's depression, he was unclear as to his status following Pius IV's death and was facing problems with Good who was anxious to quit Ireland. Wolfe described him as weak, timid and self-centred.[43]

Coincidentally, Francisco Borgia had decided that as Wolfe's status as nuncio had technically lapsed, it was an opportune moment to order him quit Ireland.[44] It was suggested that Wolfe might travel to Germany and if this was not feasible, that he should stay with Creagh in Ulster where he might be safer.

But Wolfe was not welcome in Ulster. MacArdle had already been circulating rumours that Wolfe had taken a concubine and this information had been passed to Polanco and Borgia by Creagh and by Good.[45] Creagh appears to have maintained better relations with the local chieftans and clergy in Ulster. His continuing tenure and residence in Armagh suggest that he enjoyed the

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[41] A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 4r-v.

[42] A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f 45v.

43 A.R.S.I. Ital. 131 f 352r-v.

[44] A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f 154r. Polanco did not share Borgia's opinion on the lapse of Wolfe's faculty, but he did agree that he needed a rest. A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f 51r.

[45] A.R.S.I. Epp. Ext. 10 ff 290r-v, 294r.

protection, or at least the toleration, of Shane O'Neill. This may have driven something of a wedge between himself and Wolfe. That other Ulster clergy were actively lobbying in Rome for the setting up of an Inquisition under O'Neill's protection points to the further isolation of Wolfe in Ulster and within the church. The ambitions of O'Neill and his kinsmen in holy orders, particularly Miler McGrath, who drafted the petition on the Inquisition, were concerned with controlling rather than reforming the church.[46]

By the end of 1568, Polanco conceded that the Irish mission was not a success and determined to recall the men. But by the time that decision had been made Wolfe was under arrest.[47]

Francisco Costero ordered Daniel to Louvain.[48] Good had been initially deployed as Creagh's assistant so he could not be recalled so easily.[49] But Daniel missed his boat, and together with Good, turned his energies to preaching. This appeared to be more rewarding and both men decided to stay put, at least until the spring of 1569.[50] But there was anxiety at Rome. It was felt the priests should be recalled as soon as it was feasible and in the interim they should not stay at Youghal (which they had been using as the base for their preaching). [51]

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[46] A.S.V. Arm XI Vol. 91 f 357.

[47] A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f 209v-210r, 107 f 100v-101r.

[48] A.R.S.I. Germ. 147 f. 256r.

[49] A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f. 209v-210r.

[50] A.R.S.I. Germ. 149 f. 175r.

[51] A.R.S.I. Germ. 107 f. 183r.

Good returned to Belgium in the spring of 1570.[52] Daniel did not return to Louvain as instructed. He was in Madrid in January and by July was in Lisbon soliciting funds to buy Wolfe's release from Dublin Castle.[53] The General, Borgia instructed the Spanish Provincial to find a college place for Daniel to keep him from meddling in Irish affairs.[54]

In attempting to fulfill his commission, Wolfe had alienated powerful and politically influential figures both within and outside the church. He had parted company with Lacy, with the citizens of Limerick, MacArdle and McGrath. He had criticised their conduct and attempted to replace them with his own nominees. He alienated the ordinary clergy by attempting to stem the tide of Rome running and by insisting that only clergy bearing references from himself should be considered for preferment within the Church. His disgust with the behaviour of the Irish bishops reflected a growing frustration in his role and a sense of opposition to the reforming agenda from within the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland who actively undermined him. He later asserted that only a few of the Irish Bishops, notably Walsh and Leverous, were worthy of the office.[55]

His relationships with the Irish chieftains were no more successful. Those who he regarded as upstanding, men such as O'Connor Sligo, were ill-inclined to offend the Crown. More damaging was the attitude of Wolfe toward Shane

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[52] A.R.S.I. Germ. 108 f 98r.

[53] A.R.S.I. Hisp. 113 f 65r.

[54] A.R.S.I. Hisp. 69 f 28v.

[55] *Cal. S. P. Rome, 1558-1571*, No. 865 p 483.

O'Neill, who he openly condemned as a murderer and a heretic. Alienated from the Old English community, the most powerful chieftain in the north, and from a sizable proportion of the clergy, it is hardly surprising that Wolfe found it difficult to make progress. And a certain amount of culpability for this must lie with Rome. Having issued faculties to the nuncio, Pius IV turned his gaze elsewhere, to concentrate on managing the re-convened Council of Trent. But Pius failed to provide any substantial support for the mission, leaving Wolfe to sink or swim. The apparent inability of the mission to deliver reform of the Irish church in the face of entrenched interests undoubtedly shaped Wolfe's attitude, and ultimately led him toward more radical alternatives that he believed would facilitate a reformation.

When Wolfe had first arrived in Ireland, the Mayor of Limerick felt sufficiently confident of a sympathetic hearing to petition Sussex, seeking leave for the public celebration of mass in the city. The Lord Lieutenant indicated that he would have to seek clarification and further instruction from London. But the fluidity and uncertainty of these first years gave way to a hardening of positions on all sides. By the late 1560s the situation had become more difficult. By that point events in France had heightened levels of anxiety in reformed circles. Furthermore, the death of Pius IV, or more precisely the election of Pius V, ended the possibility of any easy rapprochement between crown and church. The coup d'etat in Scotland also contributed to tension and from May 1568 a viable alternative to Elizabeth was permanently resident on English soil. With the fall of Northumberland and the ascent of the Cecil camp, there could no longer be any room for ambiguity around matters of religion

With the exception of Wolfe, the Jesuit presence (such as it was) had been withdrawn from Ireland before Pius V, with apparently little regard for immediate or practical consequences, tossed the grenade that was *Regnans in excelsis* into play.

CHAPTER FOUR

Chaos in Excelsis, the legacy of Pius V

Reaction in England to the publication of Pius V's Bull of Excommunication, *Regnans in Excelsis* was firm and it was punitive. The bull was first published in England (and so given canonical effect) when a copy was fixed to the gate of the Bishop of London's house on the evening of 25 May 1570. The culprit, John Felton, a London Merchant, was hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor at St Paul's Churchyard, the scene of his crime.

Edmund Daniel, who had been working to secure Wolfe's release from captivity, returned to Ireland in 1572. At the time of his arrest he was carrying letters from Fitzmaurice to Gregory XIII and it was believed that he was responsible for bringing the copy of the bull that was displayed on the gates of Limerick.[1] He was held in Limerick for some time before he was taken to Cork and tried, before Perrot, for treason. He suffered the same fate as Felton on 25 October 1572. Daniel has the distinction of being the first Jesuit martyr in Europe.[2]

These two savage acts signalled a significant shift in the relationship between the Crown and its Catholic subjects. Membership of and allegiance to the authority of the pope was now interpreted as a mark of opposition and potential treachery. But three years after Daniel's death, the constable who apprehended the Jesuit, Thomas Arthur of Limerick, petitioned Gregory XIII for absolution for his part in the matter.[3] And this was a sign of growing unease at the turn of events among those who had hitherto supported the authority of the Crown and the

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[1] TNA: PRO SP63/34/32 (i) and (ii).

[2] Hogan *Ib. Ign.*, p 20.

[3] A.S.V. Supp. Lat. 3355 f 99.

apparatus of the State in Ireland. Over the course of the next two decades this unease would become alienation. Provoked by sporadic outbursts of savagery (particularly after the Baltinglass rebellion) this alienation would play a significant role in redefining Irish Catholic identity, particularly among the Old English community. The ethos of the Old English had been informed and underwritten by the missionary manifesto implicit in the bull *Laudabiliter*, the foundation text of the colony. Culture and religion had been underpinned by a sense of the exceptional nature of their relationship with the church and with the crown. But as far as the new breed of administrators in Dublin and London were concerned, all Irishmen (regardless of origin) were now subject to the Crown. And as church papists and recusants, the Queen's Irish subjects were, at best, troublesome.

But in practice, those servants of the state who operated on the ground appear to have inhabited a less ideologically rigorous environment. Wolfe languished in Dublin castle for five years, and the conditions of his confinement appear to have been dependent to a large degree on the whim of individual goalers and the level of comfort he could afford. Wolfe does not appear to have been regarded as a serious threat to the security of the state. And in these circumstances a prisoner could buy his way out of goal. Release could be secured on payment of a bail bond (or a bribe) to the appropriate person.

Mercurian had been informed as late as 1576 that Archbishop Creagh's release could be secured on payment to his goalers of 300 florins (to cover expenses

incurred in captivity).[4] Aquaviva was also informed that Charles Lea remained in goal on account of a debt of 100 crowns (again incurred for upkeep) and that once this was settled he would be released.[5] But the money was not raised in either case and both men languished in goal for years. "For want of a nail", much was lost.

Although it is clear that the resources of the church were stretched in many directions, the failure to secure the release of the prisoners was essentially an issue of priority rather than resource and displays a rather callous disregard on the part of the curia for the lives of its agents. Flush from the victory of Lepanto, Gregory XIII had moved on to grander projects. The Pope concerned himself with ambitious plans for the defeat of the Turks, the re-conquest of England or the destruction of the Huguenots in France. Creagh and Wolfe were old news. And they were unwelcome reminders of the failed initiative of a previous regime. Successive popes and their advisors had demonstrated a flair for strategy and long term planning. But all of them fell short of the mark when it came to detail, or consistency. The provision of adequate resource and support to implement strategy was absent from successive papal initiatives to bring about a reform of the Irish Church. And shifts in emphasis and direction from the top meant that initiatives were abandoned at an early stage of their implementation. Far from being coherent or strategically integrated, the overall landscape of the papal Counter-Reformation project was littered with wasted lives and lost opportunity. This was to a large degree inherent in the nature of the institution of the papacy

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[4] A.R.S.I. Germ. 156 f 23v.

[5] A.R.S.I. Franc. I i f 206r.

itself and was determined by the selection process that ensured constantly shifting sand at the centre. Where Paul III and Pius IV promoted institutional reflection and reconstruction, Paul IV effectively ignored the Council of Trent (which was suspended for the duration of his pontificate). But coherence, direction and sustained and sustainable strategies had other drivers within the institutional structures of church.

Foremost among these was the Generalate, the inner circle of administrators who ruled the Society of Jesus. Like the pope, the General of the Society was chosen for life. Unlike the pope, the candidates were not elderly. Claudio Aquaviva was thirty-seven when he was elected in 1581. He served as General until his death in 1615. The electoral body was a General Congregation of the Society, comprised of all members who had taken the fourth vow of obedience to the pope. But in practice, the candidates were drawn from a self-selecting oligarchy that ensured continuity and stability. As the organisation grew its character changed. The original ethos (of the missionary band) had, by the latter half of the century, been transformed into a teaching machine. This institutionalisation was a function of growth and was a particular characteristic of the Generalates of Mercurian and Aquaviva. There were dissenting voices and these emerged after the death of Borgia and the election of the first non-Spanish General, the Dutchman, Everard Mercurian as his successor. Opposition came primarily from within the Spanish province and was led by Loyola's nephew, Antonio de Araoz, the Spanish Provincial. He and his supporters saw their influence declining within the organisation and sought to wrest control or to change the direction of

the order. But these attempts were thwarted, the dissidents were expelled and continuity and stability was maintained.[6]

While this intrigue was unravelling in the Spanish province, Wolfe, who was a resourceful operator, had borrowed his way out of goal and travelled from Dublin to Lisbon via Limerick. He took passage with some merchants from Waterford, but he was obliged to pay an exorbitant fee for the crossing, over four times the standard rate. He was accompanied on his journey by James Fitzmaurice's young son, who was going abroad for schooling.[7]

When he reached Portugal, Wolfe's money problems crystallised. The Portuguese province estimated his debts at 500 ducats.[8] Wolfe's own reckoning detailed £128 owed to his goaler for his food and keep, £64 owed to ten citizens of Dublin who stood bail, £64 to a group of Limerick merchants who provided support to Good and Daniel and a further £40 raised in Limerick to support Creagh, a total debt of almost £300.[9] This is roughly equivalent to €100,000 in current terms. Wolfe had no assets and no income. The extent of his facility alone indicated a degree of commitment on the part of his creditors to his mission to the Irish church.

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[6] G Lewy "The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Early Years of the Society of Jesus", *Church History* Vol. 29 (2) June 1960 pp 141-160.

[7] TNA: SP63/43/17; A.S.R.I. Lus. ff 286-8.

[8] A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 f 277.

[9] A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 f 288r.

The Portuguese province was not inclined to bail him out. As one Jesuit wryly commented, Wolfe had been in Ireland "on the pope's business". Clearly this was not regarded as being necessarily the business of the Portuguese province.[10] However, faced with the immediate prospect of Wolfe and an increasingly agitated and vocal representative of his many creditors they had to do something. The provincial offered the Irish merchant roughly one third of the total debt in full and final settlement. When this was declined the provincial threatened to have the man expelled from the country if he continued to make trouble.[11]

Bad debt and disgruntled creditors was not the only fall out from the failure of Wolfe's nunciature. Wolfe himself had shifted his position in the wake of the excommunication of Elizabeth. In a preamble to a detailed intelligence report on the situation in Ireland, prepared for the Spanish ambassador to Portugal, Wolfe stated that in the years before the excommunication of the Queen, he would never have contemplated compromising his duty as a subject, but now released from this obligation, his duty to God and his zeal to eliminate heresy took precedence.[12]

Villaregia, the Portuguese Provincial, had already informed the General of his concerns about Wolfe's plans to produce a memorial on a projected Spanish conquest of Ireland.[13] The Spanish ambassador to Portugal was also

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[10] A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 f 277.

[11] A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 ff 119r-121v, ff 286-8.

[12] A.S.V. Arm. XIV Cap. II No 26.

[13] A.R.S.I. Lus. 66 f 92r-v.

embarrassed lest he be compromised by the document and hinted at Philip's displeasure. But Philip, who liked to keep his options open, lent a sympathetic, if not uncritical ear to the Jesuit. Encouraged by this, Wolfe cut short a journey to Rome and turned back to Portugal, intending to purchase arms for a projected invasion of Ireland.[14] In May 1575, Villaregia reported that a Spanish merchant had informed him that Wolfe had transferred a substantial sum to France. Where he had obtained the money from was a mystery.[15] But his intentions were clear. He planned to buy a large quantity of arms and smuggle them into Ireland concealed in a cargo of salt.[16]

Wolfe's activities made him enemies on two fronts within the Society. On the one hand, the central authorities within the Order (the General and his circle) were anxious that his meddling would embarrass them, harm relations with Spain, or compromise alternative options then being considered against England. But he also became an unwitting pawn in the deteriorating relations between Portugal and Spain. The uncertain future of the Portuguese Crown, which was to pass to Spain on the death of King Henry in 1580, heightened anti-Spanish sentiment among subjects of the Portuguese Jesuit province. The hostility of the Portuguese ensured that Wolfe's increasingly idiosyncratic and clandestine behaviour was put into the public domain and his fall from grace was inevitable. He was expelled from the Society.[17]

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[14] A.R.S.I. Lus. 67 f 83; Hisp. 124 f 14r-v.

[15] A.R.S.I. Hisp. 124 f 72v.

[16] A.R.S.I. Lus. 67 f 150r-v.

[17] A.R.S.I. Hisp. 124 f 206r. For a discussion of the circumstances surrounding Wolfe's departure from the Society of Jesus see T. J. Morrissey, "'Almost hated and detested by all': The

Wolfe's career is paradigmatic of the progress of the Counter-Reformation in Ireland. Sent to the country with an impressive array of faculties, dispensations and authority to effect a reformation of the church, both spiritual and structural, Wolfe found his efforts frustrated by the hostility of an incumbent clergy whose authority had been left largely untouched by successive religious settlements. An embedded culture of "Rome running", strong local control over appointments (Creagh noted that O'Neill even commandeered the incomes of the clergy in his entourage) and sheer distance all worked against him. And the papacy contributed to this situation by its failure to engage with the proper implementation of its own vision. Pius IV appears to have believed that it was sufficient to have come up with the plan, made the appointment and extended faculties and the job would get done, leaving him free to turn to other things. But the vision implied long term commitment. Reform through education was at the underlying heart of the plan. It could not happen overnight. But without adequate, regular funding or consistent support it was not going to happen at all. Ironically, it was the strength and resilience of the structures and culture of the Irish Church, rather than its absence that was to be the immediate undoing of Wolfe's mission.

Whether Wolfe shared the view of Robert Persons and Henry Fitzsimon that the failure of the Marian clergy to effect any substantive initiative for change was the undoing of post-reformation Catholicism is a moot point, but he arrived at

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Problem of David Wolfe", T. M. McCoog (ed.) *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture 1573-1580* (St Louis, 2004) pp 675-703.

similar conclusions as to the necessity of political upheaval as the means to achieve its reformation. This radicalism drove him into the arms of Fitzmaurice, and, ultimately out of the Society of Jesus.

But Wolfe's mission had not been entirely in vain. From his arrival in Ireland, Wolfe set about identifying suitable candidates for the Jesuit novitiate, boys of good family who could be sent to study at colleges in Europe and who, in time, could themselves serve on the mission in Ireland. The first three candidates, Maurice Healy, Edmund Daniel and David Dimus were dispatched to the German College in the care of one of the canons of Limerick Cathedral who was travelling to Rome on official business.[18] The three candidates made their novitiate vows on 11 September 1561 in Rome.[19] More candidates arrived from Limerick and from other Munster towns where Wolfe was active. Throughout the 1560s and 1570s these entrants studied, taught and rose through the ranks in Jesuit colleges across Europe. By the time that Wolfe had returned to Portugal, there was a growing pool of Irish Jesuits in Europe, candidates who might serve on a mission to Ireland or teach in colleges and schools overseas.

On 5 December 1564, Robert Rochford of Ferns had entered the novitiate in Rome.[20] By 1568 he had studied at Ingolstadt, and Dillingen but his health had not been good. He was sent to Louvain where the climate was thought to be

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[18] A.R.S.I. Germ. 143 f 82r.

[19] A.R.S.I. Rom. 170 f 94.

[20] A.R.S.I. Rom. 170 f 153.

similar to that in Ireland.[21] He was dispatched home to Ireland in late 1572 where he set up a school in Youghal.[22]

Edmund Tanner, who was thirty-nine when he joined the Society, proved to be a more difficult subject for successive Generals. Tanner entered the Order with a specific desire to serve in Ireland. This enthusiasm was frequently frustrated by the demands of his superiors who sought to distract him from his obsession and keep him occupied in other matters.[23] Tanner's frustration grew and he lobbied to be released from the Society, which Borgia agreed to do in the summer of 1571.[24] On leaving the Jesuits, Tanner, courtesy of the patronage of Morone (and through him, Borromeo) landed a job teaching in a seminary in Milan.[25] Some time later, he was appointed Bishop of Cork.

Wolfe was expelled from the Society in 1575. But as a veil was drawn over one enterprise, a new venture was being planned and two more missionaries, Charles Lea and David Dimus were preparing to join Rochford in Ireland. Both men had been examined by doctors and ordered home on health grounds. Tanner, spotting an opportunity, offered to take them under his wing.[26]

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[21] A.R.S.I. Germ. 149 f 181r.

[22] A.R.S.I. Germ. 141 f 1r.

[23] A.R.S.I. Germ. 107 f 197v.

[24] A.R.S.I. Germ. 108 f 175v.

[25] A.S.V. Arm LXII Vol. 33 f 138.

[26] A.R.S.I. Ital. 146 f 39r-v.

The instructions issued to Lea indicate that the intent of the mission was limited. The men were instructed not to meddle in local politics in Ireland, but to stick to teaching and some preaching. The limited scope of their remit may be explained by the fact that they were not yet ordained. Tanner had been issued with a faculty to ordain Rochford in Ireland.[27]

The attitude of the Society to this venture was decidedly lukewarm. The men were not provided with any resources for their mission although Lea was given licence to beg for alms from Jesuit superiors en route to Ireland. An alternative interpretation might be that the novices, deemed unfit for work in Europe, had been tossed out of the nest and left to make their own way home. And the journey was not without incident. There would appear to have been tension between the two Jesuits and Tanner. The Jesuits in Lisbon (still smarting from the Wolfe affair) were also suspicious of Tanner's motives and intentions. Lea also complained to the General about the general lack of provision made for their journey.[28]

A fourth Jesuit, David Stackpole, was also given permission to return to Ireland in order to regularise a family inheritance matter. His visit to the country was brief and his role appears to have been that of messenger.[29] Tanner was requested by Mercurian to send reports back with Stackpole who was returning

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[27] A.R.S.I. Rom. 12 (i) f 34 r-v.

[28] A.R.S.I. Lus. 67 f 213r; Hisp. 124 f 273r.

[29] A.R.S.I. Gal. 89 (i) f 92.

to France.[30] Mercurian heard nothing from Lea or Rochford for a long time and his first report was a letter from Tanner dated 11 October 1577. Tanner reported that Lea and Rochford taught school in Youghal, and encouraged frequent communion, good morals and Christian doctrine. However, David was no longer working with them and appeared to have abandoned his vocation.[31]

Within Ireland, the political temperature was rising. The defeat of Fitzmaurice and the relative ease with which government forces dealt with the rebels convinced Mercurian of the folly of further Jesuit engagement. In an effort to brush off requests for action from the papacy, the General observed that he did not see how the Jesuits would achieve much in such a difficult environment.[32] Mercurian, who had been unhappy with the direction that Wolfe had taken, was increasingly uncomfortable with the schemes being promoted and supported by Gregory XIII and his Secretary of State, Cardinal Galli. Therefore he was anxious to maintain regular contact with (and a degree of control over) his young subjects in Ireland. But Mercurian died in August 1580. By the time his successor, Aquaviva, had been elected, Rochford had been forced to leave Ireland and Charles Lea was in prison.[33] Aquaviva was of the same mind as Mercurian and no further Jesuits were sent to Ireland until James Archer's arrival in 1598. And this marked a new chapter in Jesuit history, the beginning of a

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[30] A.R.S.I. Gal. 49 f 9v.

[31] I.J.A. Ms A I

[32] A.R.S.I. Franc. I (i) f 71v.

[33] A.R.S.I. Franc. I (i) f 117v.

period of definite commitment of manpower and resources to missionary endeavour.

Scant evidence remains of the missionary activity of Lea and Rochford. But what we do know is that their initial attention to teaching was set aside in favour of a more active role supporting Fitzmaurice and Baltinglass. Rochford escaped to the Continent in the aftermath of the Baltinglass rebellion, Lea was less fortunate.

The rebellions were crushed with an impetuous ferocity. But the severity of the government's response to the Baltinglass revolt alienated Old English opinion in Ireland and played a significant role in the rise of recusancy as a political phenomenon in the towns of Ireland. In the relatively short space of the twenty-five years that separated the Baltinglass rebellion and the outbreaks of resistance in the towns that marked the initial years of King James's reign, the political complexion of Ireland had been transformed.

But the outlook of the Society of Jesus had also undergone a radical change. The personnel who served on the mission during the seventeenth century stand in contrast to their sixteenth century counterparts. They were not Apostolic nuncios, the mission was Society business, not a papal mission, and the lower profile maintained by most of the Jesuit subjects working in Ireland contrasts with the high spirited activism of Daniel, Rochford and Lea. The complexion of the order was changing rapidly in the later years of the sixteenth century and as the order expanded, it became more structured and more controlling of its

subjects. The men sent to Ireland after Wolfe were young, inexperienced, and naive. The priests who staffed the later Jesuit mission to Ireland were older, politically more sophisticated and aware of the wider political hinterland than their predecessors (or their colleagues on the continent). Control of the mission in Ireland was concentrated firmly in the hands of a group around the Irish Superior, Christopher Holywood, and this control effectively curtailed personal initiative.

The efforts of Wolfe, Daniel, Rochford and Lea all ended in badly. But they shared something else in common: all were convinced of the central role that education would have to play in the mission if it were to succeed as a long term project. All had endeavoured to invest time, money and effort in schooling in Ireland. They identified suitable candidates for the Society and, in the absence of facilities at home, arranged for them to go abroad to be trained in at the German College in Rome and in other colleges run by the Society across Europe. This process was of critical significance and left an enduring mark on the future complexion of the order, both in Europe and in Ireland. And each of these men had played some role in that.

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The failure of Wolfe and his colleagues to establish a papal Counter-Reformation in Ireland (a mission that was predicated upon a fundamental assumption: the restoration of England, and Elizabeth, to the Church) is a symptom of a wider failure on the part of the Old English colony to come to terms with the shifting

sands on which the foundations of its own status and identity rested in Ireland. This was, primarily, a failure to comprehend the fundamental shift in relationships with the state, and with the papacy that had taken place in a relatively short time frame. By the 1570s, a restoration of Catholicism as had occurred under Mary was no longer going to be feasible. The nature and the priorities of the Church had changed and so too had the direction and control of the English state and its administrative strategy in Ireland.

The new constitutional dispensation of the 1540s (and its retrospective papal endorsement) marked a high watermark in the relationship between the community of the Pale and the Royal administration in Ireland. But the wheels were coming off this particular wagon before it ever got moving. Within a few short months of his arrival as Lord Lieutenant, Sussex's regime was the subject of a series of significant complaints and allegations from the leaders of the colony.

And that was the nub of the problem. Ireland was no longer a colony. The colonial elite, whose position and power was founded upon their special relationship with the Crown and its representatives in Ireland, had effectively colluded in undermining the ideological foundation of their position (an English colony with a papal mandate to promote the true Catholic church among the Irish). Ireland was now a kingdom and the royal writ extended to all the kings subjects, equally.

And this shift in the interrelationship between the elements of the Irish polity was signalled in a number of ways. First, there was a subtle, but fundamental, re-casting of the ideological "back story"; the foundation myth of the kingdom. The "historical" formulation that drew on Giraldus and *Laudabiliter* was retired to the bench and a revisionist formulation based on a fusion of consent, dedition, conquest and prescription was brought into play.[34] But the logical path this reasoning followed elevated the status of the "mere Irish" and, by implication, diminished the special status of the colonists, subordinating both to the representatives of the royal administration.

This theoretical down-grading occurred at a time when successive Vice-regal programmes sought to control and civilise the polity and generate net revenue from the Queen's Irish dominion. But these programmes provoked significant opposition, principally among the Palesmen who ended up bearing much of the cost of the resulting military campaigns by way of local assessment (the *cess*). This was levied as a tax, or purveyance, but frequently it took the form of billeting soldiers on the property or in the homes of those assessed. And the size of the garrison had increased dramatically (by a factor of 3 between the 1560s and the 1580s).[35] In addition, it was common knowledge that officials (including the Lord Deputy) skimmed the revenues to supplement their salaries. On the

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[34] C. Brady "The attainder of Shane O'Neill and the problems of Tudor state-building" in C. Brady and J. Ohlmeyer *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005) p 37-8.

[35] C. Brady "Conservative subversives: the community of the Pale and the Dublin administration, 1556-86" in P. Corish (ed.), *Radicals, rebels and establishments: Hist. Studies XV* (Belfast, 1985) p 18.

ground, the Palesmen were at the mercy of those lower down the food chain who were billeted on them and who helped themselves to whatever they could.

This was an issue of concern and of substantial grievance. And although successive Lords Deputy were sensitive to the distress this burden caused, Government could not function without the revenue. It could not (and therefore would not) give it up.

So the Palesmen embarked on a campaign of attrition conducted on two fronts, non co-operation at home and factional lobbying in London. This campaign yielded a partial result. The Palesmen succeeded in humbling Sussex, Sidney and Fitzwilliam, each in turn. Although they could not overthrow the fundamental character of vice-regal rule, the Old English remained a force to be reckoned with in Ireland. They continued to control the physical assets of the country, the land, the cattle, trade and, as lawyers they used the courts to exercise effective mastery over the legal system. But their traditional place at the heart of the administration was being eroded.

This was a tense situation for all concerned. The Palesmen had championed the cause of English Government in Ireland, only to find that their status had been (theoretically) downgraded. The implementation of successive Government programmes (effective or otherwise) was costing significantly more money than had been anticipated. This was digging deep into the pockets of the Palesmen, traditionally the Government's staunchest supporters. Then, to make a difficult situation worse, Pius V proclaimed Elizabeth "*the pretended Queen of England*

and the servant of crime" a heretic, released her Catholic subjects from any obligation to her, forbade them to obey her orders and laws and pronounced anathema on those who persisted in supporting her regime.

Chief amongst Elizabeth's alleged offences was the charge that she had "*removed the Royal Council, composed of the nobility of England, and filled it with obscure men, being heretics*". And so it seemed in Ireland where the principal offices of the crown, traditionally the preserve of the lawyers and bishops of the Pale, were now being filled by ambitious placemen from England.

The self-consciously papalist rebellion of Fitzmaurice in Munster did not have widespread support in the Pale, but it had touched a chord among some gentry of the Marches (the Eustaces, the Nugents and the Delvin kin groups) who declared for Fitzmaurice and the Pope. But the government misread the situation and over-reacted with the same hysterical ferocity that allowed the Cecil faction to assert their dominion over the government of England in the aftermath of the Campion affair. But the long-term result in Ireland would prove to be rather different.

Although a limited number of people were executed in the aftermath of the Baltinglass rebellion, the Pale community as a whole was subjected to three or four years of brutalising harrasment by government troops. Then, under Perrot, the government once more attempted to assert some form of permanent settlement on the country and in so doing, provided in the parliament called to

endorse the plan, a focus for a self consciously Catholic opposition to the vice-regal programme.

Just as the missionary imperative of the English colony in Ireland had defined the self-image of the Palesmen, their opposition to the government programme of Perrot and his English Protestant associates was defined by a self-consciously Catholic identity. But this Catholicism was distinctly different from the "state" religion of canonists like Dowdall and Curwen. The political loyalties of the Palesmen had travelled a considerable distance since Curwen had published *Illius* in the summer of 1555, and it is also clear that their religious sensibilities had moved on.

The political pressures driving that transformation have been enumerated. But what is not clear is how a distinctly Catholic or recusant sensibility was developed without any obvious intervention by or active role for a resident Irish clergy to mediate its propagation. This raises some fundamental questions as to what the significant drivers behind a Counter-Reformation sensibility in Ireland might have been and to what extent they (rather than the appointed agents of the church in the country) determined the essence and future direction of Catholicism in Ireland.

The missionary endeavour of Wolfe had been founded on the anticipation of the reconciliation of the papacy and the state. This premise proved to be false and as this uncomfortable truth became clear, Wolfe seems to have suffered something of a personal crisis of identity that undermined not only his traditional loyalty

and political outlook but also his commitment to the Society of Jesus. Within the Order itself, a fundamental re-orientation and definition of mission, purpose and priority was taking place and this institutional transformation would have a fundamental impact on the nature and extent of the next stage of engagement of the Society with the Old English Catholic community in Ireland.

As the papal project for a Counter-Reformation in Ireland was falling apart, the Jesuits themselves were undergoing a process of fundamental change and re-positioning. This process re-defined the order with a primarily teaching remit, running colleges and schools across Europe. And it was in these schools and colleges, away from Ireland, that the intellectual and spiritual formation of Irish Jesuit subjects took place. Most of the men had left their families at a relatively early age and reached maturity in an environment which was removed from (or at best on the fringes of) developments at home in Ireland. When first generation of students who went overseas in the 1570s and early 1580s returned to Ireland to work on the mission, they received a much more positive and welcoming reception, from both laity and clergy, than their predecessors did.

In the space of fifty odd years the religious attitudes and outlook of the Irish (or at any rate the "English of Irish birth") would appear to have undergone a radical transformation. However, neither the Jesuits who came to Ireland nor, according to the reports of Wolfe or Good, any of the other regular or secular clergy in the country played a significant role in this transformation. There was a re-fashioning and a formulation of attitude and identity that appears to have been an

initiative of the laity, unprompted and unmediated by the institutional church in Ireland.

But the concurrent institutional re-fashioning of the Society of Jesus itself, which took place during the 1570s and 1580s, meant that when missionaries returned to Ireland they would be best placed to respond positively to the sensibilities of the laity and exert a defining leadership role in re-fashioning the self-image of the Old English Catholic community which had been under siege for so long.

PART II

The Development of Institutional Structures, 1570-1633

CHAPTER FIVE

Ratio Studiorum:

From Soldiers of Christ to Schoolmasters of Europe

The original circle of companions around Loyola could not have anticipated the rapid and exponential growth of the Society, in terms of its membership and of its institutional activity that occurred over just two or three decades. This growth had a profound effect upon the nature of the Order. The original *Formula* of the Institute (which was refashioned as the foundation bull "*Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae*") described the principal object of the Society as *"the advancement of souls in Christian life and doctrine and the propagation of the Faith by the ministry of the word"*. The original vision of the work of Society was framed in a determinedly missionary context.

The founders had not intended that the Society should be a teaching order. Although Ignatius and the other companions believed in and were committed to a high level of learning, facility of expression and firm theological training as a prerequisite for membership, they envisaged that recruits would have acquired these skills at an orthodox university before they entered the Jesuit Order. But this proved to be an impractical solution because the standards of orthodoxy, levels of discipline and the quality of teaching and learning at many established universities were unsatisfactory. And so the Society, unwittingly, embarked on the establishment of a vast educational enterprise that extended across Europe and beyond.

Very quickly the Society's assistance was being enlisted to run colleges where provision was to be made for both scholastics and lay students. At the time of Loyola's death, the character of the Society was undergoing a radical transformation and much of its financial and human resources were being

deployed in the running of schools and colleges[1]. In 1556 the Jesuits ran thirty-three colleges. In 1599 they operated 245 colleges in Europe. That figure had increased to 372 in 1615. By 1626 the total was 441.[2]

Teaching had become, by default rather than design, the principal activity and the *Ratio Studiorum*, the formal curriculum of the Society, adopted by General Congregation in 1599 states this explicitly:

"It is the principal ministry of the Society of Jesus to educate youth in every branch of knowledge that is in keeping with its Institute. The aim of our educational programme is to lead men to the knowledge and love of our creator and redeemer. The provincial should therefore make every effort to ensure that the various curricula in our schools produce the results which our vocation demands of us"[3]

The *Ratio Studiorum* established a uniform curriculum and lesson plan for teaching and learning which was as thorough as it was structured. Students spent seven years on the Latin and Greek authors, three more years on Aristotle alone, four more years on scholastic theology, a further two on patristics with an additional two years to achieve a doctorate. But the curriculum did not offer any preparation for missionary endeavour, such as vernacular language and the study

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[1] M. Fois "Everard Mercurian" in T. M. McCoog *The Mercurian Project: Forming Jesuit Culture 1573-1580* (St Louis, 2004) pp 25-30.

[2] H. Höpfl *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630.* (Cambridge, 2004) p 11.

[3] A. P. Farrell *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599*, (Washington, 1970) p 1.

of controversy was a relatively new subject in Jesuit schools, an innovation made by Bellarmine at the Roman College in 1576.

And this structured, orderly, sequential approach to the education of (literally) the elites of Europe, had a profound and transformative effect upon the character of the Society itself. The approach to the running of schools mirrored a developing organisational structure for the Society, in which a clear almost rigid sense of hierarchy, procedure and bureaucracy was emerging.

There were two classes of member. There was a very clear distinction between those who were ordained (and those destined for ordination), and those who were not. *Coadjutors* were lay members who would not become priests but were occupied with domestic duties. These subjects were managed by *procurators.* They convened their own congregations every three years and had a right to call for a General Congregation of the Society (though this was not exercised). The second, and more important class was made up of clerical grades, scholastics (novices), who after two years probation, would take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. After ordination and an additional year in the novitiate they were promoted to *spiritual coadjutator.* This constituted the bulk of the society's membership and served as its teachers, preachers and missionaries. An inner circle proceeded to take the fourth vow, pledging obedience to the pope. These were *professed* Jesuits. Members of this group were eligible for high office and they, or their elected representatives, constituted the General Congregation of the Order, the body which was responsible for electing the General and ratifying the codification, systemising and regulation of the Order. This process was a

particular feature of the administrative regime under Generals Mercurian and Aquaviva. These two men presided over a period of rapid growth and institutional transformation of the Society between 1573 and 1615.

One feature of this process was a subordination of individual action that had found expression in more overt political initiatives of Wolfe, Daniel, Rochford and Lea. This process is also evident in the events that occurred in the English College in Rome when the Jesuits wrested control of that institution from Owen Lewis and Morys Clynnog (who were part of Goldwell's inner circle that had been instrumental in urging Pius V to excommunicate Elizabeth).[4] The instinct of Mercurian and Aquaviva, and the purpose of the structures they put in place within the Society had been to suppress impulses that William Allen observed were "the common inclination of Adam"[5]. These common inclinations were nevertheless, disruptive and counterproductive to the core mission of the Order.

It was in this period of institutional and infrastructural formation and growth that the students who came from Ireland, some of them inspired and encouraged by Wolfe and his colleagues, were shaped intellectually. And it was these men (or some of them at any rate) who would serve on the Irish mission of the Society during the Jacobean and Caroline period.

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[4] J. Nice "Being "British" in Rome: The Welsh at the English College, 1578-1584" *Cath. Hist. Rev.* Vol. 92 (2006) pp 1-24.

[5] T. F. Knox (ed.) *Letters and Memorials of William Cardinal Allen* (London, 1882) p 74.

CHAPTER SIX

Formation of a Jesuit: Why the Irish Joined

Any overview of Jesuit activity in the sixteenth century that focused only on the careers of one or two outstanding individuals would be misleading. It would create a false dichotomy, an impression of the Society as militant and politically active in the sixteenth century, yet contemplative and deeply conservative in the seventeenth century. And this perspective may have prompted some modern historians to pose questions about the nature of the Irish Reformation that have provoked controversy.[1]

The principal strategy and focus of the Society was on the recruitment and training of a body of young novices. This was true of Ireland also. It had been a recurrent theme of Jesuit interventions from the time of Salmeron's fleeting first visit. The training of students took place out side of the country, but it was critical in determining the character of the Jesuit activity in Ireland. And it is this process of training and recruitment that we must look at to fully understand the direction in which the Irish Jesuit mission developed and to grasp its contribution to the development of a Counter-Reformation ideology.

The much quoted Jesuit boast "Give us a child at the age of seven and he will be ours for the rest of his life", although no doubt apocryphal, strikingly conveys the emphasis that the Order placed on the thorough training, from an early age, of both lay pupils and members of the novitiate. This tendency on the part of the Order to recruit as novices those who had been brought up in a peculiarly Jesuit

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1 The most celebrated controversy of its type must be that engaged between Brendan Bradshaw and Nicholas Canny. B. Bradshaw, "Sword, Word and Strategy in the Reformation in Ireland", *Hist. Jn.* XX1 (1978) pp 475-502; N. Canny, "Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland, une question mal posée", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* XXX (1979) pp 423-50.

way of life is balanced by a marked disinclination to accept into the novitiate, adults or men who had already trained for the priesthood with another order.

But Loyola's original intent had been different. The earliest entrants into the Society were educated, mature and experienced men. And this characteristic (an advanced age of initial entry) is evident among those Irishmen who joined the Society in its early years. David Wolfe, probably the first Irishman in the Society, was twenty-seven when he joined in 1555.[2] Wolfe was already ordained, and a priest of some prominence within the diocesan hierarchy of Limerick.

By the 1560s the average age of all entrants to the Society had dropped markedly.[3] Most entrants were boys in their late teens, educated in the increasingly fashionable Jesuit schools. But the tendency for Irish entrants to be men of mature years, often already in Orders, continued for some time. Edmund Tanner was thirty-nine when he entered the Society in 1565.[4] It is likely that Tanner was already ordained, for within two years of entry, Francis Borgia, General of the Order, was recommending him to Peter Canisius for a lectureship in Theology.[5] At the time of his release from the Society in 1571, his advanced

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2 In a letter to Mercurian dated 12 December 1573, Wolfe gives his age as being forty-five; A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 ff 286-288.

3 T.V. Cohen "Why the Jesuits joined, 1540-1600", *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* (1974) p 251. By the 1560s the median age of recruits was nineteen and only ten per cent of novices were over thirty.

4 A.R.S.I. Rom. 170 p 161. Hogan *Ib.Ign.*, p 16. Polanco noted his reputation as a scholar, M.H.S.I. Borgia IV pp 69.

5 A.R.S.I. Germ. 107 f 36v

age did not go unremarked. Nadal referred to him as the "old" Irishman, and Richard Fleming was to express his sympathy for the "poor old man".[6] Charles Lea, at the time of his entry in 1570, was in his mid-twenties and had studied for some time at Oxford, Paris and Cologne. Nicholas Sedgrave of the Dublin merchant family entered in 1573 aged thirty-five. Thomas Field of Limerick entered the following year aged twenty-five. James Barry of Cork entered as a novice in 1579 aged twenty-seven, and the same year, Nicholas Comerford of Waterford, a priest and Doctor of Theology, entered the Society aged thirty. James Archer was also thirty at the time of his entry into the Society. Thomas White, the founder of the Irish college at Salamanca, was a late entry to the Society as was Florence More, the first Ulsterman to join.[7] The picture that emerges of the first years of the history of the Irish mission is fairly clear. Recruitment was slow and limited. Those men who did join were, for the most part, experienced clergy in their twenties and thirties. Overall, the average age of entry was twenty-seven.

These statistics contrast markedly with the situation that prevailed at the end of the century. A sharp rise in the number of Irishmen entering the Society in the 1590s was coupled with a fall in the average age of entry. And this was the effective point at which critical mass was achieved and the process of recruitment and training over the previous forty years began to bear fruit. Unlike

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6 A.R.S.I. Germ. 109 f 43r; A.R.S.I. Germ. 134 f 183r.

7 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.,* pp 17, 19, 25-26. On White, A.R.S.I. Cast. 37 f 40r-v. On More, A.R.S.I Germ. 167 f 45.

some papal initiatives, Jesuit strategy was consistent, and it recognised and understood that the Counter-Reformation was a very long game.

In the years from 1598 to 1604, almost as many Irishmen jointed the Order as had done in the previous sixty years of its existence, a total of forty-four new entrants.[8] Taking as an indicative group the Irish novices who entered the Society in 1604, the average age of that group had dropped markedly to twenty-two,[9] and the ages of a clear majority of entrants in this group was below the mean point. A few novices of mature years, such as Thomas White of Clonmel, aged thirty-five at the time of entry, distort the average. Most of the students were still in their late teens. Indeed, the shift from the priestly novitiate in Wolfe's time to a student novitiate during Holywood's superiorship is one of the most significant features of the complexion of the Order and it fundamentally altered the nature and scope of its activities within the Catholic community in Ireland.

The process of the recruitment of clergy into the Order during the first phase of the history of the mission seems to have hinged on contacts made during the career of the prospective novice with the Jesuits on the Continent. David Wolfe joined as a result of contact with Loyola and his circle in Rome. Under Loyola's influence, Wolfe renounced his benefices in Ireland and joined the Society.[10] Often those who found promising careers in the church or universities abruptly

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8 Hogan *Ib. Ign.*, p 249.

9 Ibid., p 123-124.

10 *M.H.S.I. Mon. Ignatiana* Vol. X p 496.

cut short by the Elizabethan church settlement, men such as William Good, Nicholas Comerford or James Archer, went into exile of the continent. Here they became attracted to a religious order whose early dynamism, enthusiasm and vigour embodied the spirit of the early years of the Counter-Reformation. The reputation of the Society of Jesus was very alluring.

In contrast to the rate of adult entry into the Society, the numbers of youthful Irish novices remained small until the 1590s. One explanation for this must be the limited nature of Jesuit activity in Ireland during this period. Few members of the Order were active or present in the country and their ability to attract vocations was curtailed. Directly inspired vocations appear to have been rare. David Wolfe assured Rome of the eagerness of the three youths he was sending to enter the novitiate in 1561, Maurice Healy, Edmund Daniel and David Dimus.[11] But this case appears to be exceptional. William Good's experience as a school master in Limerick in the mid 1560s would seem to be a more typical indicator of the attitudes of Irish youths and their parents, to Jesuit attempts to foster vocations. Good noted the marked devotion of three of his pupils in Limerick who were regular mass goers (unless prevented by their parents).[12] The rest of the boys (and their parents) were quick tempered, fractious and engaged in feuding within the city. Good, who was, according to Wolfe, prone to complaint and exaggeration, despaired of making any progress in the proper instruction of his pupils. The citizens of Limerick, who were hardheaded merchant stock, withdrew their sons from Good's school if they displayed

11 A.R.S.I. Germ. 143 ff 80r-82r.

12 A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 8v-12r.

excessive devotion. Good's services had been primarily engaged as a schoolmaster to instill some English grammar, Latin and the basic principles of jurisprudence into the sons of the Limerick merchants. His customers certainly did not see the school as having any core religious purpose. The phenomenon of school vocations was a feature of recruitment at the end of the sixteenth century and these were fostered in Jesuit run schools in Europe.

Dermot Bernardin, an Irish youth of eighteen years, entered the Society at about the same time as Wolfe. It is possible that he accompanied Wolfe to Rome and joined the Society along with him. His career within the Order was not noteworthy and little documentation remains save reports of his unsatisfactory academic progress. An Order that set such store by academic excellence had little room for men such as Dermot, however devout. After several years of persevering to teach the youth some basic grammar, his Jesuit superiors gave up on him and set him to more menial tasks.[13]

The three boys picked out by Wolfe and sent to Rome were all from the Limerick area, and he knew their families. One of the boys, Edmund Daniel, was a relative of Wolfe's. It is possible that these three vocations were prompted by the example of Wolfe. It is also probable that they were prompted by the more worldly desire to secure positions of influence within the church. Given the uncertainty over the direction that the Protestant establishment would take, government connivance in the Catholic sympathies of Bishop Lacy of Limerick, and Wolfe's status as an apostolic commissary, the futures of the boys, and their

13 A.R.S.I. Sicul. 59 f 77r.

families, would not have looked unpromising in 1561. But whatever their ambitions may have been, none of these boys proved to be a success within the Order. None of the three was ordained (although all remained within the Society for at least ten years).

The rigours of climate, especially in central and southern Italy, took a heavy toll on the health of the novices. All three boys were blighted by respiratory difficulties, which appear to have been severe cases of asthma and migraine.[14] It was also believed that David had contracted tuberculosis.[15] Maurice developed scrofula and when all other remedies failed was sent to France to receive the royal touch.[16] Donatus More, another Irish youth who joined the Society, was also blighted by ill health. This, and his ineptitude as a scholar prompted the Order to release him from his vows and send him home to Ireland.[17] Medical advice in Daniel's case recommended that he be sent home in the hope that he would recover in the fresher air of Munster. He was packed off to Ireland as an assistant for Good.[18] Despite ill health, Maurice Healy continued his studies in the more conducive climate of northern Europe.[19] Physically, the novices were less than adequate. The life of a Jesuit missionary demanded vigour and stamina. Intellectually and temperamentally the boys also proved unacceptable to the Society. It is significant that none of the three was ordained. When David

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14 A.R.S.I. Ital. 123 f 208r; A.R.S.I. Ital. 126 f 105; A.R.S.I. Germ. 153 f 165v.

15 A.R.S.I. Ital. 146 f 39r-v.

16 A.R.S.I. Germ. 105 f 182r.

17 A.R.S.I. Germ. 106 f 45v-46v; A.R.S.I. Ger. 106 f 103v.

18 A.R.S.I. Germ. 145 f 185r, 186v.

19 Healy was sent to Poland, however his performance there was far from satisfactory and as a result he was moved to Germany. A.R.S.I. Germ. 153 f 37r.

Dimus was sent back to Ireland with Bishop Tanner in 1575 no faculty was issued for his ordination.

Of the three, Maurice provided to be the most spectacularly unsuitable for service within the Society, yet paradoxically remained within it for the greatest length of time. Considered too unreliable for service in Ireland, he was kept at his studies, despite the disruptive effect he had on the other novices. Aquaviva was reluctant to dismiss Healy, despite repeated demands from his Provincial. [20] Maurice, for all his failings, was one of a small number of Irishmen in the Society and, theoretically, might be needed in some capacity. The sharp increase in the numbers of more suitable subjects by the turn of the century changed matters and his career as a Jesuit was brought to a close.[21]

Loyola's original scheme for the Irish mission provided for the recruitment of suitably schooled youths into the Society for further training at Jesuit seminaries on the Continent. The youthful recruits to the Society in the first phase of the mission provided qualitatively disappointing. But the mature novices inclined to be politically more active than the General regarded as helpful to the image and overall strategic direction of the Society. Had this situation persisted, the Irish mission would have stagnated and stalled. But Aquaviva's decision to expel

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20 A.R.S.I. Germ. 153 f 165v, as early as July 1573 concerns were being raised that Healy was unorthodox and lacked a vocation. Lawrence Maggio called for his dismissal and prompt return to Ireland. Maggio, who did not want trouble in his province, had tried to insist that David Dimus should not be allowed within his jurisdiction. A.R.S.I. Germ. 134 f 87r.

21 He was dismissed from the Society on 29 August 1603.

Healy in August 1603 signalled a new departure and a confidence in the quality of the entrants of the 1590s who were by this stage ready for service in Ireland.

The change in the quality of novices joining the Society by the 1590s was almost certainly driven by a thirst for education, which was apparent among the Old English community by the end of the century. The educational revolution, which swept across France in the 1560s resulted in a marked fall in the average age of Jesuit novices. And this phenomenon had now touched Ireland. There was also a change of attitude discernible among the novices who were now seeking entry to the Society.

The very rapid growth of the Order towards the end of the sixteenth century resulted in a radical change in the nature of its organisation. After Loyola's death, the development of the educational aspect of the work of the Society, particularly by Nadal, placed a very great emphasis on, and demand for, schooling. Under Loyola, the Company had been a small, intimate group, run directly from Rome. Within the group there had been significant scope for personal initiative and this was encouraged by the founder. But the close personal involvement of the general in the day to day running of the Society on the ground was no longer practical and much greater administrative control was delegated to individual superiors. At the same time, a proliferation of rules and regulations, which had accrued since the founder's death, were formalised and codified.

The expansion of the Society resulted in its adoption of a structure and hierarchy increasingly like that of the traditional religious orders and this may have deprived it, to a degree, of its early vitality and drive. But it would be premature to suggest that the Society of Jesus, or indeed, the Counter-Reformation movement as a whole, had run out of steam before any lasting impression had been made in Ireland. However, it would not be unfair to say that the first flush of enthusiasm, energy and *esprit de corps* that surrounded the founding companions and their extended circle, and that had characterised the ethos of the Society at the time of the Council of Trent, had been institutionalised, routinised and contained. Under Mercurian and Aquaviva, the Order was attracting and recruiting men of a different calibre to those who had jointed in the first flush of the Counter-Reformation.

Henry Fitzsimon identified the absence of suitable educational facilities that could meet the growing demands of the Old English community as a factor in prompting them to seek training overseas.[22] Sufficient numbers of Irish youths were already being educated abroad in the 1580s to prompt Christopher Cusack (at Douai) and Thomas White (at Salamanca) to give some sort of formal structure and financial support to their education. The schools that they founded soon sought shelter under the Jesuit umbrella in an effort to attract the patronage and funding necessary for their continued existence. Neither Cusack nor White could afford to continue supporting these institutions out of their own pockets. The act of bringing the colleges under the auspices of the Society of Jesus had

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22 H. Fitzsimon, *The Justification and Exposition of the Divine Sacrifice of the Masse* (Douai, 1611) p. a2r-v.

the effect of transforming them from communities of Irish students, living together for mutual support, into seminaries for the preparation of priests and missionaries.

Intending students at the colleges were obliged to take an oath committing them to serve on the Irish Mission later in their careers. Those who did not take Holy Orders were obliged to reimburse the college for the costs of the education. At Salamanca, for example, reimbursement was set at a rate of sixty Castilian ducats (roughly twenty pounds) for each year.[23] That this oath was tendered is indicative of the fact that the Jesuit authorities feared their colleges would be swamped with ambitious young Irishmen intent on acquiring a formal education for purely personal advancement and at little personal expense. When compared to other forms of education available, the continental colleges were competitively priced. A university education would have cost upwards of £30, whilst the cost of maintaining a student at the Inns of Court in London would have exceeded forty or fifty pounds a year.[24]

The depositions of the Irish students commencing their education at Salamanca and elsewhere in Europe also reflect a sea change in the attitudes of the Old English merchant and gentry classes towards education. In the 1560s William

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23 D. J. O'Doherty (ed), "Students at the Irish College, Salamanca 1595-1619" in *Archiv. Hib.* 2 pp 1-36. From figures provided by J.J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America 1660-1775, A Handbook* (London, 1978) p 99, there were roughly three ducats to the English sterling pound.

24 L. Stone (ed.) *The University in Society* (Princeton, 1975), Vol. 1 p 43 and W.R. Prest: *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth 1 and the Early Stuarts 1590-1640* (London, 1972) p 27.

Good's desire to provide a Catholic education and to encourage vocations among his pupils was firmly rebuffed by the citizens of Limerick.

Despite the generous provision by Limerick Corporation of goods valued at ten pounds per annum for the support of a school, discontent at this restriction prompted the Jesuits to move to Kilmallock. Here they were free to encourage religious devotions, but promised financial support never materialised. Chastened, they returned to Limerick where Good lamented that the Jesuits were forced to desist from catechising their pupils and stick to grammar.

The citizens of Limerick wanted schooling for their sons that were in keeping with their future careers as merchants. They had no wish to see them lured into a distant seminary on the continent, or burdened with an expensive and unnecessary education.

By the 1590s the situation had changed. Significant numbers of boys with similar Old English backgrounds were travelling to Europe. The boys entering the college at Salamanca all gave an account of their previous education.[25] A very high proportion of the students came from Waterford, and large numbers came from Kilkenny and Clonmel. These students named specific masters who taught them in Ireland, and it is apparent that in these centres at least, a number of Catholic teachers were catering for the educational demands of the old English townspeople. John Sherman, the Protestant schoolmaster in Waterford, reported in 1585 that his pupils had deserted him in favour of the papist schoolmaster in

25 *Archiv. Hib.*, Vol. 2 pp 1-36.

the town.[26] This clearly illustrates the shift in the attitudes of the townspeople towards an explicitly and self consciously Catholic education, and necessarily, away from an increasingly assertively Protestant establishment. Some seventeen schoolmasters were named in the depositions. Often a pupil was schooled by a succession of different masters as his progress demanded. Luke Bennet of Ross had studied with John Power, Matthew Roche and John Flaghy at Waterford before going to Salamanca.[27] Flaghy's school at Waterford seems to have been something of the centre for Catholic education in the 1590s. The curriculum provided at these establishments seems to have covered grammar, rhetoric and sometimes an introduction to the humanities and philosophy. That a high proportion of the pupils coming from these schools went on to enter White's college at Salamanca, or Cusack's house at Douai, might suggest that the purpose of the schoolmasters in Ireland was to select talented pupils and foster vocations in much the same way as the petits seminaries of the Ultramontane church in nineteenth century France.

The links between Thomas White and the Irish education system through his uncle's school at Kilkenny, might serve to create the impression that this was precisely the function of the schools in the corporate towns. However, the necessity of demanding an undertaking to serve on the Irish mission was an inhibiting factor. The students were being sent overseas to receive some form of further education by their parents. Some of the students explicitly state that they are to be fee-paying, thereby freeing themselves from obligation. Thomas

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26 TNA: P.R.O. SP63/118/29(i).

27 *Archiv. Hib.*, Vol. 2 p 12.

Comerford and Ambrose Wadding in their depositions stated that they would pay the fees of fifty ducats a year. [28] Both these students were from leading families in the city of Waterford, and they had been sent abroad for an education not a career in the church.

With the exodus of Catholic fellows and tutors from Oxford during the 1560s, that university ceased to be the major draw for Irish students. For a brief period the gentry and merchants of the Pale flirted with the scheme for the foundation of a university at Dublin. James Stanihurst, the Speaker of the Irish parliament, and for a time, host to Edmund Campion who had himself deserted Oxford, was enthusiastic about the project. The scheme was designed to include grammar schools in the larger country towns and Stanihurst hailed the idea as a major initiative toward civilising the native Irish, and instilling in them the values and lifestyle exemplified by genteel Palesmen like himself.[29] Schools and universities were perceived as nurseries of gentility, a final stage in the training of a gentleman, or in the process of metamorphosis from merchant to gentleman. It is evident from Stanihurst's remarks on the benefits to be derived from widespread education in Ireland, that the Old Englishmen of the Pale were absorbing, whether by direct contract with English intellectuals such as Campion, or from an awareness of humanistic pedagogic theory, the idea of

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28 *Archiv. Hib.*, Vol. 2 pp10 and 18, both men later joined the Jesuits.

29 E. Campion: *A History of Ireland*, printed in *Ancient Irish Histories The Works of Spencer, Campion, Hanmer and Marlebourough* (New York, 1970) Vol. I pp 194-96.

education as a means of worldly advancement, perfecting the intellect, instilling civility and reforming morals.[30]

As the population of the Old English community would not seem to have risen dramatically, certainly not in such as way as to outpace the educational explosion of the 1590s [31], the substantial increase in numbers of students going overseas represents a real and dramatic rise in the demand for education from a small section of Irish society. But it is also part of a wider phenomenon, an expansion in the demand for education that was sweeping across Europe.

The failure of the initiative to found a college in Dublin to get off the ground, despite the enthusiastic support, forced parents to look elsewhere. One alternative was the Inns of Court in London, and a considerable number of Irish students were concluding their education there. In contrast to the universities, the enforcement of religious conformity in the legal profession remained fairly lax, at least until the beginning of the reign of King James I. Unlike the universities, which made provision by way of scholarships for students of limited means, the Inns of Court provided an exclusive (and expensive) training. Old English merchants were sending their sons to the Inns for a legal education, but social advancement also played an important part in this choice. The largest numbers of Irish students attended Gray's Inn, widely regarded as the most

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30 Peter White's pupils, at Kilkenny, were introduced to the works of Erasmus in the course of their studies, C. Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst the Dubliner 1547-1618*, (Dublin, 1981) p 25.

31N. Canny: "Early Modern Ireland: An appraisal Appraised" in *Irish Economic and Social History* Vol. IV (1977) pp 62-64.

socially prestigious of the Inns.[32] Like the colleges on the continent, numbers at the Inns rose dramatically from the 1590s onwards.

The high cost of legal education and the limited number of places available, prompted many families to look for an alternative for their sons. The colleges on the continent proved most popular, providing at a cut price, a slightly more specialised training for young gentleman to that offered in London. A comparison of entries to the Inns at London with those at the Irish colleges in the 1590s reveals members of the same Old English families at these institutions. Members of the families of Bath, Sedgrave, Nugent, Archer, Wadding and White attended both the Inns and the colleges in this period. Like the Inns of Court, the Irish colleges on the continent had undergone a process of gentrification in the later years of the sixteenth century. To counter this, the seminaries had to strive to provide an exclusively clerical atmosphere. That many of the Old English went to the continent for education rather than for clerical training may be gauged from the unruly behaviour of a section of this student body. In common with their contemporaries in London, the Irish at Salamanca could be high-spirited. One student was killed in a brawl outside "a naughty woman's door".[33] White's community, in its early days at least, was not just a seminary. A lack of discipline and general disregard for authority was a symptom of an increasing proportion of young "gentlemen" in the colleges. When Salamanca came under Jesuit auspices in 1592, new statutes were introduced, and the wearing of gowns

32 D. Cregan "Irish Catholic admission to the Inns of Court 1558-1625" in *Ir. Jurist* Vol. V (1970) p 99.

33 B.L. Landsdowne Ms.71 f 96r

by the seminarians was made compulsory. This last measure seems to have attracted great attention and praise from Jesuit observers, who were of the same opinion as the benchers of the Inns of Court who regarded student uniform as an essential element in instilling discipline and orderly behaviour.[34]

Florence Conry and a number of other clergy who supported O'Neill during the Nine Years War were alarmed at the direction the colleges appeared to be taking. Conry drafted a memorial, which he presented to the King of Spain, attacking the college at Salamanca, and Thomas White in particular, whom he accused of discrimination against students of "true" Irish origin.[35] The main thrust of Conry's argument was that the students, who were substantially the offspring of the Old English plutocracy, were fellow travellers with the English Crown. Culturally alien and of politically dubious allegiance, these youths were keeping valuable seminary places from poor students of "pure" Irish origin and loyalties. Conry asserted that the Old English had no real love of Spain, and would be inclined to send their sons to England or France were it not for the cost of education in these countries.[36]

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34 B.L. Landsdowne Ms. 71 f 96r and f 102. Judges Orders noted in 1614 that "outward decency in apparel is an ornament to all societies and containeth young men within the bounds of civility and order". W.P. Prest *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth 1 and the Early Stuarts 1590-1640* (London, 1972) p 94.

35 *H.M.C. Salisbury Mss.* Vol. XIV (London .1923) p. 146.

36The Lord Deputy in a letter to Salisbury of 11 May 1610 also recognised that the inducement of free education was taking the children of the Old English overseas. TNA: P.R.O. SP63/229/91.

It is clear from Conry's memorial that there was not only an increase in the number of Irish men entering religious orders such as the Society of Jesus, but a general surge in the demand for education at university or equivalent level.

The development of Catholic education towards a more exclusively clerical training is mirrored in the early growth of a new foundation at Dublin. The original enthusiasm of the Old English, many of whom were willing to contribute towards the university, evaporated. The degree of clerical control and influence on the nature of the curriculum marked its early metamorphosis into a Protestant monastery.

The growth of the seminaries, both on the continent and their Protestant counterparts, at Trinity College and at Cambridge, indicated the acceptance by both Protestant and Catholic reformers of the need for an educated, competent clergy, not only to deal with unbelief within the community, but also to provide an effective, credible counter to dissent. In short, what were needed were men who would direct an increasingly educated laity and lead them by example.

Although Conry alleged that the main attraction of the continental colleges for the Old English was the low cost of tuition, another important element was the orthodox, Catholic quality of that tuition. This also points to a change in attitude and contrasts markedly with the experience of William Good in Limerick in the 1560s. Good credited the intervention of Royal Commissioners with ensuring the acquiescence of the citizens of Limerick in Protestant services, and inspiring their unwillingness to allow their children to be influenced by overt Catholicism.

But it is clear that the commissioners themselves were not particularly zealous reformers and were reluctant to coerce the people in matters of religion as long as the services being conducted in the churches and the teaching in the schools was acceptable (i.e. that it did not promote papal supremacy).[37] The citizens of Limerick tolerated the state church. Their Bishop, Hugh Lacy, was hostile to reform. Good may have been expressing his contempt for the trimming prelate, and his willingness to pay lip service to royal supremacy, but it is clear that Protestantism was not at issue here. Wolfe, in one of his "descriptions" of Ireland estimated the number of Protestants in Limerick at seven or eight (whom he described as rebellious youths rather than active reformers).[38]

It is apparent from Good's experience in Limerick, that being a Catholic in the later 1560s did not raise awkward questions of loyalty or conscience as it was to do at the end of the century. The early efforts of the Jesuit mission to import something of the essence of the Counter-Reformation could only founder on the complacency, disinterest and inherent conservatism of both priests and people.

The state of the church within the Pale in the 1560s is difficult to assess but it would not appear that a conscious Protestantism was pressed upon an unwilling population. Equally there is no evidence to suggest that Counter-Reformation missionaries were affecting any changes within the Catholic community. It is more likely that the majority of clergy within the Pale at this stage were of

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37 J. Begley *The Diocese of Limerick in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1927) p 507.

38 A.S.V. Arch. Arm XIV Cap. (ii) 26.

markedly Catholic sympathy, without necessarily entertaining any enthusiasm for reforms of any nature, be they Protestant or Catholic.

Officially the Elizabethan settlement applied to Ireland but the government had as yet made no real attempt to enforce Protestantism, whether through lack of conviction, or interest. The same bishops who presided over the Marian restoration in Ireland piloted the Elizabethan settlement through the Irish Parliament. David Wolfe was rendered powerless by their trimming and in his frustration branded them as "hirelings and dumb dogs" of the English Queen.[39] But in the absence of any definite government policy on religious observance (or any coherent and sustained effort on the part of the Catholic Church), the 1560s were a period of murky religious allegiance and uncertain direction.

By the 1590s that situation had changed radically, the Old English were confident to assert their recusancy by sending their children overseas for a Catholic education, whether this was to Salamanca, Douai or the Inns of Court in London (widely regarded in Government circles as a nest of papists). This points to a major re-orientation, not only of Old English attitudes to education, but also towards the ecclesiastical establishment in Ireland and to a consciousness of their own Catholicism. It seems clear that the growth of a firm stance as regards religion on the part of the Old English played a major part in the explosion of Catholic education and signalled a sea change in outlook. It also suggests that Conroy's black and white stereotyping was no longer appropriate.

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39 *Cal. S. P. Rome,1558-1571,* No 865 p 483.

In the two decades that passed between the outburst of enthusiasm for the idea of a university in 1570 and the actual erection of the college at Dublin in 1592, a coherent and definite hostility to the Protestant establishment had taken root. To the Catholic gentry and townspeople, the Protestant college near Dublin was founded with the obvious intent of perverting them and their offspring. Jesuit missionaries working in the Pale in the late 1590s recorded this deep feeling of revulsion towards the Dublin foundation on the part of the Old English establishment. Henry Fitzsimon, by his own account the product of a Protestant education prior to his conversion, goaded one of the few Catholic gentlemen to send his son to Trinity College, to withdraw the boy and send him abroad, lest he succumb to the blandishments of his heretical teachers. The rise of a conscious recusancy among the Old English by the 1580s rendered the college at Dublin (as an institution for the education of the native gentry at any rate) obsolete before its foundation. If anything, the self consciously Protestant nature of the foundation only served to increase the flow of students overseas.

The curriculum provided by the colleges presumed a prior training in grammar and some sort of introduction to the humanities. The surge in popularity of explicitly Catholic education among the Old English townspeople from the 1580s onwards, ensured that entrants satisfied the requirements. Latin, philosophy and theology were the main areas of study; music, Greek and Hebrew, were also encouraged.[40] In an Irish Catholic college which was, especially after a Jesuit take-over, concerned with the advancement of the Irish

40 T.J. Morrissey "The Irish Student Diaspora in the Sixteenth Century and the early years of the Irish College at Salamanca" in *Recusant History* Vol. 14 (1978) p 251.

mission, it seems strange that no attention was paid to the fostering of any specific missionary expertise or technique in the novices. The absence of an explicitly missionary preparation of any substance in the training of students was not peculiar to the Irish Colleges. It was not part of the curriculum of any Jesuit institution in Europe. Frequently in the letters of the General, references are made to the missionaries about to go to Ireland. Aquaviva often wrote to the provincial superior or rector at the particular college, suggesting that he prepare the intending missionary.[41] This preparation was fitted into a matter of days before departure and cannot have broached any specific questions of missology. It is much more likely that preparation took the form of prayer, meditation and an instruction to stay clear of politics. Even missionaries intending to proceed to Japan received no more training than this, the language and the problems of dealing with people of an alien culture and religion were to be learnt at first hand in the mission field. As such little additional preparation went into the training of priests for the non-European mission fields it hardly seems surprising that the Irish Jesuits, who after all intended to return to their homeland, received no missionary training. Missology and the concept of a specific missionary training of the priest as missionary rather than as pastor is essentially a nineteenth century phenomenon, and was more characteristic of Protestant, non-conformist denominations rather than of Catholicism. In any event, the whole process of developing a specialised missionary approach in opposition to competitors from other denominations would have been alien to the outlook of the World-Church

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41 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 31r. Aquaviva wrote to John Alvares, provincial of Portugal, that he was to prepare Edward Clare and John Baptist Dugin for the Irish Mission, *"Interim instruat illos duos (Clare and Dugin) dequibus opus erit, animetque ad hoc capessendum iter, et labores pro divina gloria".*

Rome perceived itself to be at the time of the Council of Trent. But although the idea of a missionary training was not entertained by the Counter-Reformation church, the missionary imperative was very much alive, particularly so within the Society of Jesus. It is important that Loyola's Spiritual Exercises played a central role in the preparation of the Jesuit novice. Although no explicit missionary preparation was given to clergy, the pervasive influence of Loyola's ideal of the pilgrim priest spreading the work of God to faithful and infidel alike, ensured that the missionary impulse was very much a part of Jesuit life. [42]

The mature Irish priests who joined the Society in its early years seemed to have done so for three specific and quite distinct motives. David Wolfe was attracted to the Society by its reforming spirit. Men such as Edmund Tanner and Richard Pembroke were attracted to the Society because it appeared to offer the opportunity for missionary work. The non-European missions of the Society were very highly regarded and the prospects of working in Ireland still seemed very real when Tanner entered in 1565. His personal frustration became very evident when the prospect of missionary service receded. Tanner demanded to leave the Order and was duly obliged, much to the relief of his superiors. Pembroke's career proved equally frustrating. Unable to realise his aspiration to work in Ireland, he became disruptive, and when put to other tasks, was petulant and aggressive. [43] Aquaviva finally agreed to his dismissal. Education was the

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[42] J. C. Olin "The Idea of Pilgrimage in the Experience of Ignatius Loyola" in *Church History* Vol. 48 (1979) pp 395-7.

[43] A.R.S.I. Germ. 170 f 100. Pembroke's exasperated superior expressed the hope that God would pardon those responsible for giving him his job within the Order.

third major draw of the Society for mature entrants, not as students but as tutors. This is the case for Good for Thomas White, William Bathe and Stephen White.

Later entrants to the Society were students, usually in the sixteen to twenty age bracket. The vast majority of them were sent overseas by their parents (or guardians as in the case of Richard Field) for their education. John Houling wrote of boys turning up, penniless, on the quays at Lisbon having abandoned their parents without so much as a farewell, in an effort to avoid the perils of a Protestant education.[44] This seems far-fetched. Houling presented the initiative of these youths, jumping ship in Waterford or Dublin to escape from heresy, as an exemplary reaction to parental conformity (and the implication appears to be that Hogan accepts Houling's account). But to view these boys as rebels, rejecting parental choice is to place them a generation out of context. By this stage all the boys' parents would have been determined recusants (which was exactly why they were being educated at Salamanca rather than in Dublin). If, in fact, there was a generational conflict over religious conformity within the Catholic community, it would have arisen in the 1560s and 70s rather than at the end of the century. The most likely explanation for the boys turning up in Lisbon, as Houling describes, would be that they travelled unaccompanied (or in groups) in ships owned by their parents or relatives, which were taking goods back and forth between Ireland and Spain or Portugal. The boys would not have had much in the way of money as they were intended for Jesuit colleges which did not demand fees. The regularity of traffic between Ireland and the Spanish ports meant that contact was regular. These boys, although young were by no

44 E. Hogan. *Distinguished Irishmen of the Sixteenth Century* (Dublin, 1894) p 41.

means children. Furthermore the degree of parental engagement is also manifest in the readiness on the part of the Old English to contribute monies to support the colleges.[45]

The process by which boys entered the novitiate of the Order was quite separate and distinct from that which brought them to study in the colleges on the continent. One important aspect in the process of finding a vocation was parental encouragement. Richard Fleming, who came to the Society from Oxford, was clearly given every support in his priestly vocation by his parents. His mother, a devout woman and the holder of considerable monastic property, had reserved several rich livings for her son. It is not unlikely that the burden of enjoying rich monastic livings for over twenty years was weighing heavily on a guilty conscience. In this case, personal contact with developments within the church on the continent may have alerted Fleming's mother to the enormity of her sins, although it is equally possible that efforts made by religious orders in Ireland to recoup their losses, had had an effect. Fleming's mother sought a dispensation to continue holding the properties in Ireland, and undertook to support a number of novices to atone for her sins. Cases of possessioners supporting the clergy or contributing to the education of seminary priests on the continent, or the missions at home, to atone, belatedly, for a collective sin of

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45 Both Archer and Fitzsimon collected substantial sums of money for the support of the Colleges. Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 38 and p 49. Lay people who contributed to the Society often sought participation in the collective merit of the Order. Such a privilege was usually only accorded to major benefactors of the Society. This also indicates that the giving of monies was considered as an act of sacramental participation rather than one of penitential satisfaction.

acquiescence in the Henrician Dissolution were not unknown[46]. Although Curwen had published Pole's collective dispensation to holders of clerical temporalities and monastic lands, and this had been enshrined the preamble to the legislation annulling legislation from the preceding reigns, it is evident that some members of the laity were now taking additional steps to ensure salvation.

People who gave support to the colleges and to the mission did so for a variety of reasons.[47] Fleming's mother was keen to obtain a dispensation to have mass said in her private chapel. As it was perfectly possible to hear mass in a public church, Rome was anxious to discourage such abuses and declined to give the dispensation.[48] Like their English counterparts, the Catholic gentry, and to a degree, the merchants of the towns who sought to ape them, had developed a marked preference for private, personal attention from the clergy. And an extension of this development was the desire to have a priest within their own family, a gentleman among gentlemen.

The gentrification of the fashionable colleges on the continent resulted in a corresponding rise in the social class and status of the clergy produced by those particular institutions. Indeed, this development may also have given substance to the enhancement of sacerdotal status attempted by the Council of Trent. An educated cleric, born of a family of relatively exalted social status, could theoretically at least, command a greater degree of respect and authority within

46 B Jennings (ed.) Brussels Ms 3947 *Anal. Hib.* Vol. 6 (Dublin, 1934) p 35.

47 A.R.S.I. Germ. 148 f 315 r-v.

48 A.R.S.I. Germ. 107 f 114v-115r.

the community than his medieval counterpart ever achieved. That the gentry in Ireland made a practice of employing private family chaplains to cater for their spiritual needs, is borne out by Archer's threat to excommunicate these priests and their well to do hosts and employers, should they prove reluctant in their support for O'Neill.[49]

The modus operandi of the Jesuit missionaries who were coming to Ireland at the turn of the century was centred upon their own homes, or the homes of their kinsmen. Barnaby Kearney and his nephew Walter Wale operated from Cashel, their home town. Indeed, it seems most likely that they lived with Barnaby's brother, David, the Catholic archbishop of Cashel, who had a house in the town.[50] When Christopher Holywood wished to strengthen the resolve of the leading gentry of the Pale, he called them to his house, most probably his family home at Artane Castle.[51] The most outstanding example of this phenomenon of the gentleman-missionary was the flamboyant Henry Fitzsimon. A member of one of the leading Dublin families, and related to many of the rest, Fitzsimon was not one to let his vocation impede his lifestyle. He was reputed never to dine with less than six people and conducted disputations while out riding.[52] Even the circumstances surrounding his arrest illustrate this. The Jesuit was informed on after making treasonable utterances against the Crown during an

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49 TNA: P.R.O. SP63/202(iii)/161

50 R.W. Jackson *Archbishop Magrath* (Dublin, 1974) p 31; I.J.A. Litt. Ann. 1605; A.R.S.I. Anglia. 31 f 290 et seq. On Good Friday, the emotional hysteria generated by a Jesuit sermon, preached in the Cashel house, was such that it disturbed the Archbishop who was next door.

51 E. Hogan *The Life and Letters of Henry Fitzsimon* (Dublin, 1881) p 149.

52 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.*, p 49.

after-dinner conversation in the home of a leading Dublin merchant.[53] It seems natural that a section of society that sought to maintain members of the clergy as part of the household retinue should carry this process to its logical conclusion and encourage the clerical training of an intimate member of the family, a move which avoided the embarrassing anomaly of the priest as a household servant.

Within the colleges, the rarified atmosphere in which the boys lived and studied also played a role in encouraging vocations. It would have been an unusual student who did not feel, at some time, that he had been called to be a priest. And the intense rivalry and competition for control of colleges underlines how important the regular clergy regarded these institutions as a source of vocations. The clash between Fitzsimon and the Capuchin, Francis Nugent had its roots in a competition for student vocations.[54] A similar process of talent spotting operated at the Inns of Court in London.[55]

One aspect of the peculiar atmosphere that prevailed within the colleges was the example of the non-European mission. It is hard to imagine the impact that men such as Xavier, De Nobili or Valignano could have had on impressionable youths, but it cannot be overestimated. From the latter part of the sixteenth century a constant stream of merchandise, objects d'art and missionary letters flowed into Catholic Europe. By the 1560s carefully prepared editions of these letters were being published. An even greater volume of material was available

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53 TNA: P.R.O. SP63/206/101; SP63/206/102.

54 F. X. Martin *Friar Nugent* (London, 1962) p 169.

55 W. R. Prest *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth 1 and the Early Stuarts 1590-1640* (London, 1972) p 176-7.

within Jesuit archives, enabling Luis de Guzman to produce a history of the Order in Japan.[56] Robert de Nobili, a young Italian aristocrat, groomed for high office in the church, was so enthralled by the idea of the missionary life in the Orient, and by the example of Xavier in particular, that he abandoned everything for missionary life in India. The dissemination of literature, particularly about the mission in Japan, regarded by many in the sixteenth century as the church's most dazzling success, played a very great part in inspiring men to missionary work in other fields. In a letter of March 1579 to William Good, Robert Persons acknowledged that many men (including himself) were consciously inspired by the foreign endeavours of the Society.[57]

Good also appreciated the importance of home grown exemplars and was responsible for commissioning and executing a series of murals in the English College in Rome illustrating the life and deaths of Campion, Sherwin, Bryant and a succession of English martyrs who would inspire missionary fervour in generations of impressionable novices.[58] In the Irish colleges, depictions of the lives and missionary work of Patrick, Brigid and Colmcille, and a large

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56 D. F. Lach *Asia in the Making of Europe: The century of Discovery* (London, 1965) Vol. I (i) p 315.

57 L. Hicks (ed.) *The Letters and Memorials of Robert Persons Vol.1 1578-88* Catholic Records Society Vol. 39 (1942) pp 5-7.

58 M. E. Williams "Campion and the English Seminaries", T. M. McCoog (ed.) *The Reckoned Expense: Edmund Campion and the Early English Jesuits: Essays in Celebration of the First Centenary of Campion Hall, Oxford, 1896-1996* (Woodenbridge, 1996) p 285-299. The Jesuits in Lisbon favoured a decorative scheme focused on relics of St Brigid and St Patrick and this theme was also favoured by the Franciscans, first at Louvain and subsequently at St Isidore's College in Rome. P O'Connell *The Irish College at Lisbon 1590-1834* (Dublin, 2001) p 34.

supporting cast from the pantheon of the national church created a different, but no less potent ambience.

Thomas Cohen's conclusions on Jesuit recruitment in this period in Europe suggest that most men who joined the Society did so for the security and companionship afforded by a regular ordered life within a religious community. He rejects the notion that the missionary impulse was of any real significance in prompting vocations with the Order. [59] This general impression is not borne out by the experience of the Society in either England or in Ireland. A significant number of recruits joined the Order specifically to serve on the Irish mission. A number of personal testimonies confirm the huge influence that Indian and Oriental missions had on young novices. [60] But many of those who sought to go to Ireland were prompted by the desire to serve near to their families. This phenomenon may have been influenced by the relationship of the Society to Ireland. Without any formal provincial structure at home, the whole raison d'être of Irishmen with the Society, in theory at least, was for a life of missionary service. The original vision and missionary impetus that Ignatius shared with his companions may have been diminished in a large and increasingly structured order, but among the relatively small number of Irishmen in the Society, it remained strong.

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59 T.V. Cohen "Why the Jesuits joined 1540-1600" *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* (1974) p 241.

60 I.J.A. McErlean III/D/37

CHAPTER SEVEN

Laying up Treasures: Financing the Irish Mission

Although the missionary impulse may have been strong among the Irish Jesuits, the financial basis of their endeavour was less secure. Ignatius originally hoped that an Irish mission would be supported by the Jesuit provincials, who would provide for and train Irish students in their novitiates. This plan seems to have had some measure of success, if we are to judge from the expressions of satisfaction being made by superiors regarding their Irish charges. Wolfe was judged to be an edifying priest, and Richard Fleming was an exemplary and much sought-after teacher.[1] But these were early examples and the cross subsidising of the Irish mission in this manner soon ran into difficulties. There were several factors at work, not least among them the incidence of unsatisfactory attitude and behaviour from some of the Irish novices. As the order expanded in the later sixteenth century and its educational enterprise became increasingly important across Europe, superiors were reluctant to use resources to support Irish novices who were likely to be called away to the Irish mission. Superiors were also unwilling to put up with novices like Tanner and Pembroke, whose single-minded determination to serve in Ireland resulted in disruptive behaviour. Aquaviva was forced to concede George Bader's point, that foreign (in this case Irish) priests were of limited use in a province where, lacking any command of the language, they could neither teach nor work among the general population. Also they took up valuable places within colleges that could be more appropriately filled by native novices.[2] The colleges were also reluctant to release gifted Irish teachers to serve on the mission as Aquaviva discovered in 1598, when he was forced to order one provincial to comply with

[1] A.R.S.I. Ital. 116 f 81; A.R.S.I. Germ. 107 f 27v.

[2] A.R.S.I. Austr. 1 ii p 316.

such a request.[3] The colleges maintained that as they paid for the education of these priests, they should have at least some use of them. As time progressed, the colleges came increasingly to resent the demands that the Irish missionary project made on their resources. In a letter to Everard Mercurian of 14 July 1575, Adornus, the rector of the college at Genoa, complained that Charles Lea and David Dimus had arrived at the college, en route to Ireland, having spent all their journey money (they had originally been allocated 15 scudi, around £3-7 sterling). The college authorities had to put themselves out, call in favours and inconvenience others to find the two youths a place on board a ship bound for Spain. They also had to provide some additional journey money.[4] Although this was a minor incident, it is symptomatic of the ambivalent attitude of the colleges towards a project that was of no immediate interest to them and was felt to be an unnecessary burden upon their increasingly strained resources. If the Irish mission was to succeed an alternative method of funding the project would have to be found.

The foundation of the Irish colleges at Douai and Salamanca by Cusack and White provided a focus for the education of the Irish in Europe. When Salamanca was taken under the Jesuit umbrella, the college benefitted from substantial royal grants from Philip II and his successors. And the existence of a specifically Irish college created a focus for Old English patronage. Many of the students at the college in Salamanca were supported by funds provided by

[3] A.R.S.I. Franc. 1 ii f 430r.

[4] A.R.S.I. Ital. 148 f 82r-v.

Munster merchants.[5] By the turn of the century the Irish colleges had a fixed income of sorts, and although it was far from adequate (the college was oversubscribed with students) Irish merchants could always be found to advance money.

There were other likely sources of funding in Ireland itself. The commission of inquiry into the elections for the 1613 Parliament was charged to establish whether priests or Jesuits had made or attempted to make any collections or levies of money, and to discover to what use it had been put.[6] The commission reported back that priests received fees for saying mass, performing marriages and baptisms, and various funerary offerings. These had been divided among the priests, and a part had been sent to support scholars in seminaries overseas. [7] The authorities in Ireland were clearly perturbed by this flow of resources out of the country. One estimate, made in 1627, claimed that as much as £65,000 was then being sent overseas each year.[8] This must be an exaggeration. If correct it suggests that every priest in the country had *surplus* income in excess of £65 and that this was being sent overseas.[9]

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[5] Six students were supported by Spanish notables, five were supported by the Munster merchants. Another five or six depended upon alms. A.R.S.I. Cast. 36 I f 66r-v.

[6] *Cal. Pat. Rolls Ire., Jas1,* p 396.

[7] Ibid., p 398.

[8] TNA: P.R.O. SP 63/276/89; B.L. Harleian Ms. 2176 f 4r-5v. Crown revenues for 1612 amounted to £44,000 only, B.L. Landsdowne Ms. 156 f 1r.

[9]There were roughly 1,000 priests in Ireland in 1623, P. Corish *The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1981) p 26.

It would not be untrue to say that by the 1630s the Catholic Church in Ireland, given the climate of *de facto* toleration that prevailed during the period of the personal rule of Charles I, had achieved some degree of financial independence. To suggest that large amounts of money were being diverted out of the country is quite a different matter. At a period when the Crown was unable to wring any real profit out of its efforts in Ireland, the suggestion that the Roman church was absorbing the surplus wealth of the kingdom may have seemed a comforting illusion and bolstered the view that if papistry were eradicated, prosperity would surely follow.[10]

It is difficult to estimate the true amounts of money being sent overseas to support students at the seminaries. If the seminaries were educating around 30 or 40 boys at a time, the sums needed to maintain them for a year would not have been in excess of £100. Given that the colleges were in receipt of grants from the Spanish crown, as well as from other sources on the continent, it is difficult to envisage Fitzsimon or Archer raising amounts in excess of several hundred pounds a year. The true amount was probably smaller than this and was not therefore a dependable source of income.

An indication of how money was dispatched to the continent can be gleaned from a legal action that came to light in 1634. Luke Plunkett and his bother Thomas possessed an estate valued at £2,000 at Meath and Dublin. Together they decided to bequeath £1,000 for pious works. £400 of this was for use in Ireland. £600 was intended as an endowment to support three poor scholars in

[10] TNA: P.R.O. SP63/248/46.

the Colleges in Europe.[11] The £600 was sent, in the form of commodities, by one Henry Ask, a merchant, to Middlesborough. Here the goods were sold and realised as cash. At this stage it was dispatched to Clovis, a merchant in Antwerp, at the direction of the Capuchin, Francis Nugent. But Nugent and Clovis failed to invest the money profitably. They were subsequently sued in court by an individual named Enos, a scholar who was to have been a beneficiary of the bequest. Wentworth got wind of the affair and attempted to retrieve the money. Writing to Laud on 31 January 1634 he reported his success in recovering £400 of the bequest and that efforts were being made to recover the other £600 from the Plunkett trustees.[12]

There is a clear differentiation to be made between the funding of the colleges, and the running of the missionary enterprise. As financial units they operated independently of each other. A major area of expense encountered by the mission was the provisioning of journey monies for those going to Ireland. The colleges did not regard the provision of travel expenses to be their responsibility. Having educated, fed and clothed the novices for several years, they did not feel inclined to pay for the privilege of being relieved of their burden. Travel was not initially expensive, as the missionary would pass through Catholic Europe, where the Jesuit houses would at least provide accommodation for the traveller. Costs rose the nearer one got to the sea. The major expense seems to have been the securing of a safe passage to Ireland; however unexpected difficulties could arise. Holywood was advised against travelling to England from the Low

[11] TNA: P.R.O. SP63/254/89.

[12] W. Knowler *The Earl of Stafford's Letters* (Dublin, 1740) Vol. 1 p 187-9.

Countries, and was forced to embark from a port in Northern France. France had at this time expelled the Society of Jesus and membership of the Order was a treasonable offence. Holywood was forced to disguise himself as a merchant, employ a servant and stay in public inns.[13] Barnaby Kearney and Walter Wale travelled to Ireland via London, where they were entertained in the house of a leading Catholic. From here they travelled to Chester, disguised as merchants. At Chester they purchased a quantity of saddles, bridles and similar equipment under the guise of re-selling the goods when they arrived in Dublin. But they were forced to leave the city hurriedly to evade capture and were obliged to abandon their merchandise. Fortunately some Irish sailors took the men for students and offered them free passage home to Dublin.[14] Throughout the sixteenth century the mission, unlike the colleges, had no permanent financial basis, but depended to a large extent on handouts from well-wishers whether on the continent or in Ireland. No attempt to rationalise the financial affairs of the enterprise emerged until the active superiorship of Holywood, when the expansion of the mission, and its relative success inspired a new enthusiasm on the part of the General of the Order.

The income of the mission in Ireland was erratic, and visibly small during the sixteenth century.[15] If the mission were to achieve anything in Ireland it would

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[13] Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, pp 45-6.

[14] Ibid., pp 116 and 135-6.

[15] Wolfe was allocated fifty scudi for his journey to Ireland in 1560. Good was given a further 188 Ducats, of which twenty-five was for himself, the rest was for Wolfe. A further forty scudi were donated to the mission in 1564. This appears to have been the sum total of monies that reached Ireland from the Continent (money sent with Creagh was confiscated). In the years of

need to be financially independent. Wolfe argued for the provisioning of benefices for the Society. These benefices were in the city of Limerick and would have provided an income of around 120 marks. [16] But the request was declined. Frustrated in his efforts to create a Jesuit establishment in Ireland, Wolfe petitioned Rome for an income of 300 scudi per annum (roughly sixty-seven pounds).[17]

The amounts of money arriving in Ireland were totally inadequate and the missionaries were forced to rely on the goodwill and charity of their flocks (although this was contrary to Jesuit regulations). Apart from goods worth ten pounds per annum given by the citizens to Good to support his school at Limerick, he had the use of a house. Helpful though this was it placed him in an unwelcome position of obligation. Wolfe, who did not work in a fixed area, was forced to run up large debts, a situation exacerbated by his confinement in prison. At the time of his escape to Portugal, Wolfe had debts of almost £300. [18] Richard Field repeated Wolfe's request for a permanent and independent Jesuit establishment in Ireland, funded by a grant of benefices. Both Field and Fitzsimon submitted lists of properties thought suitable to Rome.[19] But Aquaviva was anxious that the Jesuits should not be seen to take the initiative in the matter of acquiring benefices in Ireland. Such a move would have incurred the implacable hostility of those orders that historically held the livings. It was

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Wolfe's imprisonment these sums would have barely covered his expenses for one year alone. Field requested property that, if granted, would have yielded an income of £1,300.

[16] A.R.S.I. Ital. 120 f 386r-v.

[17] A.R.S.I. Ital. 131 f 352r-v.

[18] A.R.S.I. Lus. 65 f 277.

[19] Hogan *Ib.Ign.* p. 44 and p. 68.

preferable for laymen who had possession of ecclesiastical property to approach the Holy See regarding any transfer of the property into Jesuit hands.[20] Aquaviva's reluctance to face down other orders on this issue condemned the Jesuit mission to an undue dependence on the charity of the Old English. The lack of financial independence precluded any radical clerical initiative on the part of missionaries that might offend their hosts. Deprived of any income of their own, members of the Society of Jesus working in Ireland, before 1604 at any rate, would be little more than house guests cum chaplains to the Old English establishment in Ireland.

I

The methods and lines of communication adopted by Jesuits travelling to Ireland from the continent do not seem to have undergone any major change during the period. The journey was long, tedious and subject to periodic localised hazards.

The route followed by Holywood on his first journey to Ireland was not unlike that adopted by Wolfe forty years previously[21]. Travelling from Padua, Holywood passed through Switzerland to Spier.[22] Richard Stanihurst advised him not to travel through Holland, and suggested a safer route by way of France. As the Society of Jesus had been banished from France, it was arguably safer for

[20] A.R.S.I. Fl. Belg. 1 ii p 270.

[21] A.R.S.I. Fl. Belg. I ii p 696

22 I.J.A. Ms A 7.

missionaries entering Britain to avoid detection by using this route.[23] However, this was not without its hazards. Holywood aroused the suspicions of local Huguenots at his port of embarkation. Unfortunately, there were no ships travelling to Ireland at that time, and Holywood was forced to take passage to England. He was tendered the Oath of Supremacy on landing at Dover. He refused to subscribe and was arrested.

On the occasion of his return to the mission after his release and exile, Holywood sailed directly to Ireland from Brittany.[24] By 1604 the Oath was not being strictly enforced upon travellers, particularly those entering the Irish ports. This amelioration of conditions allowed missionaries going to Ireland to travel via Calais and London, which was more convenient, comfortable, and less hazardous than the long sea journey. Maurice Wise travelled to Ireland by this route, and was entertained by Henry Garnet in London.[25] Barnaby Kearney and Walter Wale also used the same route, traveling on to Dublin via Chester, [26] probably taking a similar route as that used for mail passing between Dublin and London.[27]

The re-admission of the Society of Jesus into France in 1605 removed some of the hazards of travelling through that country, and allowed for wider variation in the routes used by traveling priests. Bordeaux rapidly became an important

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23 The Jesuits were suspected of complicity in the assassination of Henry III and were banished from France until 1605

24 I.J.A. Ms A 17.

25 I.J.A. Ms A 23.

26 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 135.

27 B.L. Royal Ms. 18.D.111 f 84v.

centre of communication. The port carried a considerable volume of Irish trade, and Irish merchants recommended it as a safe and convenient route for sending Irish novices to the continent.[28] But intelligence was not always accurate, Fitzsimon when at Douai, urged the use of routes through Dunkirk and Rouen that resulted in the capture of a number of men.[29] This unfortunate incident was no doubt the result of his sources being less aware of, or less sensitive to, the degree of vigilance exercised at particular ports at any one time, than the merchants and seamen who used them daily. However, as a rule, the route through the Flemish ports and London remained a favourite for personnel traveling to Ireland.[30]

The communication of letters was a more complex operation, and several different routes were employed. The use or non-use of a particular route from the continent has been taken to signify a particular political allegiance among different factions within the English Catholic community.[31] As a rule the Appellant clergy and their allies seem to have favoured routes through French territory, the Jesuits preferred to travel from Spanish territories. In the case of the Irish Jesuits, it is impossible to draw such a conclusion for a number of reasons. First, in this case we are dealing with one religious order, not a whole community. Furthermore, the group was composed of a relatively small number of individuals who had a fairly uniform political outlook. The use or non-use of

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28 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 36r.

29 A.R.S.I. Gal. Belg. I p. 49-50.

30 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 69v.

31 J.A. Bossy "Rome and the Elizabethan Catholics: A question of Geography" in *Hist. Jn.* Vol. 7 (1964) explores the different routes employed in the 1580s and 1590s.

a particular route reflected considerations of convenience or danger rather than a conscious expression of allegiance. As a rule the route chosen was the shortest and most convenient from the college of origin of the Jesuit priest concerned.

While there may have been difference of political behaviour among the early missionaries such as Wolfe, Archer, and Fitzsimon, and their successors, Holywood, Nugent and Malone, there was no shift in the lines of communication employed by the missionaries to demonstrate such a change (as was apparent in the English case). But the roots of this political behaviour lie elsewhere. The enthusiasm of Wolfe, Archer and Fitzsimon for direct action, which led them to abandon the prejudices and beliefs of their upbringing, and earned them the rejection and opprobrium of their kinsmen, were not fostered in a Spanish as opposed to a French, seminary. Nor were they borne out of allegiance to or conviction in the moral superiority of the causes of Fitzmaurice or O'Neill. They were the product of their reforming zeal that was far reaching in its scope, and radical in its intent. Just as Robert Persons had come to regard force as the necessary instrument for bringing about the reformation of England; Wolfe, Archer, and to an extent, Fitzsimon, regarded the rebellions as a necessary element in a broader programme for the reform of Irish society. The innate conservatism of their successors, the lessons of experience and financial constraint, and the altered circumstances of Jacobean Ireland ensured that the seventeenth century mission proceeded in a different direction.

Although the routes taken by the missionaries travelling to Ireland were fairly clearly defined, the responsibility for the provisioning of the viaticum, or journey

money, for individual missionaries was a point of contention. A cursory review of complaints that arose over money gives the impression that the Society ran its missionary ventures on a shoestring budget. In fact, it would be fair to say that the church authorities, like any other government in early modern Europe, were faced with frequent financial crises that ambitious re-construction programmes did little to alleviate. At the outset of the mission in 1598, Holywood had rather caustically expressed regret to Aquaviva that the papal treasury was in such straits that it would ill afford to fund the venture.[32] It is likely that the unhappy experiences of the papacy with David Wolfe would have made the Curia more than a little reluctant to fund further Jesuit ventures in Ireland. In any event, Holywood's affairs were not Rome's responsibility. Wolfe had been an Apostolic delegate; Holywood's brief came from Aquaviva. The responsibility for finance was a purely internal matter; a point frequently made to the Irish mission, which was forbidden to petition the papacy for funds.[33]

The thorny question of journey money involved two parties. On the one hand was the recently established, but penniless, Irish mission, and on the other, the individual provinces from where the missionaries were sent to Ireland. The provinces on the continent that had trained and supported the Irishmen had a number of grievances. First, they were reluctant to give up men on who they had expended time, effort and money in training, and who were a valuable part of their community as preachers or teachers. Secondly, the colleges could ill afford to support the number of students they had by the beginning of the seventeenth

32 A.R.S.I. Germ. 178 f 178.

33 A.R.S.I. Rom. 156 vii.

century, Salamanca had twice the number of students that its income could reasonably support.[34] The Irish students who were trained on the continent were an added burden on the colleges at the time of very rapid expansion of the order.

Providing travel money for those going to Ireland stretched the meagre resources of the colleges, and the patience of the provincials, to the limit. The amounts involved could be substantial, particularly if the priests posed as merchants, thus necessitating the purchase and transport of moveable marketable goods. It is not surprising that the Belgian province should have appropriated a portion of the legacy of Patrick Sedgrave, bequeathed to the Irish Mission, to offset the costs of journey monies.[35] Unfortunately for the provincials, Aquaviva decided that in the case of Irishmen living and working on the continent, the needs of the Irish mission were to take priority over the needs of the provinces.[36] Thus provincials were obliged (in theory) to release valued teachers and preachers at the behest of the superior of the mission.[37] In some cases provincials pleaded extenuating circumstances, or simply ignored the request. However the Irish superior usually brought sufficient pressure to bear through the General to ensure compliance. In practice, Aquaviva's enthusiasm for the mission and its needs was somewhat fitful and much of his energy was devoted to the balancing of the needs of one side against the demands of the other.

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34 A.R.S.I. Cast. 36 (i) f 65r-v

35 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 186.

36 A.R.S.I Franc. 1(ii) f 430r.

37 A.R.S.I. Austr. 2(i) p 368. Local pressure for the return of men such as John Gerott of Wexford helped to sway the opinion of the General. No amount of pressure could induce de Los Cobos, the Provincial of Valladolid, to release William Bathe from his teaching duties in the province for service on the mission.

In 1609, a procurator was appointed to organise funding on the continent for the Irish mission. One of the conditions of his appointment was that he was not to be a drain on the resources of the colleges, neither in his person, nor in the manner of his fund raising.[38] He was responsible for the payment of the viaticum, or at least for ensuring the refunding of such monies to the colleges. From this point on it became customary for the Irish mission to supply the necessary funds to bring men from the continent.[39] Two factors in particular precipitated this state of affairs. The mission was becoming more established in Ireland and was attracting a degree of support from wealthy patrons. It should have been in a position to organise its affairs. At the same time, the growth in the numbers of Irish men in the colleges overseas rendered the provision of support and journey money by overseas provincials for a body of men over whom they exercised a nominal and disputed authority, an intolerable burden.

Aquaviva's instruction to give priority to the Irish mission produced a number of results. The provincials were certainly less than enthusiastic to continue bearing the burden of Irish seminarians who would be of no future benefit to the Province. This was particularly true of the Spanish and Belgian provinces, which supported the majority of the students concerned. Ultimately this resulted in an attempt at a more equable distribution of Irish novices throughout the continental provinces.[40] The more immediate effects were equally radical.

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38 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 11r-v. Thomas White was the first man to occupy this position.

39 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 31r and f 66v-67r.

40 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 71v. Viteleschi informed Robert Bathe that it was his intention that each province should admit one Irish Jesuit novice.

Aquaviva was anxious to increase the missionary force in Ireland. To this end he forbade the provincial of Valladolid to deploy his Irish subjects for teaching without permission. They were to be kept in readiness for the mission.[41] Another result of his concern was Aquaviva's insistence that men should be trained as quickly as possible. It was suggested that students might be rushed through quick degree courses at less reputable universities.[42] Orders were issued in particular cases forbidding slow students an extra year to master their theology.[43] Rather, it was brusquely suggested, they should read Taletus in their spare time.[44] It was asserted that this handbook contained an adequate amount of information for the needs of the mission, and one suspects the implication that anything more detailed was beyond the comprehension of the men concerned anyway. This new regime was a response to the needs of the mission, but the growing number of Irishmen in the Society permitted the authorities to correct abuses that had, until now, gone unchecked. In the past, rebellious spirits had been tolerated simply because there were so few Irishmen in the Society. From the 1600s the rebellious and the ill disciplined were unceremoniously ejected.[45] The enforcement of a timetable on academic studies meant that those with little aptitude for learning, who had previously been tolerated on the grounds of piety or obedience, found their position rather less secure.

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41 A.R.S.I. Cast. 7 p 777-8.

42 A.R.S.I. Cast. 7 p 675.

43 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 80v.

44 Franciscus Cardinal Toletus *Summa Casuum Conscientiae* (Lyons 1599).

45 John Cusack was unceremoniously ejected for insubordination A.R.S.I. Fl. Belg. I ii p 1100. Alexander Lynch was dismissed on the grounds of physical weakness A.R.S.I. Fl. Belg. I ii p 1113.

II

The struggle for limited funds among the competing interests within the order had brought to a head the thorny problem of authority and jurisdiction over the Irish members of the Order on the continent, and the more delicate issue of the status of the Irish mission itself. The quarrel over journey money had been quelled by the appointment of an Irish procurator. Aquaviva did not intend the procurator to exercise any authority over the Irish seminarians, beyond that of providing them with journey money. However, the men who held the office, notably Fitzsimon, took it upon themselves to co-ordinate activities, often without the consent of Holywood. This was seen as an abuse of office by the European provincials and an affront to their own jurisdiction.[46] With the support of the general, Holywood managed to assert his authority over the agents of the mission operating on the continent, and to impose control over the running of the mission, and the selection of personnel. In a letter to Fitzsimon, Aquaviva stressed his commitment to respond to Holywood's requests for workers for the mission.[47] This was more of a rebuke to Fitzsimon than an absolute commitment to Holywood's wishes. In practice, Aquaviva was endeavouring to balance the conflict of interest between the Irish and continental superiors. On the one hand, the General was unwilling to allow potentially disruptive or unreliable elements to serve on the mission, thus all personnel required the express approval of Holywood. However, it was essential to attend to the particular interest of the

46 Complaints were received about Archer's highhanded running of the affairs of the mission in Spain, and in particular, his opaque financial management. A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 39r.

47 The letter was dated 7 December 1613. A.R.S.I. Anglia 1f 39v-40r.

continental provincials, upon whose continuing goodwill the education of Irish novices necessarily depended. Holywood's repeated requests for the services of Jesuits such as William Bath and Stephen White, who were pursuing high level academic careers on the continent, were ignored as long as their services there were in demand. It is not surprising that soon after the censuring of certain theological propositions on the nature of grace, which effectively ended White's academic career, he was made available for service in Ireland, though a plea of ill health spared him this fate for a number of years.[48]

The problem of jurisdiction raised a number of more general questions concerning the administration of a Society. The thorny question of the status of the novices overseas had also blighted the English mission. The issue came to a head at the seventh general congregation of the Society, held in 1615. The influence of the Spaniards ensured that the principle adopted was based upon jurisdiction subject to provincial authority, rather than nationality. To avoid the inevitable confrontation with the Spaniards and the Belgians, Vitelleschi elevated the English mission to the status of a vice-province in 1619, thereby exempting its subjects from the ruling of the congregation. The problems of the Irish mission were not to be so easily resolved. One major problem was the size and relative poverty of the mission. By 1621, the English vice-province had some 240 members, of whom 130 were working in England.[49] These Jesuits lived in

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48 White was removed from his chair at Ingolstadt, and a number of propositions made publicly by him were censured for being contrary to orthodox teaching. Having made the required statement of retraction, he was told to prepare to go to Ireland and serve on the mission. A.R.S.I. Censurae Opinionem 1 f 174r et seq. and f 199r.

49 F. Edwards *The Jesuits in England* (London, 1985) pp 52-53.

permanent residences, and ministered within a specific area. The whole operation was self-financing and characterised by stability, which was the accepted criterion for provincial status.[50] By contrast the Irish mission numbered thirty-six in 1621.[51] Simple comparison might suggest that, given the relative size of the countries, this was a reasonable enough number. However, the relative size of the Catholic population of Ireland was very much greater than that of the neighbouring island. In theory at any rate, the demands made on the Irish missionary would require more flexible organisation. The uncertain financial basis of the mission in Ireland, and the changeable political climate effectively ruled out any change in status. The fact that no efforts were made to elevate the status of the mission in the 1630s, when the greater degree of stability and apparent success of the venture might have secured some concession from Rome, suggest that a more fundamental obstacle stood in the way. That obstacle seems to have been a particular perception of the status of Ireland.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Jesuit authorities considered uniting the English and Irish missions under one Superior.[52] The Irish missionaries were hostile to the idea of their subordination to another jurisdiction, preferring the direct control of the general in Rome.[53] The English Jesuits were equally hostile to the idea, though for other reasons. Henry Garnet impressed upon Robert Persons the importance of distancing the English mission

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50 T.M. McCoog "The Establishment of the English Province of The Society of Jesus" *Recusant History* Vol.17 (1984) pp 121-139.

51 A.R.S.I. Anglia 9 (i) f 7r-v and f 8r.

52 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 16v.

53 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 161-2.

from the activities of their Irish colleagues, not least because they were likely to be compromised by the activities of Archer and Fitzsimon.[54] The plan did not proceed. However, the continuing reluctance of the Irish missionaries to participate in suffrages for dead members of the neighbouring English province suggests that they regarded even this act of charity as the first step on a slippery slope.[55] It seems clear that both the Jesuit Curia and the Roman authorities regarded Ireland and the Irish mission as an adjunct to England. This is apparent from the arrangement of archival materials relating to this period within the Vatican Archive. The Archivio Segreto was, and is, primarily an administrative archive, and the organisation of materials within it reflects the attitude and general working priorities of the notaries who originally deposited them there. Papers and correspondence relating to Irish affairs are, by and large, deposited along with the much larger bulk of material concerning England. Furthermore, a considerable number of items relating to Ireland were directed via the English Court. The explanation for this is rather simple. The papal curia, like any other government, corresponded by inclination with equals. Matters concerning Ireland were, if at all possible directed through the Crown. This is particularly true of the early seventeenth century, which witnessed a temporary thaw in Anglo-Papal relations. The same administrative conceit is apparent in the organisation of the archive of the Jesuit curia, where much of the material relating directly to the affairs of the Irish mission is to be found in the "Anglia" series of manuscripts.[56] It is to be expected that the cast of mind that thought in

54 A.R.S.I. Anglia 38 G p 10; I.J.A. 4/D/10.

55 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a ff 2v-3r.

56 The main volumes containing Irish correspondence are Anglia Volumes 1, 4a, 6a, 9, 31 and 41.

such terms would not countenance the establishment of a separate Irish provincial structure. To do so would cause controversy within the order, and compromise the delicate relationship of the papacy with the Crown.

Clearly some other means had to be found to reduce the conflict of interest that existed between the mission and the European provincials. One apparently satisfactory way out of the impasse was the appointment of Irish Rectors to rule the Irish seminaries in Spain. At Seville, Richard Conway and Thomas Briones proved more successful than any of the Spaniards appointed to the post, who had experienced short tenure and high turnover of personnel.[57] This was largely due to their extreme unpopularity with the student body. Also, a dramatic volte-face on the policy of forbidding the use of Irishmen for service as teachers or preachers in Spain also sweetened the mood of the Spanish provincials. In general, however, the modest requirements of the Irish mission meant that the number of instances in which conflicts on this issue might arise was small. Furthermore, by the 1620s, the number of men serving on the Irish mission was reaching a peak. This was dictated by self-interest on the part of the continental provincials who were anxious to restrict unnecessary expenditure, and on the part of the Irish Jesuits themselves already serving on the mission who were hostile to men whose social or political outlook differed from that of the clique around the Superior. A further factor was a pragmatism on the part of the Irish mission that restricted activities to areas of potential success, thus demanding fewer men.

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57 F. Finnegan "The Irish Rectors of Seville 1619-1687" *I. E. R.* Fifth Series Vol. 106 pp 45-63.

These developments served to ease the strains upon Hiberno-Spanish relations within the Order. As the running of the mission settled into a fairly regular pattern, the office of Procurator, that had caused such offence to the Spanish and Belgian provincials, became redundant and was replaced with a number of "agents" in key locations. At the beginning of Holywood's tenure as Superior he had proposed that the mission should have an agent in Rome to expedite business[58]. The readmission of the Jesuits into France also opened up the possibility of the port of Bordeaux becoming an important centre for the Irish mission. In 1608 Aquaviva promised to send Henry Cusack there as agent for the mission[59].

The apparent success of the Irish Jesuits in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, and the favourable reports of determined recusancy in the wake of the mandates controversy, had heightened expectations in Rome of dramatic results from the mission. Aquaviva was fairly happy to facilitate its activities on the continent, and instructed that a more stable administrative structure be adopted in Ireland itself. In 1609, Thomas White had been appointed procurator of the mission. By 1610, the mission was asking for agents in Rome, Bordeaux and Douai, and for the appointment of sympathetic rectors in colleges training Irish novices. By 1611, the three agents had been appointed.[60] However, Aquaviva was keen to impress upon them their complete subordination to the wishes of the Superior in Ireland. It was felt necessary to curb the

58 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 130.

59 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 5v-6r.

60 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 19v-20r.

enthusiasm and reckless initiative of a man like Fitzsimon, who served as agent at Douai.[61]

The experiment lasted for a few years only. Robert Bathe had been appointed as agent in Rome, but his tenure was brief.[62] His duties were light, it was felt that he had not enough to do, and his presence in the city caused friction within the Order. Vitelleschi declined to appoint a replacement in 1619, deciding that he would deal personally with problems that arose, by letter.[63] Although the mission petitioned for an agent in Madrid in 1619, the General's determination that the office had outlived its usefulness ensured its abolition.[64] The decision to abolish the office of prefect of missions was made in 1626; the post of agent in Belgium was finally abolished in 1628.[65] The agents had proved useful at an early state, when they were able to clarify problems over faculty and jurisdiction in Ireland. The re-establishment of a resident secular hierarchy in Ireland removed many of these issues and the burden upon the agents was lightened considerably. Furthermore increasing self-sufficiency and the growing sophistication of the organisation of the mission in Ireland rendered the office of agent a costly anachronism.

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61 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 21v-22r.

62 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 54r.

63 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 89v. Officially the mission was under the direct control of the General. The agents often generated friction with the local provincial authorities where he was based. As a fund raiser the agent was in direct competition for alms; as a lobbyist, he could be a cause of political embarrassment.

64 I.J.A. 5/L/22

65 A.R.S.I. Baet. 5(ii) ff 119v-120r and Anglia 4a f 15v.

At the earliest stages the Irish missionaries operated largely as individuals, living in or around the homes of relatives or of wealthy patrons, and maintaining regular direct contact with the General in Rome. In fact, maintaining contact with the Superior in Ireland could be more hazardous and intermittent. Holywood ordered the priests to live at a distance from one another for safety; they might meet one or twice a year to discuss progress, or to renew their religious vows. In more settled times, the priests preferred to work in pairs.[66] As early as 1606, Andrew Wise and Walter Wale were reported to be working in a "residence". This term referred to a general field location, not a fixed house in a particular town.[67] As the number of men on the mission grew, and as the adverse conditions under which earlier missionaries were labouring abated, more formal administrative structures and co-ordinated policy were felt to be desirable.

Theoretically the Superior controlled the running of the mission in Ireland. In fact, the unhappy experience of Richard Field, who had unsuccessfully endeavoured to assert the authority of the Superior over Fitzsimon and Archer, demonstrated the extent to which individual initiative could play a part. Holywood sought to recover the authority of his office by controlling communication with Rome. In 1607 he instructed the other priests not to write so frequently to Rome, unless for some very pressing reason.[68] The obvious excuse for such an action was that of security. Letters of this type risked seizure. Walter Wale seems to have regarded this as irregular, for he wrote to George

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66 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.*, p 166 and p 161.

67 Ibid., p 190.

68 Ibid., p 221.

Duras, assistant to the general, informing him of the change and pointing out that although he had no good reason to write, should Duras so wish it, he, Wale, would be more than willing to correspond. The tacit invitation to criticism indicated a degree of disaffection with Holywood's strategy. But Wale was regarded as a self-opinionated and difficult man.[69] Opposition notwithstanding, Holywood had his way. From this time onward, correspondence with Rome from individual missionaries, other than the Superior or agents specifically delegated by him, was very rare indeed. By taking on the burden of communication, the Superior effectively controlled the flow of information to and from Rome. This greatly enhanced his authority. As far as Rome was concerned it gave him the ear of the General, and ultimately allowed him to formulate and direct strategy. The lines of communication employed in the transmission of letters were somewhat more complex and varied than those employed for personnel. Missionaries or novices travelling to and from the continent could carry letters. Holywood brought the novice David Galwey from Belgium to Ireland in 1604 so that he might carry letters back on his return journey to Rome, where he was to complete his studies.[70] The merchant community, who were in much more frequent contact with the continent, provided a more reliable and regular service. The routes employed depended largely on trading patterns, but letters were frequently sent to Rome through Bordeaux, Bilbao, La Rochelle, Lisbon, Antwerp, Paris and London.[71] It was common to send several copies of the same letter by different routes in an effort

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69 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 68r.

70 I.J.A. Ms A 24.

71 I.J.A. 5/L/6.

to insure against seizure. As a further safeguard against discovery, letters or portions of letters were written in cipher.[72]

Communication could be interrupted during war or times of unrest. Field noted that in 1600 Irish merchants were unwilling to carry closed letters, but insisted on being allowed to read their contents.[73] During 1627-28, hostilities closed the English ports to traffic and prevented the movement of letters to the continent for over six months.[74] In any event communication was slow. At the very best of times a letter from Ireland could take between two and three months to reach Rome.[75] Some could be delayed for very much longer. Even within Catholic Europe communications could be slow. News of Richard Conway's death at Seville on 1 December 1626 did not reach Rome until 1 March 1627.[76] And bearing this in mind, Ireland was not quite as isolated from mainland Europe as has often been assumed.

Letters written by the Irish Superior to Rome could take one of two forms. In the course of a typical year, a number of letters relating to particular administrative or disciplinary matters would be exchanged. [77] A second, more formal type of

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72 Examples of intercepted Jesuit correspondence are to be found among the State Papers in the National Archives in London, for example TNA: PRO. SP63/217/23.

73 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 67.

74 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 13v-14r.

75 This assumes that letters that arrived in Rome received prompt attention and response.

76 A.R.S.I. Baet. 5(i) f 235v.

77 Taking the years 1612, 1622 and 1632 at random, one can get some idea of the volume of correspondence of this nature. For 1612, one letter from Aquaviva survives. Presumably there was a response. In 1622, Vitelleschi sent seven letters to the Superior, and two letters to other members of the mission. The General would appear to have received only one reply. In 1632,

document was the annual letter. This took the form of a detailed report of the activities of the previous year and followed a standard formula which to an extent determined the nature and presentation of the information contained within. The letter for a particular year was generally composed in the early weeks of the subsequent year. The letter began with a general statement on the condition of the country, including any unusual or outstanding events. For example, the annual letter dated 1614 discussed the events surrounding the opening of the 1613 Parliament, and gave a general description of Irish parliamentary institutions and process.[78] This was followed by more detailed reports from the different parts of the country where Jesuits were working. In practice Jesuits from around the country submitted some sort of account of their activities to the Superior who incorporated the information in a single report. Holywood was in the habit of delegating responsibility for the drafting of the report to Robert Nugent, but he continued to supervise its composition.[79]

In this way a uniformity of style and purpose was achieved, and the Roman insistence on particular information largely relating to the numbers of baptisms, general confessions, conversions, and the image of the Society, both with the laity and with other religious orders, was reflected in the content.[80]

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six letters were received from Nugent in Ireland, all of them dating from the previous year. Vitelleschi responded with five letters to Nugent, and duplicate copies of correspondence sent in the previous year, which had never reached Ireland.

78 A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 ff 72r-85v.

79 I.J.A. Ms A 56; 5/D/8.

80 One of the papers seized at the Jesuit House in Clerkenwell was a document setting out general guidelines on the content and composition of annual letters, TNA: P.R.O. SP16/99/1 f 37.

Although the volume of day-to-day correspondence with Rome remained fairly constant throughout the period, the latest surviving annual letter concerns the years 1621-1622.[81] The next document of this nature that survives is a brief summary report of the period 1641-1650.[82] For reasons of security, it was common practice not to be specific in naming persons or places in these annual reports. Obviously this is a limitation for anyone attempting to use these reports as historical documents and Aquaviva found them equally elusive.[83] In 1621, Holywood informed Rome that he intended to cease sending annual reports for security reasons.[84] Vitelleschi allowed that reports could be submitted as and when it was possible to do so.[85] A report for 1622 was dispatched, and Holywood stated he was awaiting information to prepare a report on the following year.[86] A complaint, dated 1625, that letters are not following the customary formula, suggests that reports of some description were being dispatched to Rome.[87] These are apparently no longer extant.

The authority of the Irish Superior, although in theory subject to the direct intervention of the General, and occasionally disputed by those who challenged his claims to jurisdiction over Irish Jesuits overseas, was in practice very great. This was most apparent during the interregnum that followed the death of

81 A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 ff 146r-153r.

82 A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 159r-180v and TNA: P.R.O. SP31/9/13(iv).

83 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 10v.

84 I.J.A. 5/N/1.

85 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 95v.

86 I.J.A. Ms A 60.

87 A.R.S.I. Germ. 112 f 217r.

Aquaviva in 1616. The Superior had become a *de facto* provincial.[88] Only in exceptional circumstances had he to seek Rome's approval for his actions, for example in cases of dismissal from the Society, though even here he might expect little difficulty. The Superior supervised the affairs of the mission, controlled the appointment of men suitable to serve in Ireland and directed promotions within the missionary hierarchy. The two men who held this office during these years exercised a decisive influence on the character of the mission.

III

An attempt to ascertain who was prevented from serving in Ireland is a good place to start in attempting to establish the nature of the mission itself. The two most outstanding cases of exclusion were James Archer and Henry Fitzsimon. Archer's own sister asked that he be kept out of the country for the sake of peace.[89] The vision of Archer and Fitzsimon was out of step with the prevailing view. Fitzsimon was permitted to go to Ireland by the General in 1631, but the Superior, Robert Nugent insisted on his return to Europe in the same year. Regardless of his advancing years, he was considered to be potentially disruptive.[90]

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88 A.R.S.I Anglia 1 f 48r.

89 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.,* p 166.

90 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 30v.

Of the 210 Irishmen who joined the Society of Jesus before 1641, twenty-nine appeared to be of Gaelic Irish extraction.[91] Men whose families were of Old English stock and who came from the towns, made up the largest group within the order, 145. This heavy representation of townsmen is also reflected in the numbers of these who actually served on the mission in Ireland in this period. Eleven were of Gaelic Irish origin; nineteen from Pale county families and seventy-five came from the towns. The concentration of Jesuit activity in and around the towns, and the nature of their missionary endeavour served to perpetuate the hegemony of the urban outlook within the order. Irish Jesuits continued to be drawn from merchant families who already had sons or cousins in the order.[92] Boys were also drawn from the schools established by the order in the Irish towns, particularly in Waterford, Fethard, Cashel, Clonmel and Kilkenny as well as Dublin itself. The ambitious designs of Archer or Fitzsimon had no place within the more limited and conservative horizons of the average Jesuit missionary.

Allegations of discrimination against Gaelic Irish members of the Society were being leveled as early as the beginning of the century, when Florence Conry suggested that those of Old English extraction who controlled the colleges were

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91 The information has been compiled from an unpublished biographical catalogue of the Irish mission compiled by Fr. Francis Finnegan. An abridged version of this catalogue serves as an appendix to F. O'Donoghue "The Jesuit Mission in Ireland 1598-1651" unpublished Ph.D. thesis: Catholic University of America, 1981.

92 For example, the Wadding family of Waterford had six of its members in the Order at one time.

preventing Irish students from taking places, reserving them instead for their own fellow townsmen.[93]

It is difficult to say how much credence one should lend to the charge as Conry's personal enmity for Thomas White, the Rector of Salamanca, seems to have been the driving force behind his allegations. However, one ought to concede that in a situation such as this it would have been unnatural for the townsmen of Munster and Leinster not to favour the company of their fellows. As William Allen was to observe of a similar dispute that arose at the English College in Rome, such behaviour was but "the common inclination of Adam to like, and whisper underhand for their own against others of other countries".[94] While it would be a mistake to imagine that a deliberate policy of discrimination was exercised by the order, it would be true to say that a certain bias seems to have operated in favour of Old Englishmen from the towns. Furthermore, as a definite hierarchical structure developed in the seventeenth century, the urban bias of the mission was institutionalised. This created opportunities for those with the necessary power and influence to conduct personal vendettas, a charge levelled at William Malone during his superiorship in 1647-49.

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93 H.M.C. *Salisbury Mss.* Vol. XIV (London, 1923) p 146.

94 J.A. Bossy "Catholicity and Nationality in the Northern Counter Reformation" in S. Mews (ed.) *The Church and National Identity: Studies in Church History* Vol. 18 (Oxford 1982) p 287-8.

A more notable and definite group who were not to serve on the mission were those Irishmen whose academic distinction rendered them indispensable to their provincials on the continent.[95]

What of the missionary himself? The typical man would be of Old English extraction, from a wealthy or comfortable home background. While it is fair to say that those who went on the mission did not represent the intellectual cream of the order, the more exacting standards of the early years of the seventeenth century had ensured that they were not without talent. Walter Wale suggested that the men sent on the mission should be mature, have received some form of preparation for the work, and be able to speak both languages.[96] By and large the men sent to Ireland fulfilled these requirements. Most were at least in their early thirties by the time they returned on the mission and many were older. The work was physically demanding, and a robust constitution was advantageous. A number of the missionaries, particularly the elderly, suffered illness periodically.

In 1610 the mission numbered ten working priests. In 1621 this number had grown to thirty-six, by 1637 the mission had fifty-six priests working in Ireland.[97] This expansion was matched by a more sophisticated approach to the organisation of the mission on the ground. In 1609, Aquaviva requested

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95 Neither Richard Fleming, nor William Bathe were released from their teaching commitments to serve on the mission in Ireland. Stephen White was only released for services after his fall from grace.

96 I.J.A. 5/C/13.

97 A.R.S.I. Anglia 9(i) f 7r-9v, and I.J.A. 5/C/7. The catalogue of 1609 given by Hogan does not distinguish between fully professed priests and those such as Galwey, Saul and Kiernan who had yet to complete their training. Hogan, *Ib. Ign.,* p 228.

Holywood to nominate suitable men for the posts of consultor and admonitor on the mission.[98] These men were to assist the Superior with the running of the mission. Aquaviva suggested that the senior post of admonitor be given to the Superior's companion or socius and successor designate. The consultors were appointed on the basis of seniority and experience on the mission, Barnaby Kearney, Andrew Mulroney, Nicholas Leinagh and Patrick Lenan.[99] In 1619, Holywood was invited to nominate his successor.[100] A list of candidates was submitted to the General for his consideration. Vitelleschi also seems to have consulted Nugent and Lenan. Andrew Mulroney was chosen for the position but died later the same year. Barnaby Kearney was subsequently designated.[101] At the time of Holywood's death in 1626, Robert Nugent was acting as his socius and successor designate.[102] His conduct during the disputes with the Franciscans and Dominicans had marked him out as a likely successor.[103] The General confirmed his official appointment, and letters patent were dispatched from Rome.[104] In this way the Superior exercised control over the complexion of the order. As early as 1636, Nugent had designated William Malone as a future Superior.[105]

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98 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 11v.

99 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 14r-v.

100 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 89v.

101 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 93r-v and f 95r.

102 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 8v.

103 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 102r.

104A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 10v-11r and f 12r.

105 I.J.A. Ms A 66. Malone succeeded Nugent as Superior in 1647.

Promotion within the Society of Jesus was dependent to a large degree upon status or grade within the order. Those who had made the final profession of the fourth vow had the highest status. In Ireland it was necessary to submit information on candidates for the final profession to Rome. Their cases were considered and promotions made. As the superior prepared the information on the various candidates, he largely controlled the promotion of those on the mission. By the time of Nugent's superiorship, this cumbersome procedure was abandoned, and the Superior was given full discretion in the matter.[106]

The concentration of so much power in the hands of the Superior was contentious. One complaint, made in 1632, alleged that Nugent did not bother to consult his superiors before reaching decisions (by this stage the consultors had been superseded by superiors of Jesuit residences in the towns). He was also accused of undue favouritism towards those of his own province, Leinster.[107] Vitelleschi advised him to mend his ways. Regardless of occasional censure, the system favoured powerful ruling cliques within the order and allowed William Malone, and his Ormondist cabal, to attempt to purge the Society in Ireland of those who were out of sympathy with their outlook, and to silence opposition to their rule during the 1640s. It is a tribute to the degree of control that this clique exercised over the mission that despite Verdier's dismissal of Malone, his associates, Dillon and St Leger, were soon running the mission. This group had ensured that there was no one else with an appropriate level of experience or

106 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 8r-v.

107 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 30r.

administrative skill necessary to run the mission; by default they remained in control.

IV

Just as the administrative structure of the mission was not immune to the failings of human nature, the residential structure that developed during the same period was not without imperfection. The earliest of the seventeenth century missionaries lived in, and worked from, the homes of their families and friends, or those of wealthy patrons who were prepared to provide them with hospitality and shelter. A number of government intelligence reports of the early years of the century list priests working in the country, and sometimes include details of where they resided. Unfortunately, the rather cavalier use of the term Jesuit to indicate any priests educated overseas, and indeed, in some cases mistaken identification, means that some of the detail of these reports is inaccurate. However, it is clear that the Jesuits lived in some style in the homes of their relatives and friends. Barnaby Kearney stayed at the home of Lady Shee, the widow of Richard Shee, at Kilkenny. Holywood frequently stayed with Sir Christopher Plunkett. Thomas Sheine stayed at Edmund White's house in Clonmel, and Nicholas Leinagh and Andrew Mulroney stayed with Leinagh's brother.[108] While such an arrangement may have alleviated the initial poverty of the Society in Ireland, it had fundamental effects upon the complexion of the mission. The location of the mission in the homes of the gentry and the urban

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108 R.I.A. Ms.23.F.1. f 305-6; T.C.D. Ms 580 f 21r and W. B. Burke *A History of Clonmel* (Waterford, 1907) p 48.

patriciate immediately reduced its scope and efficacy as the vehicle of a major reform and regeneration of the whole church.[109] As far as was possible, missionaries were sent to work in their home areas.[110] This served to enhance the prestige and popularity of the Society in a particular locale, but it ensured that a predominantly urban body of men were concentrating their efforts in a limited number of towns. To combat this, the mission was divided into a series of informal residences. Initially this term referred to an area under the supervision of a spiritual prefect rather than to a particular house or college. The priests worked within this area, moving around the region, preferably in pairs.[111] By 1611 every province had at least one residence, Munster had two, and hopes of establishing a more permanent structure were high.[112]

Several obstacles stood in the way of this development. First, there was a question of capital. The Society had strict rules on the accepting of alms, or the holding of property by its members. There was also a subsidiary issue of the dangers that such a visible and permanent structure might pose. Secondly, the decree of Urban VIII forbidding the foundation of new religious houses posed a serious problem which other clergy were not slow to exploit.

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109 Christopher Haigh suggests that the English Jesuits were falling into similar ways, C. Haigh "From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* Series Five, Vol. 31 (1981) pp 129-147.

110 Frequently, people requested the return of local men who had trained as Jesuits, to serve on the mission. Hogan, *Ib. Ign.*, p 129.

111 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 71a v.

112 I.J.A. 5/D/7.

At the turn of the century the Irish Jesuits had petitioned Rome to grant rights to the livings of abandoned religious houses, which could be used to support the Society in Ireland. Field requested the livings of Thomas Court, St Mary's Abbey, the Hospital of St John the Baptist, All Saints, the Augustinian house and Holmpatrick Priory, which he calculated would yield an annual income in the region of £1,300.[113] George Duras agreed and advised Aquaviva to act on the request but he declined to do so.[114] A petition submitted in 1610 by Walter Wale requested the grant of ten religious houses, once the property of the Benedictine and Augustinian orders and calculation of revenue yield took full account of the diminution of income since Dissolution.[115] Rome was anxious not to alienate those religious orders that had originally held the properties in Ireland and was usually unwilling to grant their livings to the Society. In any event, by the 1620s more settled conditions encouraged orders such as the Cistercians and Benedictines to return to the Ireland. This resulted in a scramble for property. Those livings which the Jesuits enjoyed at the behest of lay benefactors, who legally held the properties, became serious points of contention among the religious.

Though theoretically lucrative, monastic livings proved to be disappointing source of income. They could only be enjoyed through the good offices of Catholic laymen who held the livings, and as the religious orders returned and re-established themselves, they proved to be a source of dispute. In cases where the

113 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 68

114 I.J.A. 4/F/1.

115 I.J.A. 5/C/6.

value of a particular living was modest, its real value in the prevailing conditions was so small as to render futile any attempt to take possession. The living of St Peter's in Waterford had been granted to the Society in 1609[116] but it was not until 1648, when the living was valued at twenty-four marks per annum, that any attempt was made to take possession.[117]

Alms proved to be an important source of income for many of the Irish clergy. However, Jesuit regulations forbade priests to accept alms or mass offerings. In theory individual Jesuits were forbidden to have an income, or to hold personal private property. In both England and in Ireland where it was legally difficult for the order to administer property, it was necessary to adopt alternative strategies to satisfy these scruples. The English province got around the problem by administering bequests and assets through lay trustees.[118] In Ireland, in the early years of the mission at any rate, a rather more flexible interpretation of the regulations was called for. Bishop Tanner had advised that Jesuits working in Ireland should be careful to accept alms and mass offerings, lest they offend the secular and mendicant clergy who depended on these as a source of income.[119] And the Jesuits who petitioned Rome for dispensation to receive such offerings had adopted this line of argument. Dispensation to receive alms for the performance of religious duties was always refused, but it is clear that the laity continued to contribute generously to the upkeep of the mission. Robert Bathe's work in Drogheda was generating an income of 3,000 crowns. This supported

116 Moran, *Spicil. Ossor.* Vol.1 p 300.

117 A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 446(ii) f 625r-v.

118 J.A. Bossy *The English Catholic Community* (London, 1976) p 233.

119 Hogan, *Ib. Ing.*, p 129.

the Jesuit residence there, and fuelled the ire of the Franciscans in the town.[120] By 1624, all the residences were being supported with "alms" and any additional income could be employed in alternative directions. [121]

The Jesuits attracted the patronage of many of the wealthier citizens, and the Society frequently benefited from bequests and legacies. Many of these were donated specifically for the foundation of permanent residences or colleges. At an early stage permission was granted to liquidate such assets to support the day to day running of the mission, or at the very least, to use any interest accruing in this way.[122] A number of grants from the Spanish authorities provided a more substantial capital base, which was to be invested. The council of Italy made a grant of 3,000 "pecunia", the queen of Spain donated 3,000 scudi.[123] By 1621 the Jesuits felt that they had acquired sufficient capital to enable them to rent a permanent house, which would accommodate three men.[124] Rome advised caution, and instructed that in the business of the house, nothing was to be committed to paper.[125] Canon lawyers were consulted in Rome, and an opinion

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120 I.J.A. Ms A 61; 6/C/20.

121 Vitelleschi rejected a suggestion made by Henry Fitzsimon that the mission should support itself out of profits from the sale of books written by its members. Vitelleschi rejected to the idea, not because it was impractical, nor because the revenue in question was negligible, but because he felt such associations with trade to be vulgar and inappropriate. A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 74r.

122 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p135.

123 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 22r and f 39r.

124 I.J.A. 5/N/1.

125 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 101v-102r.

was delivered that the papal ruling forbidding new religious foundations was not applicable in the Irish case.[126]

The stable conditions prevailing in the 1620s and 1630s were more conducive to a fixed residential system, and the Jesuits made every effort to establish new houses. At times this could manifest itself in an unseemly worldliness with regard to bequests and benefactions. Vitelleschi insisted on being kept informed of the precise details relating to any projected foundation, and took an active interest in enhancing the capital base of the mission.[127] The archbishop of Cashel, David Kearney, had promised the mission an income of 400 ducats per annum. Vitelleschi instructed that every effort, short of legal action, was to be taken to ensure that the Society received the full benefit of this promise.[128] Kearney also left the mission his books, altar vessels, a large house in Carrick-on-Suir and an income of 300 gold pieces a year. His kinsman, Walter Wale, requested that Vitelleschi procure the living of St Mary and St Edmund, Athassal, which the archbishop had held in trust for the Society.[129] The revenues of this living were adequate to support a residence of three priests, or a college.[130] Richard Conway was also instructed to petition the Spanish King for a portion of Kearney's Spanish pensions and privileges.[131] The case of Kearney,

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126 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 20v-21r.

127 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 6r-v.

128 A.R.S.I. Tolet.8 f 260 r-v.

129 I.J.A. Ms A 63; 6/C/69.

130 The See of Cashel generated a considerable income. An astounded Wentworth reported to Windebank that the Catholic Archbishop was receiving an income of around £2,000 sterling per annum. W. Knowler *The Earl of Stafford's Letters* (Dublin, 1740) Vol. 11 p 111.

131 A.R.S.I. Tolet. 44(i) f 500r.

a close friend of the Society, and a kinsman of two of its prominent members, is a very special one. However, it illustrates the degree to which the Society was prepared to defend what it saw as its rights and privileges.

A further case, which illustrates the degree to which the mission had developed into a settled residential pattern, was the dispute that arose over the bequest of Paul Sherlock. Sherlock was an Irish Jesuit from Waterford. During the period of his rectorship of the college at Salamanca, he amassed a personal library, reputed to be worth between 2,000 and 3,000 gold pieces. In 1637, he applied for faculty to donate the library to the Irish mission, and in particular to the Jesuit house in Waterford.[132] Permission was granted in July 1637.[133] However, as a Jesuit could not, technically speaking, own private property and certainly not property of such value, the college at Salamanca chose to dispute the bequest. It was alleged that Sherlock has used college funds to purchase the books. Furthermore, as the community theoretically owned all goods held by its members, Sherlock had no right to dispose of the books in this way.[134] The General directed that in order to satisfy all parties the books should be divided into three portions, one to stay at Salamanca, the others to go to Waterford and to the province of Castile. Sherlock, in an effort to make his wishes clear, inscribed the frontispiece of some of the books indicating that they were the property of the Waterford house. At his death, the Castilian provincial simply removed the library from Salamanca, distributing it among other houses in the province to

132 A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 446(ii) f 618r and 410(i) f 173r.

133 A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 410(i) f 173r.

134 A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 446(ii) f 618r. A.R.S.I. Fondo Gesuitico 410(i) f 174r-v.

prevent any further argument.[135] When enquiries were made, neither the instrument of donation, nor the General's faculty permitting the bequest, could be found and the matter had to be dropped.

Both of these cases indicate that the mission was developing from a rather haphazard affair, into a settled, sophisticated, propertied, residential organisation. And this was the defining characteristic of Robert Nugent's superiorship, the endeavour to create a solid financial basis for the mission. In 1635, an unnamed countess gave 20,000 gold pieces to the foundation of a novitiate.[136] This was most likely the dowager countess of Kildare, the greatest patron of the Society in Ireland. Not only did she give money, she granted the Society the use of her properties, the Kildare Hall in Back Lane in Dublin, and Kilkea Castle in Co Kildare.[137] The Jesuits held the house in Dublin in the name of William White, a poor layman, who acted as their agent.[138] This arrangement allowed the Society to hold the property without attracting undue notice. It also served to obfuscate the legal position so that when the property was handed over to the University, the countess was free to begin proceedings to recover the house.[139] Trinity

135 A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 446(ii) f 618r.

136 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 37r-v.

137 For a speculative discussion on the physical infrastructure and possible location of this house see R Loeber and M Stouthamer-Loeber "Kildare Hall, the countess of Kildare's patronage of the Jesuits, and the liturgical setting of Catholic worship in early seventeenth-century Dublin", E Fitzpatrick and R Gillespie (eds.) *The Parish in Medieval and Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2006) pp 242-265.

138 TNA: P.R.O. SP63/250/17(i).

139 T.C.D. Mun/P/32/41.

College was subsequently put out of the building, and it was once again used as a mass house.[140]

In 1638 when another benefactor proposed founding a residence suitable for fifteen priests, Vitelleschi demanded details.[141] The following year the mission proposed to re-open the novitiate of the Holy Trinity in Dublin.[142] The mission had accumulated capital of 12,000 scudi for the purpose, which, it was claimed, would yield sufficient revenue to support thirty men and boys. A further benefaction to found a house was made to the mission. Vitelleschi, who was not happy with the proposal, rejected the idea.[143] The donor, Thomas Walsh, archbishop of Cashel, was understandably furious at this thoughtless snub to his good intentions. The Irish Jesuits, anxious not to lose such a valuable and powerful friend, advised the general to reconsider the case. They pointed out that the capital amounted to 10,000 florins, which would yield 1,000 florins per annum.[144] In a few years the principal would have amounted to 15,000 florins, a more than adequate sum for the purpose. The general agreed to this compromise.[145] It was estimated that the interest on the principal of 15,000 florins would support fifteen people. In a case where the proposed house was donated, and therefore rent free, this would amount to an allowance of 100

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140 J.T. Gilbert *History of the City of Dublin* (Dublin, 1861) Vol. 1 p 242.

141 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 43v-45r.

142 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 46r.

143 I.J.A. Ms A 75.

144 The Irish Jesuits, who were drawn from the predominantly mercantile background, obviously had no qualms about usury, and expected the maximum return on their investment permissible under statute (10 Charles 1, Cap. 22).

145 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 52v.

florins per man. This seems a modest sum. If the 12,000 scudi were invested at a similar rate of ten per cent the revenue yield would produce a maximum allowance of ten pounds per man.[146] The 15,000 florins would only yield eight pounds and ten shillings.[147] The English Jesuits worked on the assumption that a figure of between twenty and twenty five pounds per annum was necessary to support a priest on the mission.[148] Presumably these figures only represent a fraction of the total income of the mission, and the Jesuits continued to supplement their income from "alms", bequests, and the generosity of their kinsmen.

It is difficult to establish with any certainty what the living conditions in a Jesuit residence were like. Papers and inventories of goods seized in the raid on the Jesuit house at Clerkenwell in London indicate that the Jesuits stationed here lived in some style, in a large, comfortable, well-furnished town house. It is likely that their Irish counterparts enjoyed similar home comforts.[149] Verdier's comments on the state of the mission made in 1649 suggest that while the close relationship which existed between the Jesuits and their kinsfolk may have been crucial financially, the effect on missionary discipline, and general motivation

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146 Bossy takes an exchange rate of four scudi to the English sterling pound. Bossy *The English Catholic Community* (London, 1976) p 420.

147 In 1640, the Florin was worth 3.33 Dutch Schellinger. The pound sterling was valued at 38.85 Schellinger. This gives an approximate rate of 11.66 Florins to the pound. J.J. McCusker *Money and Exchange in Europe and America 1660-1775: A Handbook* (London, 1978) pp 40-52.

148 Bossy *The English Catholic Community* (London, 1976) p 231 and p 420.

149 The house, a substantial structure of some sixteen rooms, was the property of the Earl of Shrewsbury. TNA: P.R.O. SP16/99/1; SP16/101/69; SP16/101/70 and SP16/102/61.

was less than beneficial. [150] One major ground for complaint was the spirit of localism that had developed within the houses.[151] This was particularly true at Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford, where local men held the superiorship almost as of right. This spirit of local or familial loyalty manifested itself in two ways. A number of Jesuits were reported to be living at home with their parents. One, John Talbot, a man of thirty, was not even bothering to work as a priest.[152] A similar problem had cropped up in 1628, when one missionary was reportedly serving as a parish priest to support his mother.[153] A more disturbing aspect of familial loyalty was encountered at Wexford, where the Superior, Oliver Eustace, permitted his sister to live in the house.[154] At Cashel, the sister of a former Superior was in residence.[155] This is surely symptomatic, not of sexual irregularity, but rather of the continuing dependence of the mission on the families of its members. Verdier observed that of the Jesuit houses in 1649, only Kilkenny confirmed to the ideal.[156] It was still common for residences to be based in family houses. In the circumstances, it would have been unreasonable to evict the hostess. These minor points aside, Verdier was generally impressed by the integrity of the men who served on the mission in Ireland.

Apart from the allegations levelled at Wolfe, only one case of alleged sexual irregularity involving a member of the mission arises in Jesuit correspondence.

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150 I.J.A. Ms A 114.

151 I.J.A. Ms A 114, f 3.

152 I.J.A. Ms A 114, f 2.

153 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 16r-v.

154 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 10.

155 I.J.A. Ms A 114, f 2.

156 I.J.A. Ms A 114, f 5.

Not only was this accusation unproven, it was made some seven years after the alleged offence as supposed to have taken place. The allegation was used by Nugent as a plausible excuse for removing the man concerned from Ireland.[157] Nevertheless, Verdier was nervous about Jesuits keeping the company of women. One of his major objections was the presence of female domestic servants in Jesuit houses. At Clonmel, he noted that two girls, one aged eighteen, the other twenty-two, were employed. At Kilkenny, a male cook had been dismissed, only to be replaced by a more presentable young woman of twenty eight.[158] The Jesuits had told Verdier that it was very difficult to employ male domestic servants in Ireland. However, during Francis Tyrry's brief superiorship at Waterford all the woman servants were dismissed and replaced by men. When Malone replaced Tyrry with the more politically reliable Edward Clare, the girls returned to the house. This may seem very curious behaviour, but there are two possible explanations. If the Jesuits were occupying family houses rather than their own premises, it seems reasonable to expect that family servants and retainers would continue in their positions. In the case of Waterford, political questions played their part. Tyrry had replaced Clare at Waterford during the brief interregnum caused by Nugent's retirement. Tyrry was not sympathetic to the Ormondist position adopted by Clare and Malone. Tyrry would appear to have been doing one of two things. Either he was adhering to the rules of the order and banned women from the house, or, a more probable explanation is that under the guise of conforming to regulations; he was acting to remove Clare's retainers. On Clare's reinstatement a reverse purge took place.

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157 A.R.S.I. Gal. Belg. 2 f 488r-v and Anglia 4a f 28r.

158 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 2.

Another problem, which was apparent to Verdier, was the Jesuit habit of kissing women when greeting them.[159] In fact, this was a common enough habit among the laity, and in this case was symptomatic of another issue, the reluctance of members of the order to wear clerical dress. The Irish Jesuits claimed that they could not wear clerical dress, as they could not afford it.[160] Verdier dismissed this as nonsense, noting that many of the priests spent large sums of money on trinkets such as pocket watches.[161] The question of proper attire had long vexed the authorities in Rome. Vitelleschi was most anxious that clothes should be modest and fitting, though it is clear that many of the Jesuits preferred the more extravagant apparel of their kinsmen.[162] During the more settled years of the 1620s and 1630s, Vitelleschi was anxious that regulations should be more closely observed in the running of the houses. The priests were to wear clerical dress, and lay people were not to be permitted in the houses.[163] The general feared that in Dublin particularly, where many of the richer patrons of the Society lived or visited, the residence would become an elegant salon devoted to entertaining the wealthy and the powerful.[164]

This fondness for lay dress, lay society, and the company of women probably served to break down the sense of mysterium surrounding the priestly office. A

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159 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 4.

160 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 1.

161 I.J.A. Ms A 114 f 2.

162 I.J.A. 6/C/78. Jesuits were equally prone to extravagant hobbies. Gambling was expressly forbidden. A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 16.

163 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 96v.

164 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4 f 22v-23r.

priest who dressed as your husband or your brother did, who kissed you when he met you in the street, or who entertained you to dinner, was at once a more sociable creature and somewhat removed from his sacred function. It seems clear that the Jesuits who lived and worked among the gentry and the urban elites of Waterford and Dublin were as likely to fall into the same worldly ways that Robert Bathe and Balthazar Delahoyde alleged were commonplace among the friars of Drogheda. The mission, which was staffed by, and certainly run by, increasingly elderly men, depended on the good offices of friends and relations for support. Living and working among their kinsmen for much of the time, it is not surprising that a little complacency and cosiness might set in. Although they might present a rigorous reformist face to the world when at work among strangers, preaching in the countryside, or combating the abuses of other religious orders, they were as likely to fall into similar habits themselves.

This rather begs the question of how the Jesuits saw themselves, and the nature of their work in Ireland, or indeed how their contemporaries viewed them. The attitude of Rome is discernible in its stance over questions relating to faculty. Wolfe, as an apostolic nuncio, had been given extraordinarily wide-ranging faculty. This reflected the absence of an effective secular hierarchy in the country, and demonstrated official aspirations toward a thorough going reform of the Irish church. Jones's view that the granting of faculties indicated Rome's close links with Elizabethan Ireland, and demonstrated a sympathetic understanding of the situation, is rather idealised, and may not be the most fruitful standpoint from which to view events as they unfolded in the seventeenth

century.[165] The problems of communication, loss of correspondence, and the necessity of exchanging letters on delicate matters using cipher, greatly complicated the issue. If anything, Rome was increasingly reluctant to grant faculties to missionaries. This was largely due to a return of a degree of normality in the running of church affairs, first with the appointment of vicars apostolic, and the subsequent restoration of the hierarchy. In the question of marriage, the problem of faculty can be seen with reasonable clarity. Fitzsimon was granted power to dispense in cases of marriages contracted in the third and fourth prohibited degrees.[166] Holywood appears to have received a more sweeping faculty, which covered the second degree of consanguinity.[167] However, doubts seem to have arisen over the validity of this grant, and in 1607 the mission was instructed to avoid controversy by restricting the exercise of their faculty to the second degree of affinity and only where the marriage was "in contrahendis", not "contractus".[168] Holywood's extraordinary faculties to dispense with impediments were only restored to his successor in 1638.[169] This confusion of authority and faculty was largely due to problems of communication. However, the increasing numbers of active secular clergy in the country necessitated some curtailment of the discretionary powers and responsibilities of the regulars.

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165 F.M. Jones "Canonical Faculties on the Irish Mission in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1558-1603" in *Ir. Theol. Quart.* Vol. 20 (1953) p 171.

166 A.R.S.I. Anglia 31(ii) f 703.

167 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 47r.

168 A.R.S.I. Rom. 165(ii) f 377r.

169 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 43v-45r.

By 1615, the archbishop of Dublin, Eugene Matthews, was causing problems for the Jesuits over questions of faculty and privilege.[170] The Superior was ordered by the Holy Office to submit his privileges to the scrutiny of the archbishop.[171] This stabilising of secular authority over the church was accompanied by a necessary reduction in the privileges of the society by Rome.[172] Writing in 1628, David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory expressed the opinion that all Jesuit facilities had been revoked, a rumour which provoked the hostility of other clergy to the Society, and added to an already confused situation.[173] It was clear that the secular hierarchy, and to a degree, the Roman authorities, were no longer particularly satisfied as to the "mission" status of the country.

Although relations with the secular clergy, and with the other regulars, were tense at times, Aquaviva and later, Vitelleschi were both anxious that their subjects should go out of their way to placate others.[174] Aquaviva chastised Fitzsimon, who had ridiculed the austere religious life, and the Capuchins in particular, in his book on the mass.[175] Real problems only began to emerge in the 1620s, when increasing numbers of priests with conflicting jurisdictions, made skirmishes inevitable. Nugent complained to Rome in 1626 that the

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170 The constitution published by Archbishop Matthews in 1615 specifically condemned a number of extraordinary faculties held by the Society, namely those relating to the holding of ecclesiastical property and marriage dispensation which in effect permitted the regulars to act independently of the secular clergy. A.R.S.I. Fondo Ges. 446(ii) f 661r-663v and Anglia 1 f 57.

171 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 81v.

172 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 104r-v and Anglia 4a f 3r.

173 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 18v.

174 A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 11r.

175 I.J.A. 5/E/18.

seculars and other regular clergy were impeding the good work of the mission.[176] However, outbursts such as this were rare. The Jesuits maintained good relations with the secular hierarchy, or at least with those bishops who seemed favourably disposed to the order, and this reflected the close relationships, whether familial or intellectual, which existed between particular bishops and missionaries. David Kearney, one of the great episcopal champions of the order, was a cousin of two members of the mission. Thomas Dease, bishop of Meath, supported the Jesuits in Drogheda, as did the Vicar General of Armagh, Balthasar Delahoyde. The bishop of Raphoe, John O'Cullenan, was a friend of the Society. The Jesuits petitioned for his translation to Derry in 1636, at his request.[177] The same year Nugent petitioned on behalf of Bartholomew Archer to succeed Roche as bishop of Ferns.[178] Roche and O'Moloney, bishop of Killaloe were also regarded as being friends of the Society.[179] Apart from the more obvious motives of family loyalty, or mutual co-operation, the motives behind the friendship, or even the indifference of other clergy to the order, are intangible.

Motives of emnity are more easily read. Florence Conry's antipathy to the Society seems to have stemmed from his unfortunate experiences as a novice in Jesuit hands. The problem of the disaffection of former students seems to have motivated the hostility of William Brennan, the Vicar General of Ossory.[180] Michael Cantwell, the agent of the Munster bishops, was a former Jesuit novice

176 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 7r-v.

177 I.J.A. Ms A 66; 7/C/27.

178 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 41v.

179 A.R.S.I. Germ. 113 f 189v; Anglia 4a f 27.

180 Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 210 and p 162. Brennan had been a student at Douai.

who had left the Society under a cloud[181] and Jesuits living in Munster warned of the opposition they would encounter as a result of his malevolence.[182] Certainly Cantwell urged that the numbers and privileges of the regulars should be curbed. Furthermore, he suggested they be sent out of the towns into the countryside where they could do some real work.[183]

Apart from squabbles exacerbated by motives of a personal nature, relations with the secular clergy appear to have been good. Paul Harris, who was no friend of the regulars, was not as critical of the Society as of other orders, despite his allegation that William Malone was among those who moved to prosecute him before the Lord Deputy[184].

Relations with other religious orders were less pacific and there are a number of reasons for this. Competition between the orders for vocations created a climate of rivalry that was not always healthy or friendly. These rivalries were frequently fuelled by personal grudges and enmities. But the addition of institutional rivalry over property, fees and donations proved a dangerous cocktail. A number of disputes, such as that at Drogheda quickly spiralled out of control, where the battle for hearts and minds converged with a tussle over faculty, property and precedence. As a general rule, the other orders regarded

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181 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 23v.

182 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 24r-v.

183 A.P.F. SOCG Vol. 294 f 351r.

184 P. Harris *The Excommunication published by the Lord Archbishop of Dublin* (s.l., 1633) p 38; P Harris *Fratres Sobrii Estote* (s.l., 1634) p 73-5.

the Jesuits as crafty parvenus who had procured, by guile and seduction, the patronage of the seculars, the gentry and the urban elite.

In 1629, the mission petitioned Vitelleschi for vice-provincial status.[185] Rome had political reservations about this, but politics was not the only consideration. The image of financial stability that Nugent sought to project was, like official toleration of Catholicism, short term and capricious. Rome resisted the establishment of a novitiate, the true mark of stability, and repeated requests were rejected.[186] However, in 1623, the General seemed to relent in light of more favourable circumstances. A house was opened in Back Lane in Dublin. But a sudden clampdown on public mass houses forced its closure in 1630.[187] The novices were moved to Germany.[188] Rome suspected that the mission had not matured sufficiently to deserve provincial status and continuing financial dependence upon family and friends did not augur well for the future. The re-establishment of the hierarchy and an increase in the number of regular clergy helped to relieve the burden placed upon the priests who had served on the earliest period of the mission. Their successors had graduated towards the towns where they lived with family and friends, teaching the sons of their wealthy

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185 A.R.S.I. Cast. 60 f 283r.

186 Hogan, *Ib. Ign.,* p 184, 191. A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 34v-35r.

187 The principal target of this clamp down had been the Franciscan house in Cook Street. John Roche, Bishop of Ferns noted in a letter to Luke Wadding that "*The Jesuits weare not so forward as the friars in opening their schooles or oratories; and you know they judge it prudence to suffer others try ye foord before them*". *Wadding Papers,* p 333.

188 A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 25r-26v. Only one Irish Jesuit received his entire training as a Jesuit within the country. John Gough entered the Society as a mature priest. In 1649 he was Superior of the house in Clonmel. Verdier referred to him as Andrew, A.R.S.I. Anglia 6a f 76r.

patrons and relatives, preaching to smart sodality congregations and fostering an ethos reminiscent of a haute bourgeois sect rather than a mission.

Patrick Corish suggested that Catholicism in seventeenth century Ireland perceived itself as a church, not a mission.[189] This suggests a degree of homogeneity that may not have been as apparent to contemporary commentators. The Society held firm to its own proselytising style, preaching, teaching, sodality devotion and sacramental regime. Holywood and Nugent created a stable residential environment that was made possible by a tolerant political dispensation. But the missionary imperative remained at the heart of the activities of the Society.

189 P Corish *The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1981) pp 18-42.

PART III

The Society of Jesus,

The Catholic Community and the Formulation of the Counter-Reformation in

Ireland

CHAPTER EIGHT

An Identity Re-defined

The first Jesuit interventions in Ireland, as agents of a papal Counter-Reformation, had not been successful. Much of that failure was inherent in the underlying assumption behind the mission that was predicated on the notion of a restoration of the apparatus of church and state under a Catholic monarch. This same assumption had informed Old English political strategy. Neither would bear fruit.

But the Jesuits emerged from a period of rapid growth and consolidation with a clear, focused strategy for Counter-Reformation based upon education and cultural transformation. And this coincided with a receptiveness on the part of the Old English community, who had sent their sons to be educated as European Catholic gentlemen, to receive these same priests into their community and accept their guidance and their leadership. Rejected in their overtures to the crown, the Old English found in the Jesuits willing suitors who would help them forge a new identity. And this identity was focused on the notion of a loyal and Catholic community.

The enthusiasm of the Old English is evident in the reception afforded the missionaries who arrived in Ireland at the end of the 1590s. Unlike Wolfe, these men received an enthusiastic and respectful welcome. But this sea change cannot be attributed to political adversity alone (although that was a significant driver in the process). There are other questions to be answered about the factors that might have influenced this change of direction in the nature of Old English religious observance and belief.

In the 1560s the adherence of the Old English to a reformed Catholicism does not appear to have been strong. From Good's accounts it appears that the bulk of the population of Limerick were happy to confirm to the established church as it was then constituted under the local leadership of bishop Hugh Lacy. In effect Irish churchgoers continued to follow the ritual calendar of observance as had been adhered to by generations of their ancestors. The more rigorous demands of an internalised, personal piety, whether espoused by Catholic or by Protestant reformers was as alien to them as it was unpalatable. The question as to how the Old English shifted from being Church Papists in the 1560s, to be convinced recusants by the 1580s (at the latest) remains unclear. But we can be sure of one thing, the Society of Jesus had little active part to play in the transformation, a factor that was to be of immense importance in determining the nature of Jesuit activity at the end of the sixteenth century.

One clue as to the inspiration for this change of direction can be gleaned from the opposition to Perrot's programme for reform in parliament where the Old English confidently asserted themselves as a party of "loyal Catholic" opposition to the government programme.[1] It is significant that this group was led by a group of distinguished Irish lawyers, among them Sir Nicholas White, Luke Dillon and Henry Burnell. And this points to one source of inspiration and influence on changing religious sensibilities and practice in late sixteenth century Ireland. The impetus for this change was not coming from the Irish Jesuits, nor from clergy working in Ireland. The source was most definitely external, and its most likely focus was around the Inns of Court in London, already a notorious

[1] M. O'Sullivan "Irish Lawyers in Tudor Times" *Dublin Rev.* Vol. clxxix (1926) p 11.

operating ground for Catholic missionary clergy, and a significant centre of opposition to successive vice-regal administrations.

The priests operating around the Inns were predominately trained in Europe. The form of Catholicism practised by the young lawyers and students from the Pale was Tridentine in its essence. And these were the same Catholic students who paid visits to Richard Creagh in the Tower of London, and supplied him with books and clothes.[2]

Close links with England provided a further source of Catholic inspiration and a conduit for the dissemination of Counter-Reformation ideas in Ireland. Richard Verstegan noted in a letter to Robert Persons in October 1592 that many English Catholics had gone into temporary exile in Ireland,[3] and their religious sensibilities, fostered by seminary priests throughout the 1580s must also have had some impact. There is a possibility that priests were numbered among these English exiles.

There would also appear to have been considerable numbers of English Catholics resident in Ireland by the end of the sixteenth century.[4] Some of these were

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[2] J. Begley *The Diocese of Limerick in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1927) p. 178. C Lennon *An Irish Prisoner of Conscience of the Tudor Era Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523-86* (Dublin, 2000) pp 65-6, 109-12.

[3] A.G. Petti (ed.) *The Letters of Richard Verstegan*. Catholic Record Society Vol. 52 (London, 1959) No. XV, p 87.

[4] M. Maccarthy-Morrogh *The Munster Plantation English Migration to Southern Ireland 1583-1641* (Oxford, 1986) p 190 et seq.; D Edwards "A haven of Popery: English Catholic migration

prominent members of the recusant community. Among the group of Dublin merchants punished for recusancy in the Castle Chamber in 1605 was Philip Basset, an Englishman, and it was alleged "*the principal persuader of the others in their recusancy*".[5] In 1617, a Galway merchant, Martin Skerret, was detained for bringing a friar from Lisbon to the home of an Englishman who was living outside the west gate of Galway city.[6] Plantation schemes, particularly in Munster, drew more English settlers and religious refugees, especially after 1591 when stricter enforcement of English recusancy laws made the apparent lack of restriction on religious worship in Ireland an attractive option.[7]

One obvious source of inspiration for the recusants in Ireland was the English soldiers billeted in their homes. A very significant number of the men (and their followers) in the Irish garrison were drawn from the recusant countries of Lancashire and Cheshire. These counties were geographically adjacent to Ireland and were the most convenient, quickest and cheapest source of soldiers in time of need. However, it was also an explicit policy of the government to punish the recusants in these countries by forcing them to bear the cost of and serve in the levies of troops for Ireland.[8] This is not to suggest that these troops were in any way consciously disloyal, or acted contrary to government design, but it would be difficult to dismiss the subconsciously subversive impact that

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to Ireland in the age of plantations" in A Ford and J McCafferty (eds.) *The Origins of Sectarianism in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005) p 126.

[5] J G Crawford *A Star Chamber Court in Ireland The Court of Castle Chamber, 1571-1641* (Dublin, 2005) p 291 and 486-7.

[6] H.M.C. *Egmont Mss* Vol.1 (1905) p 54.

[7] B.L. Harleian Ms 1926 f 67r

[8] B. L. Landsdowne Ms 78 f 122r.

their own determined recusancy must have had upon their reluctant hosts. The influence of the English Catholic community was an important element in the self-conscious transformation of the church papists of the 1570s into recusants by the 1590s.

Another factor in the development of recusancy in the Pale was a determinedly Protestant aspect to Perrot's government and by the seventeenth century Perrot had entered Old English mythology as the first persecutor of Catholicism in Ireland.[9] However, it would be an over statement to attribute the rise of recusancy solely to government pressure.

The adoption of this consciously recusant stance by the Old English contributed to the desire for the Catholic education of their offspring. It could be said that the Old English Counter-Reformation began, not as a result of Jesuit priests working in Ireland, but through the zealous efforts of a group of laymen and lawyers who had, to a degree, been exposed to the reformed Catholic movement during their education in London. The task that remained for their kinsmen trained in the seminaries was that of consolidating and building upon this achievement, rather than breaking totally new ground.

The role and success of the Jesuits, and even the number of Jesuit priests at large in the country was exaggerated in most government reports relating to the recusancy phenomenon in the later years of the century. In 1591 the Lord Deputy, Fitzwilliam, maintained that the country was swarming with Jesuits and

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[9] J. Coppinger *The Theatre of Catholique and Protestant Religion* (s.l, 1620) pp 67-8.

seminary priests.[10] Dowdall complained bitterly to Burghley in 1596 that Waterford was wholly given over to Rome as a result of Jesuit machinations.[11] Both these claims are incorrect. There were no Jesuits whatever on the Island, and had not been since the death of Charles Lea in 1586. The Society of Jesus was a convenient scapegoat that provided an explanation for the disquieting phenomenon of recusancy among gentlemen of account in the towns. Adam Loftus was not so quick to ascribe the phenomenon to scheming Jesuits, but shrewdly identified the root cause of the problem in the attitude of the Palesmen themselves, fostered by the ineptitude of Perrot.[12] Loftus proposed that severe disciplinary action be taken against several of the principal gentlemen of the Pale to stem the tide of Catholic opposition.[13] The nature and scope of the missionary work undertaken by the Jesuits in the 1596-1604 period, (ministering to the principal figures in the Pale community and bolstering their resolve in the face of official pressure) confirmed Loftus's analysis of the recusancy problem and exposes the alarmism of Fitzwilliam and Dowdall.

Aquaviva attributed the initiative to re-launch the Jesuit mission of the 1590s to the Irish themselves, but he does not indicate in any specific detail where the initiative came from.[14] T J Morrissey SJ suggests that the Ulster chiefs and Irish exiles on the continent were responsible for the initiative.[15] But when Old English Jesuit missionaries arrived in Ireland their natural inclinations drew them

[10] TNA: P.R.O. SP/63/161/44.

[11] TNA: P.R.O. SP/63/154/37.

[12] TNA: P.R.O. SP/63/207(ii)/92.

[13] TNA: P.R.O. SP/63/157/35.

[14] I.J.A. 4/C/19; A.R.S.I. Venet. 4 pp. 327-8.

[15] T.J. Morrissey, *James Archer of Kilkenny* (Dublin, 1979) p 17.

away from O'Neill. Politically, culturally and socially the Jesuits were drawn to the Old English communities from which they had come, and where they believed they would receive support and achieve a degree of success.

The Jesuits working in the Old English communities concerned themselves with saying mass, usually in private houses, hearing confessions, performing marriages and more often than not, attempting to untangle, and absolve, a complex web of consanguineous marital relationships, all at the behest of their hosts. The latter two functions were a very important aspect of Jesuit missionary work in a community where close intermarriage was commonplace. Some indication of the socially restricted nature of the Irish mission is evident in an incident that Holywood recounted from a missionary tour in Munster. The missionary secured the reconciliation of a "robber baron" who had terrorised the community. The gentleman erected a gallows on his estate and imposed civilised order and discipline in his territory and ensured protection to the property of other residents and travellers in the region.[16] This was reported with satisfaction by Holywood and it is clear that members of the order working in Ireland viewed the world through the eyes of gentlemen with a stake in the community and concentrated their efforts on that social group. The mere Irish were left to their own devices. The poor were there to be kept in line. In the natural order of things religious allegiance was determined by "the better sort".[17]

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[16] Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 156-7.

[17] Sir John Davies suggested an alternative "bottom up" strategy. At Dungarvan, where the Lord President had secured the conformity of the peasants, the Catholic landlords refused to allow them to return to their fields until they were reconciled to the church and performed a penance for their sins. E. Hogan (ed.) *Words of Comfort to persecuted Catholics, written in exile, anno 1607.*

Jesuit attitudes to Gaelic chieftains were negative. The Englishman William Good was particularly dismissive of both the Irish language and the people, and in this his antipathy was even more pronounced than that of Stanihurst.[18] Good cannot be regarded as typical, but the attitude can be discerned elsewhere. Writing to Aquaviva on the subject of Hugh O'Neill, Holywood maintained that those Catholics fighting against him did so to protect their fortunes, their children and their lives.[19] The superior of the mission, at any rate, was clear as to who the natural enemy was. This hostility was not a conscious policy but it was almost inevitable given the manner in which Irish recruitment into the order had developed. From the start the Society had acquired an Old English ethos, and once this had been established it would continue to determine the disposition of the order in Ireland.

Although the Jesuits would have liked to secure a degree of independence from their hosts, they enjoyed the benefits of working in a comfortable, safe and easily understood milieu. This was the home environment of the priests. The prejudices and attitudes were an integral part of their outlook and the blurring of the boundaries between lay and clerical was compounded by the custom of

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Letters from a cell in Dublin Castle and Diary of the Bohemian War by Henry Fitzsimon, with a sketch of his life (Dublin, 1881) p 156. Davies, noting the compliance of the poor at Dungarvan, suggested that if the government were to concentrate its efforts on securing the conformity of poor Catholics, their betters, who could afford to be stubborn recusants, would eventually follow them into the established church. He regarded the government policy of enforcing conformity upon the wealthy as pointless. TNA: P.R.O. SP 63/218/53.

[18] W. Camden *Brittania* (London, 1607) pp 788-93.

[19] A.R.S.I. Germ. 178 f 178.

wearing layman's attire, which facilitated their psychological re-integration into the community.[20]

By the time the Jesuits arrived the Old English were fully conscious of themselves as recusant Catholics. This was an important element in determining the direction of Irish Catholicism and it was achieved without the intervention of missionary clergy. It would, however, be a totally different matter to accept that in their every day religious practices and attitudes the Old English were in accordance with the norms of the Counter-Reformation.

I

The degree of honour and respect accorded to the Jesuits who came to work in Ireland indicates an acceptance of the special nature of the priestly office among all the Queen's Irish subjects. The kerne lurking in the Irish woodlands had a clear sense of the sacrament of ordination. Bandits attacked and robbed William Good but when they realised he was a priest, chased after him seeking absolution. Good was unable to understand the men (who spoke only Irish) but one of them, seizing the priest's hand, made the sign of the cross over his companions. And having obtained absolution of a sort, the three men hurried off.

[20] Archer was accustomed to wearing layman's attire. An illustration of him survives. T.C.D. Ms. 1209/13. Veridier noted in his visitation of the Irish mission, that the Jesuits were accustomed to wearing layman's clothes at a time when all other clergy in Ireland had reverted to clerical dress. I.J.A. Ms. 114 f 2.

They kept the priest's belongings.[21] This incident reveals the degree to which the priest was seen as an instrument of divine power, but not in himself a man to be afforded any undue respect.

Among the Old English a similar attitude persisted (albeit expressed in a different way). Lord Dunsany petitioned for Christopher Holywood's release from Wisbech and he guaranteed that the Jesuit would preach against O'Neill.[22] The authority of the priest was regarded as a useful weapon against an enemy. But he was not perceived as the natural leader of the community who would respond to its needs and preoccupations. Compliance was expected from priests. David Wolfe and James Archer would not be restricted in this way and they had been pushed, literally, beyond the Pale. Henry Fitzsimon who was clearly dissatisfied with the acceptance of the situation by the acting Superior, Richard Field, advocated a more aggressive approach to the missionary task (an approach that Rome regarded as counterproductive).

But the community felt that it was necessary to curb Fitzsimon's zeal. When he overstepped the mark by making public his support for the traditional enemy, his arrest was engineered with the connivance of the Catholic loyalists who preferred to have the priest restrained, rather than compromise their relations with the crown, or jeopardise their stake in the country.[23]

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[21] F. Edwards (ed.) *The Elizabethan Jesuits: Historia Missionis Anglicanae* (Chichester ,1981) pp 14-15.

[22] TNA: P.R.O. SP63/207/2.

[23] TNA: P.R.O. SP63/206/102

There is an absence of significant comment on irregularities in the reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist among the Old English, in the accounts made by the Jesuits, a group who were normally quick to relate their own view on local custom in religious practice. This might suggest that in this at any rate, the community was in line with standard practice within the Counter-Reformation church. However, such an assumption may be misplaced. The stress laid on particular areas of practice in Fitzsimon's treatise on the mass would suggest that there were some areas where religious ritual and observance did not conform to standards. For example, Fitzsimon was at pains to stress the need for regular attendance at mass and frequent reception of the sacrament.[24]

He was also careful to dismiss the elaborate ceremony of the kissing of the Pax Board as being irrelevant to the substance of the mass, maintaining that:

> *"it (the pax) is neither anciently nor greatly used, the causes of omitting it being as I believe for abuses; some time of emulation when it was given to one before another of a greater degree; some time of scandalous interpretations as it was not used in kissing any devout image but in kissing one another"*[25]

Fitzsimon shared the Counter-Reformation church's prudish distaste for this ritual. The ceremony was regarded as theologians as being socially disruptive

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24 H. Fitzsimon *The Justification and Exposition of the Divine Sacrifice of the Masse* (Douai, 1611) p 159.

25 Op. cit., p 391.

(giving occasion for dispute over precedence) and potentially, it encouraged sexual impropriety. But it is apparent from his exposition that the ritual was still a common and popular feature of the mass in Ireland. Although Fitzsimon sought to direct his flock towards a personal devotion focused on the Sacrament, it is apparent that among the Old English, religious practice was still comprehended within a traditional conception of the mass as a social ritual. Kissing the pax board was not a socially divisive or morally dangerous activity, but an expression of cohesion, an explicit articulation of hierarchy and social order and a tangible demonstration of social amity.[26]

That elements of a traditional conception of religion prevailed among the Old English is confirmed by an account (albeit jaundiced) of Easter observances in Dublin in the 1630s:

> *"They (the papists) practice Judaism, for every Easter Day in the morning, before sunrise, they eat roasted lamb as was prescribed to the Jews in the Levitical law, and the poorer sort eat lamb pies on Good Friday and bring them to the priest who sets them on the altar and sprinkles them with their blasphemous holy water"*[27]

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[26] Another reform minded priest, the Irish Franciscan Con Ward, adopted a similar line on the pax ritual when he was challenged for omitting it when saying mass on the island of Eigg in 1625. C Giblin (ed.) *Irish Franciscan Mission to Scotland 1619-1646: Documents from Roman Archives* (Dublin, 1964) p 66. For a general discussion of the history of the Pax ritual see J. A. Bossy "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700" *Past & Present* 100 (1983) pp 29-61.

27 B.L. Harleian Ms. 3544 f 45r.

A communal feast of paschal lamb, following Easter communion, was a fairly universal feature of late medieval Christianity and an important social ritual for the whole community in the church's calendar. The most intriguing aspect of this account is the apparent unravelling of that communality and the disintegration of social cohesion. While the rich enjoyed their roast lamb at home, the poor had to make do with mutton pies.

The social differentiation implied in this account was reflected in the phenomenon of the withdrawal of the gentry from the religious observances of the community, and the domestication of the mass in the homes of the wealthy. Here it was celebrated privately, as an act of family rather than of community devotion. This phenomenon had become commonplace within the English Catholic community where the circumstances of an oppressive regime of persecution served to legitimate the practice. At a later date, the established church also experienced a withdrawal of the gentry, if not from the church, then at least into the relative seclusion of a reserved area within it.[28] The phenomenon was regarded as an abuse by the church on the continent, and, within Anglican churches was disapproved of by the Bishops of the Protestant establishment.

Although there were tendencies towards social fragmentation or differentiation, the sacrament was essentially a symbol of the unity and corporate identity felt by the Old English community which and in circumstances of persecution, served to strengthen their Catholic consciousness and recusancy. This sense of a corporate Catholic identity was particularly strong in the municipalities of Munster and is

28 J. A. Bossy *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985) p 142.

strikingly apparent from an account of a Good Friday procession in Cork which took place during the recusancy revolt in the months after the accession of King James I.

> *Myself did see in the city of Cork upon Good Friday a procession wherein the priests and friars came out of Christ's Church with the Mayor and Aldermen and the best of the citizens along the street from the one gate to the other singing in procession and about forty young men counterfeiting to whip themselves (although barefooted and barelegged) yet their breeches and doublets were upon them and over that again fair white shirts, everyone having a counterfeit whip in his hand and always, as their chief priest ended some verse which he sung in Latin, these counterfeits would answer miserere mei and layed upon their shoulders, back and sides with these counterfeit whips"*[29]

By this Lenten act of atonement, the forty young men symbolically performed satisfaction for the sins of the rest of the community. At Waterford, the churches were ceremonially cleansed and consecrated by the clergy. The vestry and the house of the Chancellor of the cathedral were broken into and the Protestant bibles and prayer books were ceremonially burned at the high cross in the churchyard.[30] At Cashel, the house of one Protestant in the town was attacked

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29 I.J.A. Ms A 15.

30 TNA: P.R.O. SP63/248/46

and burned. He was himself unhurt, but warned that if he did not leave town, a similar fate awaited him.[31]

It is clear from the events of 1603, that an aggressive Catholicism had been unleashed by the revolt that was an expression of the communal identity of the Old English community.

Evidence of a Counter-Reformation piety focused on individual sacramental observance is harder to identify, but one collection of theological tracts might suggest such a strand within Old English Catholicism, but they are unusual, if not unique. The tracts, some written, the rest collected by F.S., an "old popish gentleman" living in Ireland, have been attributed to John White, a theologian who had been trained at Douai.[32]

The tracts include a series of intimate personal meditations on the sacrament of penance. The author's observations on the seven penitential psalms reveal a conception of sinfulness and of penance which, in its concentration upon individual morality and personal redemption, is apparently distinct from the religious traditionalism within the Old English community. The Old English laity regarded penance and the Eucharist as part of the traditional ritual of Christian sociability. What sets the author of the pamphlets apart from such a

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31 B.L. Harleian Ms. 3544 ff 42v, 46r.

32 B.L Harleian Mss. 1713 and 1714. The attribution is made by F.H. Barber *The Influence of Reformed Doctrine on English Charity in the Sixteenth Century* (Colchester ,1971) pp 41-46. White had been a close associate of the Jesuits and frequently corresponded with Polanco, A.R.S.I. Germ. 150 f 44r-45r; Germ. 151 f 26; Germ. 152 f 177r-178r.

view is his consciousness of the sacraments as an occasion for the transmission of grace to the individual soul.

As long as the Irish Jesuits remained totally dependent upon the Old English for material support, as they were throughout the 1590s, the progress of a Counter-Reformation in Ireland would be hampered by the religious traditionalism and political conservatism of the Old English.

The fundamental transformation of the Society has already been outlined in Part II above. This process, which was begun by Mercurian and completed under Aquaviva, allowed for greater regulation of the financial and administrative affairs of the mission in Rome and in Dublin. This gave the venture a degree of independence and strengthened its leadership by giving the mission a coherent structure. The release of Holywood from Wisbech marked a new beginning for the Jesuit mission in Ireland. An indication of the determination to make a fresh start is apparent in the request for faculties and authority for the Superior equal to those given to the archpriest Blackwell. [33] Whether Holywood's contacts at Wisbech had influenced his views on the running of the Irish church is open to conjecture, but it seems fairly clear that in 1604 the Society was determined to implement some radical change within Irish Catholicism and that this was intended to be as ambitious as anything envisaged by Wolfe. The suppression of the recusancy revolt in the towns, coupled with the changes within the Order, gave Holywood and his associates in the Society of Jesus the opportunity to seize

33 Hogan, *Ib. Ing.*, p 117.

the initiative back from the laity and stamp their own mark on the Counter-Reformation in Ireland.

II

The Jesuits returned to Ireland as Elizabeth's long reign was drawing to a close. The anxiety engendered among the Old English of the Pale by continuing unrest in the North of Ireland was tempered by a real sense of hope and expectation that a new reign might bring a new deal for the loyal Catholic subjects of the crown in Ireland.

The anxiety is palpable in the case of James Archer. Originally from Kilkenny, Archer's experience as a military chaplain and his sympathies with the O'Neill cause hampered his ability to operate as an effective missionary within the Old English community. He clashed with the acting Superior, Richard Field, and he was deployed elsewhere.[34] Fitzsimon found himself in custody as a result of his intemperate questioning of the validity of Elizabeth's title to Ireland. In a number of his published works, which appeared in the first decade of the reign of James I, his stance on the legitimacy of the monarchy had modified considerably.

[34] Archer was a late entrant to the Society. He joined at age thirty-one in 1581. He had been involved on the fringes of the Fitzmaurice-Sander expedition and was associated with Patrick O'Hely, Bishop of Mayo who was hanged at Killmallock in 1579. Archer was recalled to Rome in 1601 and his former colleagues on the mission ensured he was not allowed to return. T. J. Morrissey *James Archer of Kilkenny* (Dublin, 1979).

The death of Elizabeth, the surrender of O'Neill and the accession of James created a great sense of anticipation, particularly among the Old English communities in the towns and cities of Munster. James was the legitimate son of Mary Queen of Scots and was married to a Catholic (Anne of Denmark had converted to Catholicism before James's accession to the English throne). Clement VIII welcomed James's accession and Peter Lombard endorsed his legitimacy.[35] In anticipation of a regime of toleration (or more) the civic authorities in Cork, Waterford and Clonmel set about re-asserting a self consciously Catholic ethos supported by municipal authority. But they had rather jumped the gun and the vice-regal and local presidential governments set about restoring order and imposing uniformity with a policy of consistent enforcement. English recusancy legislation had no legal force in Ireland and so the Dublin authorities utilised the royal prerogative in an effort to restore conformity and expel seminary trained clergy.

The Pale gentry appealed to the crown but in the atmosphere of suspicion that prevailed after the uncovering of the Gunpowder plot they did not receive a sympathetic hearing. The main leaders of this opposition group included Henry Burnell and Richard Netterville who had figured prominently in the campaign against the cess. The ringleader was identified as Sir Patrick Barnewall, a prominent lawyer and, after a fashion, O'Neill's brother-in-law.[36] Barnewall was arrested: Burnell and Netterville were placed under house arrest.

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[35] Moran, *Spicil. Ossor.,* Vol. I, p 107-9.

[36] Barnewall's wife's sister, Mabel Bagnell, had eloped with Hugh O'Neill from Barnewall's house in 1591.

From an Irish Government perspective, Catholicism *per se* was now viewed as a problem. The administration was no longer prepared to accept the position of the Old English, that being a good Catholic and a good subject were compatible, and following the defeat of O'Neill, they no longer had a pressing reason to court favour with the Palesmen.

In order to circumvent the issue raised by Barnewall, the legal basis for the policy of enforcing mandates and fines for non-compliance, the government constructed a legal justification that relied on pre-reformation statute, principally the law of *praemunire* (the offence of introducing or seeking to introduce, without royal authority, a foreign -usually papal- jurisdiction into the realm). This sidestepped the recusants' challenge and paved the way for successful prosecution in the courts. The test case, the prosecution of Robert Lawlor, Vicar-General of the diocese of Kildare and of Ferns on a charge of praemunire, was successful. This had significant consequences not only for Lawlor, he was the principal trustee of the earldom of Kildare and the barony of Delvin, and, prison aside, conviction meant loss of civil rights and the forfeiture of property.[37]

Throughout the mandates crisis, the Jesuit missionaries maintained a low, but effective, profile ensuring that the Old English community remained within the fold and holding firm to the line that being a good Catholic and a good subject were compatible. Richard Field, the interim leader of the mission and close

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[37] H. S. Pawlisch, *Sir John Davies and the Conquest of Ireland A study in legal imperialism* (Cambridge, 1985) pp 103-121.

associate of Lawlor's, was particularly active among the gentry of the Pale and his preferred text when preaching was the question on the nature of sovereignty posed by the Pharisees to Christ.[38]

This problem, the apparently conflicting demands of Caesar and of God, was at the heart of sixteenth century Jesuit political formulation. The mandates controversy passed and a more relaxed atmosphere was ushered in when James's foreign policy resulted in a rapprochement, first with Spain, then with France. But the essential dilemma remained unresolved.

The classic Jesuit political formulation, as advanced by Bellarmine and Suarez was that the power of the papacy, while essentially spiritual, could in certain circumstances be invoked to intervene in the temporal matters where a political ruler acted in a way that was contrary to the spiritual interests and well being of their subjects. The power of the temporal ruler was also circumscribed, by an effective contract of consent with the ruled. Sovereignty was ultimately vested in the people who obeyed a just king.

This formulation was used by Jesuit and other Old English commentators to address the fundamental issue (first exposed by *Regnans in Excelsis* and exacerbated by the controversies over purveyance and the mandates): How could a good Catholic remain a good subject? The responses that it inspired were varied and demonstrate a sequence of attempts to reformulate the identity of the Old English community in terms of its Catholicism rather than of its Englishness.

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[38] E. Hogan, *Distinguished Irishmen of the Sixteenth Century* (Dublin, 1894) p 179.

In one particular case the definition formulated asserted an identity that was Irish and Catholic, though this was an unusual (and unpopular) thesis.

The report drafted by Wolfe for the Spanish ambassador to Portugal, following the excommunication of Elizabeth that released him, in his own mind, from any fealty to the Queen, is prefaced by a detailed historical preamble which attempted to assert an alternative narrative to the "lawful conquest and prescription" rationale for the Crown's authority in Ireland. He offered a scenario where the English title was constrained by local consent (MacMurrogh) and conditionality (Adrian IV).[1]

This prompted subsequent commentators to consider the historical context of the Old English. Fitzsimon, notwithstanding comments made at the time of his arrest, was scrupulous in recognising the legitimacy of James I as sovereign, and contrasted the steadfastness of King James's Catholic subjects with the equivocation of puritan commentators on the nature of the institution of monarchy.[2] Having crossed a line once, he was conscious of the narrow boundaries of Old English political sensibilities.[3]

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[1] A.S.V. Arch. Arm. XIV Cap 2a (26) p 415-418.

[2] H. Fitzsimon, *A Catholicke Confutation and a Replye to M Riders Refcript* (Rouen, 1608) p 225.

[3] For a fuller discussion of the circumstances of Fitzsimon's arrest, confinement and engagement in controversy see B. Jackson "The Construction of Argument: Henry Fitzsimon, John Rider and religious controversy in Dublin, 1599-1614" in C Brady and J Ohlmeyer (eds.) *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005) pp 97-115.

Fitzsimon had a strong sense of history and a subtle mind. He also had a waspish, sometimes vulgar, but always entertaining turn of phrase. Thus equipped he set about re-constructing the historical context of the Catholic community (a context defined by an ancient and national church, faithful to Rome from the time of Palladius and loyal to the crown). Informed Protestants such as Challoner, Hanmer and even the young James Ussher were acutely aware of the potential that this exercise in historical revisionism could have in framing the allegiances of the community. And this is evident from Fitzsimon's exposition on Puritanism and other varieties of Protestant sectarianism that were distinguished by the ambiguity of their position vis-à-vis the nature and authority of monarchy.[4]

A number of prominent figures within the established church and in the Irish administration were sufficiently exercised by this ideological repositioning strategy to engage with the Jesuits. James Ussher, who had as a student engaged in debate with Fitzsimon in his cell, wrote a sustained dissertation countering a number of propositions advanced by William Malone. Malone responded and it was felt appropriate to produce a number of additional, subsidiary responses. These were all printed by the state and written by prominent figures within the established church and administration. Each sought to refute the Jesuit position,

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[4] H. Fitzsimon *Britannomachia Ministrorum in plerisque et fidei fundamentis, et fidei articulis dissidentui* (Douai, 1614) Sig. Av-Air.

and as they did so the authors responded to a genuine appetite for this form of public discourse.[43]

Malone's work is possibly the high point of an Old English Catholic assertion of loyalism in print. However, the work, an exposition on antiquity, authority and tradition was also a point of contention for other, non-Jesuit Catholic commentators and churchmen. The cause for concern was Malone's fulsome dedication to King Charles I and his willingness to submit a matter of religious controversy to royal judgement. Malone acknowledged that:

"*Kings do raigne, the more awfull also shall we be found unto you his holy anointed; whose regal power, as we acknowledge it to be subject unto none but unto God himself from whom it is*"[44]

This was regarded by many Catholic clerical commentators as unorthodox, not only was it an enthusiastic endorsement of a heretic regime, it was an implicit rejection of the articulation of kingship formulated by Bellarmine and Suarez.

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[43] J. Ussher *An Answer to A Challenge Made by a Jesuit in Ireland* (London, 1625); W. Malone *A Reply to Mr James Ussher his Answere* (s.l.,1627). The subsequent works were R. Puttock *A Rejoynder unto William Malones reply* (Dublin, 1632); G. Synge *A rejoynder to the reply published by the Jesuits* (Dublin, 1632); J. Hoyle *A reionder to Master Malone's reply concerning reall presence* (Dublin, 1641). The copy of C. Sibthorp *A reply to an answere* (Dublin, 1625) held by TCD library (press mark BB.II.28) contains a manuscript response to criticisms made by Malone of Sibthorp's earlier work *A Friendly advertisement to the pretended Catholickes of Ireland* (Dublin, 1622). The criticisms are contained in Malone *Reply* pp 713-5. Sibthorp, a justice of the King's Bench was specifically interested in the issue of Catholicism and loyalty.

[44] W. Malone *Reply* Sig. a4v.

But leading figures within the church went to some lengths to suppress any fuss about the book. The Franciscan, Robert Chamberlain, writing to Luke Wadding suggested that a favourable construction, that was not incompatible with orthodox thought, could be placed on the offending passage by inserting two implied phrases into the text so that it read as follows:

"*Kings do raigne, the more awfull also shall we be found unto you his holy anointed; whose regal power, as we acknowledge it* ***directlie*** *subject* ***in temporalities*** *unto none but unto God himself from whom it is* ***by the free consent of the people***"[45]

This helped diffuse controversy in Rome. Chamberlain, Roche and Wadding were all concerned that any move to challenge the orthodoxy of Malone's views on sovereignty would only provoke suspicions about Catholic loyalty. Roche was also of the opinion that as Malone was "*no great classical author as may authorize newe opinions*" and as his view was plainly erroneous (but of no great consequence for the church) the whole thing would blow over soon enough.[46]

Roche may have been correct in his assessment of Malone's abilities as a scholar, but as an articulation of the developing Old English personality his work is a

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[45] *Wadding Papers*, p 265.

[46] Ibid., p 274.

significant milestone in that it serves as an expression of the convergence of political and religious identities of the community.[47]

Malone himself was not untypical of the Jesuits who were selected to serve on the Irish mission. He was the son of a Dublin merchant, Simon Malone. His mother, Margaret Bexwick was from Manchester. After studying at Douai, he joined the Society in Rome in 1606 and after further study in Antwerp, Evora and Coimbra he was ordained in 1615 and returned to Ireland where he was part of the inner circle around the Superiors, Holywood and his successor, Robert Nugent, who controlled the mission and its personnel. He was superior of the Jesuit residence in Dublin until 1635 when he was appointed Rector of the Irish College in Rome, a position he held until he succeeded Nugent as Superior of the Irish Mission in 1647.

Malone's identification with Old English loyalism, like that of his closest colleagues, influenced decisions they made on recruitment, training and staffing. Archbishop Thomas Walsh of Cashel commented tartly in a letter to John Roche bishop of Ferns that;

"*The craftie procurator Malone did woorke with his generall to send hither order to the seminaries that uppon no mans commendations, cujuscumque dignitatis sit, they receave no schollers without Holliwood is letters whome I understand is dead, this is a very preposterous course, apt to breed a great dissension betwixt*

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[47] A Clarke "Colonial Identity in early seventeenth-century Ireland" in T W Moody (ed.) *Nationality and the Pursuit of National Independence* (Belfast, 1978) p 71.

the bishopps and other prelates and the Jesuits, seeingthem by whome the seminaries shudd be moste ruled, their letters and commendations shall be disrespected" [48]

Malone and his colleagues in Ireland, like Owen Lewis and the cabal of Welsh clerics who had briefly controlled the English College in Rome, were obviously prone to "the common inclination of Adam". And they effectively excluded from the mission and from Ireland, those Jesuits who adopted positions inimical to their own outlook.

The efforts of the Old English, under Jesuit leadership, to position the community as loyal but Catholic servants of the Crown was making an impression, not only on the New English Protestant establishment in Ireland, the Church and the administration, but also on the Crown whose servants saw in the Old English position, potential for financial and political leverage. The attempted clamp down on Mass houses, which had provoked rioting in Cook Street on St Stephen's Day and the closure of the Jesuit novitiate in Dublin was a half-hearted attempt by the Dublin regime to enforce some sort of control over the regular clergy. But this campaign was an inconvenience at best and, ultimately it damaged the standing and prestige of Falkland and hastened his departure from office.

This set piece event, harrying visible clerical activity within the city during Christmas week, suggests that the mission was operating within a precarious if

[48] *Wadding Papers,* p 245-6.

not a perilous environment. But this short burst of activity by the authorities gives a false sense of normal conditions and obscures the reality of how far the Catholic clergy and specifically religious orders had successfully re-established themselves within urban social networks.

When the missionaries first arrived in the late 1590s, their work was primarily concerned with keeping the Old English population, and specifically its leadership, true to its Catholic faith without compromising its allegiance to the Crown. When the immediate crisis over the mandates abated, the fundamental issue of allegiance remained and Jesuit commentators, preachers and advisors devoted much thought, energy and ink towards a successful reconciliation of this issue.

The written word was a powerful tool in the formulating and the articulation of an ideological position but the Jesuits found more immediate instruments to advise and guide select groups of influential leaders within the community. Field, Holywood and their colleagues lived and worked in and around the homes of their families and friends. To these houses, their adherents would come for the sacraments and for counsel. As the mission became more established and grew in personnel and in wealth, the Society was in a position to set up house on its own account in a number of locations and it opened its doors to provide a focus for the religious observances of its adherents.

The Jesuits who arrived in the 1590s had, like Wolfe before them, thought in terms of acquiring rights to properties formerly in religious hands. But unlike

Wolfe, they no longer contemplated restoration of the infrastructure. The resources were to be re-directed and channelled into a more domestic, intimate setting for religious encounter. And some of the other religious orders were doing much the same thing, leasing houses and opening chapels within them. But it was not long before cracks were starting to show in the façades of the many mansions of Catholic consensus. A careful examination of the character of the Catholic community reveals the fragile and illusory nature of that consensus. Not all Catholic commentators were happy with the Jesuit resolution of the problem of faith and allegiance and there were substantially more who took issue with the manner in which Jesuit spiritual directors sought to control and influence the lives and religious practices of those who frequented their houses and religious sodalities. Paradoxically, the sharpest critics of the Jesuit mission and of its activities during the reign of King James and for much of the first decade of the reign of Charles I were other religious orders working in competition with them for the hearts, minds and salvation of the Catholic population. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

The fragmentation of consensus was also affected by the sudden intrusion of Anglo Irish politics. The Falkland regime was distinguished by the viceroy's own residual anti-Catholic instincts that surfaced as official policy on St Stephen's Day. Following his re-call, the Old English community endured the temporary interregnum presided over by a resolutely hostile Boyle and Loftus. But the community knew that this inconvenience would pass and it had high hopes of the next viceroy, who they believed, as the King's personal representative would reward their steadfast loyalty and tolerate their religion.

For the Old English, and for the Jesuit leadership, Wentworth represented a conduit of direct access to the monarch, and a face of government that appeared to be more acceptable than the bigoted Falkland or the parvenus who temporarily stood in his shoes. And so they placed their trust in his regime.

But their trust was misplaced. The impact of Wentworth's rule upon the mission, and the consequences of the expectations raised by the representative of the King and the effect of his departure on the Jesuits will be briefly considered in the Epilogue.

CHAPTER NINE

Brotherhood and Otherhood

Two essential instruments employed by the clergy of the Counter-Reformation church to instil correct religious values in the laity were the confessional and the confraternity. The confidential nature of the former renders it impossible to comment in more than an impressionistic way upon its development.[1] The growth of the latter institution presents the historian with evidence of a more concrete nature.[2]

But the Counter-Reformation was not a uniform ideology although this is the impression one would form from the descriptive canon that has generally been adopted to describe the phenomenon. The counter -reformation is vigorous, rigorous and aggressive, a coherent ideology propagated with missionary fervour by a cadre of disciplined ascetic scholars spearheading a new world order. It may have been all of these things but it was also a complex and nuanced episode in the development of Catholicism from universal world-church to denomination. And this was a journey littered with internal controversy and dispute, characterised by a denial of an increasingly sectarian profile.

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[1] J.A. Bossy, "The Social History of Confession in the Age of the Reformation", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1975), p 38.

[2] Considerable work has been undertaken recently on confraternity and religious guild organisation and the domestic focus of religious life among the Old English community (particularly within Dublin) by Colm Lennon, *The Lords of Dublin in the Age of Reformation* (Dublin, 1989); 'Mass in the Manor House: the Counter-Reformation in Dublin, 1560-1630', in J. Kelly and D. Keogh (eds.) *History of the Catholic diocese of Dublin,* (Dublin, 2000), pp 112-26; 'The foundation charter of St Sythe's guild, Dublin, 1476', *Archiv. Hib.* 48 (1994), p 3-12; 'The chantries in the Irish Reformation; the case of St Anne's Guild, Dublin, 1550-1630' in R. V. Comerford, M. Cullen, J. Hill and C. Lennon (eds.) *Religion, conflict and coexistence in Ireland: essays presented to Monsignor Patrick Corish* (Dublin, 1990) pp 6-25.

The institutional heart of Catholic Europe may have been diverted from the realities of rejection and confessional diversity by the successful propagation of the faith among the native peoples of the American and Asian colonies. However, by focusing on this, the success of the Counter-Reformation as mission, historians have effectively turned their backs on the Counter-Reformation church as an institution in flux, and on the internal tensions and jurisdictional conflicts that lay at the heart of that process of transformation.

These tensions and conflicts are well illustrated by a very local example. It was a dispute between the Vicar General of Armagh and Ordinary of Drogheda and the Franciscans based in that town. The dispute is familiar and the documentation detailed. It gives us a glimpse of Catholic life in Drogheda in the period 1618-1625.[3] Although unapologetically local, the dispute has a general significance for Irish Catholicism. Irish historians are familiar with the Counter-Reformation as hard-pressed missionary church, the beleaguered product of repression. We are less familiar with a rather more assertive face of the same institution and the manner in which it set out to re-establish rights, privileges and jurisdictions. The dispute at Drogheda is an important symptom of this process of re-establishment

[3] The major sources for the Drogheda dispute are contained in *Wadding Papers*. The principal documents are (i) Complaints of the Franciscans at Drogheda against Balthazar Delahoyde, pp 29-34; (ii) Answers of the Franciscans at Drogheda to the charges of the Vicar General, pp 34-46; (iii) A report of the Franciscans on the disputes at Drogheda, pp 46-58; Balthazar Delahoyde's letter of complaint to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, pp 637-641; and a series of attestations concerning the Franciscans pp 59-69. This series of documents consists of testimonials of support from senior members of the secular clergy, principally the Vicars General of various dioceses.

that ebbed and flowed on the tide of internal dispute, tension and intermittent persecution that characterised Catholicism in Jacobean and Caroline Ireland.

Drogheda occupied an important place in the administration of the church in pre-reformation Ireland. The Metropolitan maintained a residence at the manor of Termonfeghin nearby and the town was the usual site of diocesan and metropolitan councils which were usually held in the principal church, St Peter's.[4] The town was also the site of the archiepiscopal consistory court.[5] Drogheda boasted a number of religious foundations. At the dissolution, in addition to its parish churches, the town had houses of Carmelites, Dominican, Franciscan, Austin and Crutched friars, and a nunnery at Termonfeghin nearby.[6] Unusually the town straddled two dioceses: north of the river Boyne was the diocese of Armagh while the area south of the river lay in the diocese of Meath. Although this may seem a minor point of detail today, this proximity of jurisdiction had given rise to acrimonious disputes in the pre-reformation church that required the intervention and mediation of the papal chancery.[7] It was a stated ambition of the Vicar General of Armagh to unite the town under his own jurisdiction.[8] The Franciscan Provincial, Donagh Mooney, mindful of past disputes, flagged this issue as the very first point on his visitation report on the

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[4] Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, p 75.

[5] L. P. Murray, ed., "A Calendar of the Registers of Primate George Dowdall", *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn.* vi (1925-8); vii (1929-32).

[6] B. Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974) pp 121, 124, 139, 238, 239, 241, 242 and 244.

[7] A. P. Fuller (ed.), *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland. Papal Letters, Vol. XVII, Part I Alexander VI 1492-1503, Lateran Registers Part Two, 1495-1503* (Dublin, 1994) No. 964 and 1005.

[8] *Wadding Papers* p 5.

Franciscans at Drogheda in 1617.[9] Mooney's report, part of a general visitation undertaken during his term of office, sets out the extent of properties formerly held by the friars in the town.[10] Mooney noted that the Aylmer family, who were Catholic, had the use and enjoyment of the convent buildings and gardens. Aylmer sold the property to Moses Hill, a Protestant, some time during 1612.[11]

The Friars clung to the notion that lay occupation of former monastic property was a temporary matter. In nearby Dundalk, Mooney had composed a conscience-easing settlement with the grandson of James Brandon, the original grantee of convent property in the town. In return for an indulgence to hold and enjoy the property in trust for the friars, Brandon undertook to pay an annual income out of the property to the Franciscans. In addition, he promised not to sell or alienate the property without consent and, on demand, he would assign his interest in the property over to the order.[12] But in Drogheda the property had been sold to a non-Catholic and there was no possibility of such a composition.

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[9] B Jennings (ed.), "Brussels Ms. 3947: Donatus Moneyus, De Provinciae Hiberniae S. Francisci", *Anal. Hib.* Vol. vi (1934) p 28.

[10] Mooney served as provincial from September 1615 to September 1618. Op. cit., pp 123-4; p 172.

[11] The convent had originally been granted to Gerald Aylmer, Chief Justice of the King's Bench. N. B. White (ed.), *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1, from manuscripts in the Public Record Office, London* (Dublin, 1941), p 248; *Fiants Ire., Hen. VIII,* No 350; B. Bradshaw, *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974), p 239. Mooney dates the sale in 1612, the Brevis Synopsis of Francis Matthews gives 1610 as the date. *Anal.Hib.* vi pp 30, 147.

[12] B. Bradshaw *The dissolution of the religious orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974) p 242; B. Jennings, ed., "Brussels Ms. 3947: Donatus Moneyus, De Provinciae Hiberniae S. Francisci" *Anal. Hib.* Vol. vi (1934) p 35.

A particular cause for concern was the belief, widely held in the town that Hill was an agent of Sir Arthur Chichester, engaged to acquire the property and build a residence for him on the riverside site occupied by the friary. Mooney's source for much of the detail surrounding the Hill family's occupancy of the convent property (and the colourful detail of unfortunate, apparently supernatural misfortunes suffered by Hill family members) was his future adversary, Balthazar Delahoyde, the Vicar General of Armagh. In the space of two years these two men, who apparently had enjoyed an amicable and respectful relationship, would lead two bitterly opposing factions in an acrimonious dispute that would engulf the whole town and the clergy of two diocese.

At around the time Aylmer sold the site of the Franciscan convent in Drogheda, four friars returned to the town, rented a house there, and established a regular life. Each friar had a cell in the house. There was a separate refectory, a kitchen and a principal hall large enough to serve as an oratory. The oratory had a fixed altar, a raised dais for preaching and purpose built confessionals ("*sedes pro confessionibus audiendis*"). The Franciscans, who have for a long time been cast in the role of defenders of tradition, were, apparently, *au fait* with the latest developments in church furnishings.[13] Beyond this public space, the friars would gather behind the altar where the canonical hours were read.

Inside the house the friars adopted the regular habit. Outside, in the town, they dressed in secular clothes. The main door of the house served as the door of the chapel. It was open to the public who frequented the oratory in large numbers.

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[13] J. A. Bossy, *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985), p 134.

The friars were very popular in the town. The house was occasionally searched by government troops. This was a feature of the fitful persecution of Catholic clergy that shadowed events on a wider stage. One of the older friars was captured. The townspeople surrounded the soldiers in an angry mob, attacking them with sticks and stones, and freed the prisoner. Thwarted, the soldiers wrecked the chapel and smashed the altar.

The friars set about restoring the oratory. The Dominicans, who had also re-established themselves in the town, founded a public oratory for their own Confraternity of the Rosary. The Vicar General, Balthazar Delahoyde had also founded an oratory. Each of these institutions existed side by side in an apparent state of harmony.

Delahoyde had a close relationship with the Jesuits and he was inclined to take advice on diocesan matters from James Averred and Robert Bathe, two Jesuits who had come to the town. In 1619, Delahoyde invited the priests to set up their own sodality and run it out of his oratory. Many of the leading citizens of the town flocked to join the new sodality.

The Jesuits had already set up sodalities in a number of towns with the support of the secular hierarchy. Daniel Kearney, the Dean of Cashel, believed that the sodality promoted frequent confession and eucharistic devotion. Members prayed for the souls of the departed and provided support for the poor out of their

donations. The institution was judged to promote amity between friends and restored good relations where there had been dissent. [14]

An association of laity and clergy dedicated to the promotion of amity, the relief of poverty and the cure of souls sounds very much like a confraternity, a universal and characteristic feature of late medieval Christendom. Institutional fraternity was uninhibited by status, occupation or sex. Membership of more than one organisation was commonplace. Fraternities played a major role in civic and parochial religious observances, such as Corpus Christi. In addition they served to promote peace and charity (in the sense of being at peace with and caring for one's neighbours). Charity in our contemporary sense of the word was also an increasingly important aspect of fraternal activity. This is most obviously apparent in the scuole grandi of Venice, which administered huge reserves of funds. Charitable concern for the departed found an outlet in the institution of the chantry. Chaplains were hired fraternity servants who offered masses for the souls of the dead. Fraternities also played an active role in the parish, encouraging religious observance, funding church building and contributing to parochial life. In cases of multiple fraternities and multiple memberships, a certain jostling for position was evident and inevitable. Despite a certain fraying at the edges, the fraternity represents the embodiment of medieval religious corporatism and its clearest expression was the fraternal feast, the "*prandium caritatis*". [15]

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[14] Moran, *Spicil. Ossor.* Vol. I, p 129.

[15] J. Bossy *Christianity in the West 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985) pp 57-63.

It is immediately apparent that there are a number of fundamental differences between a fraternity and the pious groups being set up in the Irish towns. The first essential point of difference is the role of the clergy. Kearney stated that the group was "*moderamine Patrum Societatis Iesu*", under the control or direction of the clergy. Of equal significance is the terminology used to describe the group and its status. It was an "*aggregationem inchoatum*", an incomplete group. This term is the key to understanding the status of Jesuit sodality organisations in early seventeenth century Ireland and one of the substantive points of contention in Drogheda.

Aggregation of an inchoate group was a clearly defined procedure that conferred legitimate status on Jesuit sodalities. Regulation forbade the formation of a sodality outside of a properly constituted house. The original intention was to diffuse any jurisdictional conflict with parochial or diocesan organisations. However, it created an immediate practical problem in a missionary context. In the absence of a formal provincial structure and properly constituted houses, the Jesuits were effectively prevented from forming sodalities. The problem was neatly sidestepped by informally aggregating an inchoate group to the Roman *Primaria*. This process of informal aggregation was effected by papal dispensation.[16] The Jesuits were well advised to concern themselves with such

[16] Authority for the erection of the Roman *Primaria* was granted by Gregory XIII ("*Omnipotentis Dei*", 5 December 1584). Sixtus V allowed for the process of aggregation of sodalities in other Jesuit colleges ("*Superna Dispositione*", 5 January 1587). This was extended to colleges and houses of study under the care of the Society, but not belonging to it ("*Romanum Decet*", 29 September 1587). Clement VIII conferred additional authority on the General of the Society to aggregate sodalities in Jesuit residences generally. This was done by papal brief ("*Cum Sicut Nobis*" 30 August 1602). J MacErlean *The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ireland: A*

procedural formalities as other parties were also taking a keen interest. In his annual report to the General on the events of 1620, the Irish superior Christopher Holywood expressed concern that the friars were preaching against the Jesuits sodalities. It was being alleged that they were set up without authority (the Franciscans' position was that sodalities should be confined to colleges for members and scholars of the Society alone). Furthermore, the rules of the sodality requiring members to make their confession to a Jesuit only were held to be contrary to the Council of Trent and to canon law. Holywood asserted that the friars had preached with the express authority of the Irish Franciscan provincial[17].

A surviving register of the Sodality of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin founded in Dublin in 1628 gives us some understanding of how a sodality operated. A Jesuit priest acted as director of the sodality. Leading members of the laity served as the prefect and officers. Office holders were chosen each quarter by a sophisticated process of closed nomination, shortlist and secret ballot. A surviving membership roll indicates 23 male lay members and 44 female members. All the women were married but apparently not to any of the

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Short History (Dublin, 1928), p. 5. Permanence of the residence or mission station was of the essence here and it was only after considerable lobbying that the aggregation was extended to Irish sodalities, Hogan, *Ib. Ign.,* pp 43, 49. On 6 October 1617 the Pope granted an indulgence for the aggregation of sodalities at Cashel and Waterford to the *Primaria.* A.R.S.I. Arch. Prima Primaria Protocollo XIV Esposizione III. This concession was extended to include Clonmel, Limerick, Cork and Carrick on 28 October 1619 and copies of these were forwarded to Holywood the Irish superior on 28 December 1619. A.R.S.I. Anglia I f 89v-90r. Dispensation was also obtained permitting female membership, A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 73v. Formal aggregation could not be effected unless there was a permanent residence. A.R.S.I. Anglia I f 90v.

[17] I.J.A. V/N/1 (1621).

men in the sodality.[18] The rules of the sodality proclaimed its principal object to be progress in virtue and Christian piety through the sacraments. New entrants were required to make a general confession to the director. Members would make their confession and receive the sacrament on the first Sunday of each month. The six principal feasts associated with the life of Christ and the eight feasts associated with the Virgin were observed. Officers of the sodality received the sacrament on a more frequent basis. Every Sunday the sodalists met in the Oratory for an hour of reading or study. Members were expected to set an example to "the common sort" by their piety.

The sodality was designed to direct and focus the attention of the members on the lives and example of Christ and Mary. Its organisation was disciplined and structured with the moral and devotional tone set by the priest as director, not as servant. This sets it apart as something quite distinct from its corporate precursor, the confraternity. The devotional focus was on the Eucharist and the moral tone was set by the example of the holy family: the chaste marriage of the Virgin and St Joseph was promoted as the Christian ideal.[19]

Membership of the sodality conferred considerable benefits in the form of indulgences granted on entry, on each of the major feasts, on receiving the sacrament, and at death.

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[18] Clongowes Wood College Mss, Documents relating to the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary 1628-1865, ff 1-4r.

[19] H. Garnett, *The Societie of the Rosarie* (s.l., 1624), pp 162-165 and p 19.

These benefits apart, the sodality touched a popular devotional chord. The Jesuit annual letter for 1619 reported that the sodality in Kilkenny had attracted a select and pious membership. In Clonmel and Limerick, sodalities were reported to be flourishing and in Waterford, the sodality had a large but prestigious membership.

A sodality was founded in Cork in 1618 and it is a mark of the commitment and wealth of the members that an elaborate gilt and wooden statue of the Virgin and Child was brought from Lisbon to decorate the oratory. The statue was reported to be three cubits high and required eight men to carry it.[20] In Clonmel, the cult of the Jesuits Loyola and Xavier and of the novices Gonzaga and Kostkwa were also encouraged and images of all four were carried in procession through the town on feast days.[21]

This is quite a different form of organisation from the traditional inclusive confraternity where a certain promiscuity of membership and social inclusion had been characteristic. To borrow sectarian typology, this form of sodality was an organisation which exhibited characteristics of two types of religious grouping, the devotionally innovative "collegium pietatis" and the structured protest group the "fraternitas". All the classic badges of a sectarian or proto-sectarian grouping were evident. There was a voluntary association. Membership was by proof of some special merit. There was a self-perception of election or of special merit. There was a high level of lay commitment and

[20] A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 195.

[21] A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 116r; Anglia 1 f 104v.

participation, there was a strong emphasis on a novel devotional regime, there was a high degree of hostility or indifference to secular society and there was a strong charismatic aspect to the group.[22] This last term addresses the personal focus of the group on an individual, in this instance a spiritual director. It also addresses the charismatic in the Durkheimian sense of the proximate locus of the sacred in the activity of the group.

The members of the group held the priests and their sodality in high esteem. However, in common with many exclusive groups, it was regarded with suspicion by outsiders. The Jesuits encountered significant opposition in Drogheda.[23] Their opponents were not government officials or Protestant ministers. They were other Catholics, regular clergy and lay people associated with other sodalities in the town.

The Franciscans alleged that the Jesuits had behaved improperly in the recruitment of members and objected volubly to what they regarded as restrictive practices. Sodality rules required members to make their confessions to a Jesuit or to a delegated priest. In Drogheda the delegates were Christopher Delahoyde, nephew of the Vicar General, and Patrick Barnewall, a secular priest in the town. Members should only hear mass in the sodality oratory. Members should not

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[22] B. R. Wilson "An Analysis of Sect Development" *American Sociological Review* Vol. xxiv, no. i, (1959) pp 3-15; P. L. Berger, "Sectarianism and religious sociation" *American Journal of Sociology* lxiv, no. i (1958) pp 41-44.

[23] Archives Generales du Royaume, Brussels, Archives Jesuitique Prov. Flandro Belgique 1451 f 105r-111r.

miss sodality meetings. This last regulation particularly incensed the friars who held their own sodality meetings on the same days.

At first it was assumed that the sodality had been set up on foot of a special grant from the pope. However when the Franciscans demanded to see the grant it became clear that any papal concession was *viva voce* and that the Drogheda sodality had been founded on Balthazar Delahoyde's authority alone. The Franciscans noted that Delahoyde recognised no superior. In the absence of a bishop, a vicar general was empowered to perform virtually all episcopal functions throughout the diocese. This would include the conduct of episcopal visitations, admission of priests to and receiving resignations from parochial benefices, granting licences of dispensation, granting letters dismissory for clerks proceeding to ordination in another diocese and, prior to the reformation, they would receive the vows of religious and sanction the election of heads of houses.[24]

The guardian of the Franciscan house, Donagh Mooney, together with the Dominicans, made a formal complaint that the Vicar General was ignoring the rights of the regular clergy.[25] Furthermore, those who had joined the Franciscan

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[24] A. H. Thompson *The English Clergy and their organisation in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1947) pp 46-56.

[25] Mooney was portrayed as an elderly, traditional cleric by historians of the order such as Meehan. He was in fact a relatively young man. Born in 1578, he saw military service before entering the friars in October 1600. He was described by contemporaries in the order as a man of great learning. He was made guardian of St Anthony's, Louvain in 1607, and in 1611 became Vicar Provincial of the Irish province. He was elected Provincial in 1615. *Anal. Hib.* Vol. vi pp 13, 94, 121 and 124.

and Dominican sodalities were drawn away from their devotions. Mooney stated that he was objecting to the restrictive regulations of the Jesuit sodality. He attempted to discuss the matter with Delahoyde, Bathe and Everard, but did not get a hearing. He offered to go to arbitration on the matter and nominated David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory as mediator.[26] The essence of Mooney's position was that the Jesuits had no authority to erect a sodality, as there was no formal house of studies in Drogheda. This line of argument indicates that he was familiar with the concessions and privileges granted to the society. Bathe refused to submit papal privileges granted to the Society for scrutiny and withdrew from the arbitration process.

The dispute simmered over the next nine months or so until the affair spilled over into the public domain. An alternative arbitrator, James Plunkett, the Vicar General of Meath, was asked to intervene. Plunkett invited Delahoyde to discuss the matter. The invitation was ignored. A year passed and only the threat of excommunication would induce Delahoyde to consent to arbitration. The offending sodality regulations were relaxed.

However the dispute had developed its own momentum. The Franciscans had, as yet, no public oratory in the town. Therefore they had obtained licence to say mass in the ruins of the original friary. The licence was withdrawn, allegedly at

[26] Rothe's personal assessment of Delahoyde was not uncritical, "*My ancient friend Mr Balthazar Delahoid, who striving against the streame, runneth upon the rockes.....he bewraieth such imperfections which cannot but breed a feare in his friends of his imparriengy so great a busines, and in others... an opinion of his weakness and insufficience for so great a chardge which hetherto was committed to him upon trust, with regard to the necessity of the hour and the want of others more able and fitt.*" *Wadding Papers*, p 103.

the instigation of Robert Bathe and the Franciscans were obliged to share facilities with the Dominicans. Some months later Christopher Plunkett preached to a large congregation in the Dominican oratory on the Feast of St Francis. Delahoyde and Bathe alleged that in this sermon he attacked the secular hierarchy and other regular clergy, propounding no less than twelve heretical propositions. The friars dismissed this and other allegations of improper conduct.

When Mooney was away on business, Delahoyde and Bathe approached leading lay beneficiaries of the Franciscans and attempted to turn them against the order. Four of the friars went to the Vicar General and begged him not to stir up trouble but Delahoyde threw them out.

Then on the night of 26 October, Christopher Delahoyde, Balthazar's nephew, broke into the Dominican oratory chapel, destroyed the altar, stole the vessels and broke up the pulpit. The tone of the account of this incident is reminiscent of Mooney's earlier account of the raid carried out by government troops in 1611. By the end of December the Friars' own oratory chapel was nearly complete. Delahoyde wrote to Mooney stating that he had not been consulted about the building works and that the oratory had not been constituted with his authority. Therefore, the chapel was not constituted in accordance with the decree "*De Celebratione Missarum*" of the twenty-second session of the Council of Trent and he forbade the friars to say mass there. The friars sent three prominent laymen to put their case to the Vicar General. They pointed out that the friars did not require permission to build on their own property and that the privileges of the order were well established on this particular point. In addition, the decree

cited by Delahoyde (that ordinaries should not permit mass to be said in unorthodox or unconsecrated places) had not been given effect in Ireland. It was asserted that it was a long established privilege of the friars, as a mendicant missionary order, to celebrate mass on portable wooden altars. It is clear that at this point the laity were openly questioning the authority of the Ordinary and his role in the persecution of the friars. Delahoyde responded by citing chapter three of the twenty-fifth session of the Council, prohibiting regulars from setting up new houses without the licence of the ordinary. The friars countered that they had been in Drogheda for over three hundred years and their current accommodation reinforced their well-established position in the town.[27]

Delahoyde was incensed and sent his nephew to the friars' chapel where, in front of a large crowd he pronounced a formal interdict on the oratory. Many citizens remained loyal to the friars and Delahoyde was forced to send his nephew and Barnewall from door to door to canvass support. Next, the Vicar General excommunicated twelve leading supporters of the friars and called on the secular clergy of the diocese to support him. The twelve citizens appealed their case to Rome. Meanwhile, after five days of deliberation, the secular clergy of the Archdiocese rejected the interdict. The Vicars General of Down and Dromore,

[27] An interesting aspect of the Drogheda affair was the nature of the argument employed by the Jesuits to defend their position vis-à-vis the Dominicans in the town. Unlike the Franciscans who had maintained a continuous presence in Ireland throughout the sixteenth century, the Dominicans were alleged to have been absent from the island for a period. On the basis of this assertion the Jesuits challenged Dominican claims to precedence on the grounds that Society had therefore been present and active in Ireland for the greatest length of time, and therefore took precedence. This reveals a remarkably discontinuous conception of the development of the church in Ireland, and underlines the extent to which the Jesuits regarded themselves as the pioneers of a particular brand of Catholicism. A.P.F. SOCG 390 f 96

Patrick Hanratty and Patrick Matthews, alleged that the interdict had no foundation in canon law and was imposed as the result of the personal vindictiveness of the Jesuits, Bathe and Everard. They added that the meddling Jesuits should act with greater caution. Unlike the Franciscans or Dominicans they had no historic tradition in the town. Their position was based on a special relationship with the current ordinary and they might just as easily lose that privilege and influence. Delahoyde attempted to discipline the clerics but Hanratty's status as a Vicar Apostolic, and Matthews's prestige as one of the most learned clerics in the province (who had been elected to his position by the diocesan clergy and confirmed in it by the Vice Primate) rendered them untouchable.

At this point, Delahoyde, who was in his sixties, died. The Jesuits lobbied for the preferment of his nephew Christopher who was appointed Vicar General of Meath. Allegations of Jesuit high-handed behaviour continued. It was alleged that Mooney was threatened with arrest and was told that if he was apprehended in the streets of Drogheda he would be arrested and handed over to the King's gaoler for trial.

The Jesuit General in Rome was concerned that this rancorous dispute was now out of control. He instructed Holywood to establish if the two Jesuits were at fault and to take appropriate action to restore harmony.[28] In a further communication to Robert Nugent he advised that it was not prudent for the Jesuits to insist on rights and privileges in disputes with other religious at this

[28] A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 102v.

time and that it would be expedient to waive such claims in order to maintain a semblance of amity.[29]

But Bathe and Everard chose to ignore that advice and instead they sought and obtained favourable testimony from Thomas Dease, Bishop of Meath who wrote to the General blaming the friars for the events in Drogheda.[30] Dease exonerated the Jesuits from any involvement in the interdict controversy, which he regarded as a justified defence of episcopal authority (Dease clearly believed in hedging his bets as he gave an equally glowing testimony to the friars).[31] The General had taken the view that although the contentious issues between the friars and the Ordinary in Drogheda seemed to have been resolved (by the latter's death) it was apparent there was little hope of restoring good relations with the Jesuits as long as Bathe and Mooney lived and worked in the same town. The Jesuit superior was instructed to remove Bathe at least five or six miles from Drogheda (Bathe was not to be made aware of the reason for the move). It was agreed that Mooney was also to be relocated.[32] In a subsequent instruction the General specified a distance of twelve miles.[33] Holywood replied that removing Bathe from Drogheda would undermine everything that the Society had achieved in the town. He too was inclined to ignore instruction and did not implement a direct order, preferring to let events run their course.[34]

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[29] A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 102r.

[30] I.J.A. Ms B 17.

[31] *Wadding Papers* p 59.

[32] A.R.S.I. Anglia 1 f 105r-v.

[33] A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 1r.

[34] I.J.A. Ms A 61.

In the end, this strategy paid off. Mooney died in the spring of 1625. This effectively diffused the situation in the town and a dispute that had raged for five years simply faded away. This is remarkable in itself. The absence of the charismatic focus (Mooney) and the legitimating force (Delahoyde) from the competing groups removed the impetus from the dispute. Each side reverted to more regular patterns of religious behaviour: protest was routinised and reabsorbed into the institutional body of the church.

In its form, the dispute exhibited a number of classic sectarian features and the rhetoric employed by the protagonists in formal submissions to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide also suggests a sectarian theme.

The substance of the dispute was *prima facie* jurisdictional. At one level this was a dispute over institutional boundaries. In his submission to Rome, Delahoyde asserted his pre-eminent position in the local secular hierarchy as Vicar General and Apostolic Pronotary. He asserted that the friars, by their schismatic conduct, had managed to attract the attention of the magistrates upon the clergy in the town and expose them all to the risk of prison. Delahoyde also made much of the character defects of the friars who had clashed with him. Turning to the substantive issue in his complaint, Delahoyde attacked attempts by the friars to enforce traditional rights with regard to burials, the *ius sepulturae* and the *quarta funeralium*. He also attacked their success in securing tithes and offerings from the laity at the expense of the seculars, which he condemned as simony and alleged that the friars had even resorted to the threat of civil legal action to exact their dues in full.

In response, Mooney was at pains to stress the learning and orthodox training of the friars involved in the dispute. Christopher Plunkett, a scion of a leading pale family was a product of Louvain. Henry Mellan, the Guardian of Armagh and Vicar Provincial had studied philosophy and theology at Salamanca. Mooney himself had lectured in theology and philosophy at Louvain and had served as Guardian of St Anthony's College there. By way of contrast he stressed that many of the allegations made by Delahoyde arose out of his own want of learning and flawed understanding of complex regulation and doctrine.

Delahoyde alleged that it was the custom of the friars to entertain men and women of the town at great feasts in their house. Mooney denied the suggestion vehemently. He acknowledged that the friars did entertain local benefactors each year on the feast of St Francis, but that there was no question of clerical vows being compromised on these occasions. It is curious that of all the allegations made in this dispute it is this one which has captured the attention of historians who have assumed, incorrectly that they are looking at a traditional Gaelic religious order engaged in a medieval "*prandium caritatis*". But Mooney's "*convivium*" appears to have been a confraternity fundraiser.

Delahoyde also attacked the friars' assiduous defence of their traditional exemptions and privileges and alleged that they had altered the form and order of prayer offered at mass to advance the claims of the order. Mooney was quick to dismiss the charge and confirmed that as a matter of course prayers were offered

for the pope, the bishops, the four mendicant orders and for the king and queen as they had always been.

Both parties to the dispute made much of government persecution. But this sits rather uneasily with the suggestion made by both sides that each was prepared to use the civil power to enforce their rights and privileges. This, together with the practice of offering regular public prayers for the King and Queen indicates that the Catholic Church in the Pale (whether under the auspices of Jesuits or Franciscans) had a deeply ambivalent attitude to the state.

The sequence of events in Drogheda suggests that the Catholic Church occupied a semi-public position in the town. It existed in a curious "through the looking glass" world where the actions of Catholic institutions mirrored their official Protestant counterparts. For example, the royal visitation of 1615 was matched by Mooney's visitation of 1617. Catholic sodalities may have been set up by the religious orders to foster piety and galvanise Catholic resistance to persecution. But as persecution ebbed, these sodalities took on an institutional life all of their own. Catholic solidarity in the face of persecution was displaced by disputes over rights, jurisdiction, and procedure with churchmen and the institutions they represented defending their patch. Catholicism was in effect reconstructing for itself alternative frameworks for institutional religion in Ireland.

And the architecture of those frameworks reflected the ethos and the objectives of their design. The sodality organisation that the Jesuits created was a mirror image of what the Society had developed into. It was hierarchical, exclusive,

elitist and subject to close control and supervision. It is difficult to assess in isolation the influence of the sodalities on the spiritual development of the Old English elite who joined them. If we take the glowing Jesuit reports at face value, their achievement was inestimable. In towns where other regular clergy provided a more palatable alternative to members of the laity who adhered to traditional social and religious values, the sodality had a less pacific history, but the nature of the disputes that occurred, with the Franciscans and with the Dominicans also, indicates a fundamental difference of outlook between the Jesuits and the other orders (who appear to have been happy to share facilities and permit cross-over of membership).

But the Jesuits were anxious to ensure that their own sacramental teaching and devotional regime was not compromised. They were anxious to dissuade their sodality members from following alternative paths to grace. An in this sense the dispute at Drogheda was about a different form of jurisdiction, a spiritual jurisdiction over sodality members and an implied duty of care to help them find salvation in their daily life and work in the community

The devotions fostered by the Jesuits focused upon the frequent reception of the sacrament by the laity, and the cult of Mary and the Holy Family. But equally important was the development of the cults of significant Jesuits. Jesuit residences fostered the cult of Loyola, and his life and example was a regular and popular theme for sermons.[35] The Jesuits organised elaborate processions to celebrate the feast days of beatified Jesuits in the towns and they collected

[35] A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 102v.

evidence of cures attributed to his intercession to promote the cause for canonisation.[36]

The popularity of the Jesuits as teachers, as confessors and as arbitrators indicated a status in the eyes of the laity as an order with a high reputation for learning and probity. Among the clergy, they occupied a dominant position, both social and ideological, that was out of all proportion to the size of the order in Ireland. Their influence upon the secular hierarchy also lent them great leverage and they exercised this in two specific ways.

At one level the Jesuit effort was directed towards keeping the average Catholic true to the faith. The Jesuits were focused on making people conscious of their Catholicism as a fundamental element in their identity. A bad Catholic would lapse, by default, into the ways of a bad Protestant and the Society was vehement in its condemnation of Church Papists. In these circumstances the Jesuit contribution to the Counter Reformation was something of a holding operation against the forces of lapsarianism and indifference, rather than an active radical reform. But within a limited, elite group, it flourished as a vital and popular spiritual movement. Like the English Puritan clergy, the Society of Jesus was fostering a caste of the godly in Ireland.[37] And like their Puritan counter-parts, the godly were very aware of their special position within the community, a consciousness fostered by the religious exclusivity of the sodality. They attended

[36] A.R.S.I. Anglia 41 f 116 r. The novices Gonzaga and Kostka were beatified in 1605. Loyola was beatified in 1609 and canonised in 1622. Xavier was beatified in 1619 and canonised in 1622.

[37] P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1984) p 230.

sermons, devoured religious literature and regularly performed their religious duties. Their spiritual directors tried to enforce some form of control on the opportunities for social and moral laxity afforded at wakes and by activities such as gaming and immodest drinking. But this is not to suggest that there were two fundamentally different religious cultures at work in Catholic Ireland. In the mind of the Jesuits the issue was a simple one: there were good Catholics and there were bad Catholics and by fostering the piety and fervour of the former, the attitudes of the latter could be reformed by the example of their betters. This was the essence of Jesuit spiritual endeavour in Ireland.

The frameworks that the Counter-Reformation Church developed in Ireland were focused on domestic worship, the Christian family and interior spirituality. This was a pragmatic response to the absence of appropriate infrastructure. But it prompted a particular type of religious response from the clergy and from the laity. And it may be that in certain respects the Church was departing from European norms and taking on a distinctive character. When Rinuccini arrived from Europe, just like Salmeron who had come a century before him, he was unimpressed by certain aspects of the Irish Church or Irish religious practice.[38] This may in part be explained by his temperament (which might be described as precious) and his sense of his own importance,[39] but it is also illustrative of a failure to grasp the essential subtlety and variety of the Irish Counter-

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[38] J. A. Bossy 'The Counter-Reformation and the people of catholic Ireland, 1596-1641'. *Hist. Studies*, VIII, ed. T. D. Williams, (Dublin, 1971), 169.

[39] T. O'hAnnracháin *Catholic Reformation in Ireland: The Mission of Rinuccini, 1645-1649* (Oxford, 2002) p 118-9.

Reformation, which was ultimately about identity and interiority not physical display or issues of protocol and deference.

Epilogue and Conclusions, 1633-1641.

The St Stephen's Day riots in Cook Street and the temporary closure of public mass houses in the city of Dublin signalled a deterioration in relations between the Old English community and Falkland's regime. Falkland was recalled and the government placed, temporarily, in the hands of Loftus and Boyle who had neither obligation nor inclination to rely on the Old English. As a result of this brief sectarian interlude, the Catholic community placed high hopes on a change of regime that was to be led by the new viceroy, Thomas Stafford, Earl of Wentworth. As Lord President of the North, Wentworth had developed a reputation for a pragmatic (if autocratic) approach to the recusant population there. Wentworth articulated in his public utterances a political philosophy that was essentially a vision of harmony between the King (and his agents) and the subject. But the practical execution of this vision, with a ruthlessness and, at times vindictiveness, should have given all parties in Ireland, whether native or newcomer, pause for thought.

Wentworth commenced negotiations with various interest groups in an effort to establish his administration on a sound financial footing, promising trade offs and concessions in return for subsidy. Wentworth distrusted both settler (personified by Boyle) and longer established (Old English) interest groups in Ireland. He soon succeeded in antagonising all sides. In parliament he played Protestant and Catholic interests off each other, and having secured his financial

position felt confident enough in the King's favour to abandon his initial overtures to the Old English and renege on promised concessions to them.[1]

The effects of Wentworth's autocratic reign in Ireland were felt on all sides. But one outcome was an effective suppression of any further debate on the issue of who would be the king's most loyal subject. As long as Wentworth had the king's ear and acted as effective gatekeeper, the disposition of his subjects was (in Wentworth's view at any rate) academic.

In many respects, Wentworth's administration was different in its character from that of Falkland. This had been the cherished hope and expectation of the Old English community, and there expectations pre-disposed them to perceive in the actions of the viceroy a willingness to achieve an acceptable *modus vivendi* with them and with their clerical leaders. But from the perspective of the subject who had a direct encounter with authority, the Wentworth regime could appear as familiar in its dealings as its precursors. In effect, what the community perceived to be going on and what the administration was actually doing were two different things, and this cognitive dissonance is very apparent in the case of Paul Harris.

Harris was a member of the Catholic secular clergy. He was an English priest living and working in Dublin. Harris, like William Malone, was a vigorous proponent of a loyal Irish Catholic Church with a distinct historical pedigree. But Harris also regarded the regular clergy, and the Franciscans in particular, as a problematic and in certain respects, heretical element within the body of that

[1] Clarke, *Old English*, p 60 et. seq.

Church. The appointment of the Franciscan, Thomas Fleming as Archbishop of Dublin and his return to Ireland in 1625 provided a focus for Harris's energies and he drafted a series of propositions, suggesting a hierarchical distinction between regular and secular clergy (and a qualitative distinction in their respective ministries) that were allegedly being advanced by the friars in Ireland. Harris secured the condemnation of these propositions by the faculty of theology at the Sorbonne.[2] Harris was assisted and supported in his campaign by a number of secular priests including Patrick Cahill a priest of the Meath diocese who had obtained the living of St Michael's in Dublin.

The diocese challenged the validity of Cahill's appointment and Fleming nominated another priest, Patrick Brangan to St Michael's. Cahill set off for Rome to fight his case, where he was detained at the request of the Archbishop and the Superiors of the Irish regular clergy. So Harris picked a quarrel with Brangan. Alleging that Brangan had taken a book belonging to him, Harris sued for recovery of his property in the courts. Fleming ordered the expulsion of Harris from the diocese. And this instruction was backed by a letter issued by Cardinal Barberini condemning the action of Harris for seeking redress in the civil courts and for by passing customary avenues of resolution via parochial or archiepiscopal jurisdiction. But Harris remained in post and so the frustrated Brangan translated the Barberini letter into English and circulated it around Dublin. This was a mistake. The viceregal administration saw an opportunity to squeeze some advantage from the quarrel. Brangan was prosecuted before the

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[2] *Censura Propositionum ad sacrum facultatem theologiae Parisiensem allatorum per D P. Cahil Rectorem S Michaelis Dublinensis* (Paris, 1631); *Wadding Papers* p 510.

Court of Castle Chamber for what was effectively an offense under the statute of *praemunire*. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and fined £3,000.[3]

Two things are significant about the case. The first is the apparent acceptance by the authorities of the existence of a parallel system of jurisdiction; the archiepiscopal court and the quarrel with Harris were apparently not at issue. The real purpose of the exercise, from Wentworth's perspective, seems to have been to exploit an opportunity to extract cash from the clergy. Brangan was released on payment of the huge fine.[4]

Wentworth continued to offer support and encouragement to Harris's campaign against Fleming and the regulars and it was only in 1640 that Fleming felt that he could confidently assure Rome that the Harris affair was formally closed.[5]

Wentworth was clearly playing his own game and by his own rules. And the Jesuit response to this change in the political reality of Ireland was pragmatic yet flawed. First, the new regime was not perceived as a direct threat to the activity of the mission. More critically, and in the long term more damaging, appears to have been an assumption that the arrival of Wentworth and the thaw in Anglo-Papal relations signalled by the arrival of Giorgio Panzani and later of George Conn as official agents of the Pope at Court indicated a break with the past.

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[3] J. G. Crawford *A Star Chamber Court in Ireland, The Court of Castle Chamber, 1571-1641*, (Dublin, 2005) pp 584-6.

[4] *Wadding Papers* p 507.

[5] P F. Moran *History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1864) p 325.

Rumours of an imminent royal conversion circulated. These were fuelled by Conn's self-importance and his anxiety to secure a cardinal's hat. But however unfounded, they served to create a sense of expectation in some circles. The Jesuits continued to busy themselves with their wealthier patrons (and in so doing managed to wander further into the cul-de-sac of an Old English upper class sect). But when Wentworth was recalled and royal government collapsed in Ireland, the Jesuit position was exposed and, uncharacteristically, they had no options left. They had put everything on the wrong horse and now found themselves facing unpalatable choices offered by O'Neill or Rinuccini.

The Irish Superior, Robert Nugent had been sanguine about Falkland's proclamation and the official show of persecution, which he down played.[6] His insouciance was evident in his request that a skilled painter be found and sent to Ireland.[7] Nugent's interest in décor did not pass without comment. Vitelleschi, the General, had clearly been receiving reports back from other sources on everyday life within the Irish residences and he enumerated a number of areas for concern. Specifically, he suggested that the houses were over-furnished, with pictures, books and upholstery more in keeping with the homes of their benefactors, that there was a not enough emphasis on silence and contemplation and that the frequent entertainment of lay people at table compromised gravity and temperance. Furthermore school accommodation was overly decorated, the boys had too many holidays and the practice of employing women in the houses

[6] A. R. S. I. Anglia 4a f 20v.

[7] A. R. S. I. Anglia 4a f 22r.

was not appropriate.[8] In spite of the General's reservations, Nugent's request was granted and a skilled artist was duly found and dispatched to Dublin.[9]

By the late 1630s the mission had settled into a modus operandi that the General (with some satisfaction) described as settled and quiet.[10] The catalogue prepared for 1637 indicated that fifty-six men were engaged on the mission.[11] Of these twenty- two were described primarily as teachers and a further twenty-five as confessors or as preachers. The rest had specific administrative roles as superior or coadjutors. The age profile of the missionaries was rising, the average age was fifty and twenty-two of the men had served in Ireland for in excess of twenty years each. In all, twenty-six of the men were noted as being in poor health (some of them were in their late seventies and were described as decrepit).

The mission had a familiar routine of community life, teaching, preaching and looking after sick and elderly colleagues. That routine was occasionally disturbed, not by official persecution, nor by other religious orders but by human frailty and lapse of judgment within the community. In August 1639, Nugent sent Bartholomew Hamlin, one of the younger missionaries (he was in his mid forties), to Belgium. In the 1621 register of the mission the younger Hamlin was described as being "choleric" and lacking prudence or experience. And prudence does not seem to have come to him with age. It was alleged that Hamlin and a

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[8] A. R. S. I. Anglia 4a f 23r.

[9] A. R. S. I. Gal. Belg. 2 f 153r.

[10] A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 45r.

[11] A.R.S.I. Anglia 9(i) f 9r-v.

married woman were interrupted in compromising circumstances. It was further asserted by one of the domestic servants that Hamlin had propositioned her also.[12] Vitelleschi, who had already counselled against female domestic servants, was annoyed. But the subject of his irritation was Nugent, not Hamlin. Vitelleschi instructed Nugent that should a similar incident occur in future he was to first move the man concerned to another house and then send a report on the matter to Rome. He was not to repeat the mistake of peremptorily dumping the problem in the General's lap.[13] For his part, Hamlin vehemently denied the allegation and asserted that it had first been made seven years previous, that an investigation had exonerated him and that now he was being expelled from the Irish mission by Nugent and his cronies.[14] This is a familiar allegation, it was levelled at Holywood and it would again be directed at Malone, the suggestion that an inner circle of Old English gentlemen were "weeding out" undesirable elements from the Irish mission. Like Hamlin, David Wolfe was also the subject of a similar whispering campaign that continued to haunt his reputation many years after the events were alleged to have happened and the smear was effective. The Jesuit culture of 'fraternal correction' (i.e. spying on and informing on colleagues) provided an approved and effective method of removing troublesome elements in order to safeguard the reputation and ethos of the wider project.

Like Hamlin, Wentworth was recalled from Ireland in the summer of 1639 (although he did not leave until the following year). In the hiatus after his

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[12] A.R.S.I. Gal. Belg. 2 f 488r-v.

[13] A.R.S.I Anglia 4a f 47v-48r.

[14] A.R.S.I. Anglia 4a f 48r.

departure, the problem of identity, which had been effectively suppressed for six years under his regime, resurfaced. Perhaps the most notable contribution to this renewed discourse was a work by a Jesuit, Cornelius O'Mahony, from County Cork. O'Mahony spent his entire working life in Portugal but he produced a singular treatment grounded in the orthodoxy of Bellarmine and Suarez to undermine the four pillars of the English Crown's dominion over Ireland; consent, dedition, conquest and prescription.[15] O'Mahony, taking the classic formulation of Bellarmine argued that as monarchial power was derived from the sovereignty and consent of the people, the subject had the right to depose the Monarch. And O'Mahony exhorted the Irish nation to overthrow the Stuart king and replace him with a native prince. O'Mahony's argument was formed in the specific context of Portuguese separatism. Like David Wolfe before him, he was swimming against the tide of political orthodoxy among the Old English community in Ireland, which, whether formulated by Malone, Geoffrey Keating or John Lynch, unambiguously supported the Stuart regime. O'Mahony's attempt to formulate an Irish Catholic identity was one step too far. His work was condemned in Ireland and ordered to be burnt by the public hangman.[16]

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[15] C. O'Mahony *Disputatio apologetica de jure regni Hiberniae pro Catholicis Hibernis adversus haereticos Anglos* (Frankfurt [Lisbon], 1645).

[16] T. O'hAnnrachain, "'Though Hereticks and Politicians should misinterpret their goode zeal' political ideology and Catholicism in early modern Ireland" in J. Ohlmeyer (ed.) *Political thought in Seventeenth-Century Ireland Kingdom or Colony* (Cambridge, 2000) p 163. O'Mahony's call for a re-institution of a native king cut through Confederate protestations of loyalty to the crown, and fueled suspicions in some circles as to Owen Roe O'Neill's true intentions; J. Leerssen *Mere Irish and Fior-Ghael: Studies in the idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Cork, 1996) p 258.

The formulation of the identity of the Old English colony had rested on its missionary mandate from the pope, confirmed by conquest and endorsed by the passage of time. This proved to be an enduring and resilient self-image that withstood successive attempts at erosion by reforming vice-regal administrations and from clerical initiatives to redefine the nature of the institutional church. Clerical initiatives were effectively transformed by the excommunication of Elizabeth, which also gave new impetus and a reconfigured rationale to the attempts of the state to subdue and secure its expanded dominion. The formulation of the first coherent response to this onslaught had come, not from the church but from the laity. It was a lawyers' response and it had functioned and served its purpose within the confines of parliamentary procedure and legal precedent.

But the change of regime brought with it new challenges. Both James I and his son, Charles were more personally engaged with, and certainly more inclined to sympathy in matters of conscience than their predecessor.[17] But in political terms, the absence of O'Neill meant that the regime was no longer as dependent on the support of the Pale community. The government would force issues of conscience and ride roughshod over legal process as it willed. And this afforded an opportunity to the church and to the returning Jesuit missionaries in particular to take an active leadership role in formulating and directing the community towards an identity that was consciously shaped by religious conviction yet married to an emotional loyalty to the crown and the person of the monarch, a

[17] C. M. Hibbard *Charles I and the Popish Plot* (Chapel Hill, 1983) p 49; G. Albion *Charles I and the Court of Rome* (London, 1935) p 232 et. seq.

loyalty that had endured all the tribulations visited upon the community by a succession of evil counsellors from Mountjoy to Wentworth.

The resilience of this identification of Crown and conscience is evident in an exchange that reportedly took place between Malone and Rinuccini. The nuncio suggested that deploying O'Neill's army in Munster was preferable to ceding territory to Inchiquin. The Jesuit responded curtly that that was not necessarily the case. Rinuccini could not comprehend that there were Irish Catholics who believed they had more in common with the forces of heresy than with their co-religionists.[18]

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Had Salmeron and Broet landed in Munster or Leinster in 1542, they would not have been impressed by the state of the Irish church there. Salmeron had exacting intellectual standards (he regarded the Bishops at Trent with disdain) and would have been unimpressed by the cabal of trimming canonists who controlled the Irish church establishment. We do not have to speculate about the degree of resistance and opposition encountered by Wolfe, and by the other Jesuits who worked along with him. The brief reports that came back from Robert Rochford and Charles Lea, and comments about their activities from

[18] T. O hAnnrachain "Though Hereticks and Politicians should misinterpret their goode zeal" political ideology and Catholicism in early modern Ireland" in J. Ohlmeyer (ed.) *Political thought in Seventeenth-Century Ireland Kingdom or Colony* (Cambridge, 2000) p 169-170.

Edmund Tanner suggest that there was a more receptive environment (in Munster at any rate) by the late 1570s.[19]

Attempting to put shape upon a Counter-Reformation project within the Irish Church was not an easy task. The earliest attempts to implement Papal inspired reform initiatives had foundered on the indifference of the population and the hostility of the native Church establishment. But these initial set backs serve to demonstrate a clarity and a differentiation that distinguished a vision of the church shared by Loyola, Broet, Salmeon and Wolfe from the pragmatic world of Dowdall, Curwen, Lacy and McGrath.

One critical element that gave momentum to the Jesuit project was a fundamental shift in the religious sensibilities of the Old English. The Church led by Cromer, Dowdall, Curwen and by Browne was, in its essence, a narrow sect with a clearly defined missionary ideology and identity that underpinned the political and social infrastructure of a colony. And this was undone twice over, first by Browne and St Leger, with *The Act for the Kingly Title* and again by Pole, Dowdall and Curwen when they secured papal confirmation of that title. From henceforth, the main thrust of English policy was directed towards asserting dominion over the kingdom and sovereignty over all subjects living there. It was soon apparent that in the eyes of the law, all subjects were to be treated with equal rigour and the ideological justification for any special status that the Old English might have enjoyed was removed. In adversity, they came to see themselves as a recusant Catholic community. The Irish Jesuits had little part to play in this initial critical

[19] I.J.A. Ms A I; A.R.S.I. Gal. Belg. 45 f 29r; Hogan, *Ib.Ign.*, p 23.

shift in political ideology, though it greatly facilitated their missionary endeavors during the seventeenth century. The movement from exclusive sect to recusant community was a development that seems to have benefited from strong lay initiative and leadership and although there had been a significant shift in the ideological ground by the 1590s, there remained a very big question mark over the receptiveness of the community to a Counter-Reformation project. The constraints of financial dependence and familial attachments might suggest that any attempt by the Jesuits to pursue a Counter-Reformation project was compromised from the outset. However, the manner in which Holywood and his associates drove the mission forward, the concentration on education and the articulation of ideological and doctrinal positions in print points to a clear, strong Counter-Reformation agenda. The task was to establish a cohesive view of the true authority, tradition and role of the church. This was achieved in two ways. The first of these was countering Protestant apologetic. The second was countering alternative Catholic formulations and presenting a coherent salvific theology. Relations with both the regular and, to a lesser degree, the secular clergy were soured by squabbles over property and fees, but at the heart of the matter in each of these cases was a religious issue. These were essentially disputes about the mechanics of salvation. And they were every bit as fierce as the competition for vocations and as bitter (if not more so) as clashes with Protestant disputants on the antiquity of the church or the authority of its traditions, saints and teachings.

Patrick Corish's assertion that Catholicism in seventeenth century Ireland saw itself as a Church not a mission may be more right than it is not, but in one

respect at least there was a bright spark of missionary fervor in the work carried out by the Jesuit missionaries in Ireland. The Jesuits exercised a commanding influence over the course and nature of the Counter-Reformation (as distinct from developments within the Catholic Church). Indirectly through its schools and colleges the Order had a hand in the formation of the clergy (and clerisy) of Europe. Ireland was not a special case. The role of the Order in implementing a Counter-Reformation in Ireland was fundamental, and given their relatively modest numbers, the achievement is that much more remarkable.

As to questions of success or failure, that Ireland still had a fundamentally Catholic population at the end of this period is not a valid indicator of success. That the population (or a significant element within it) had a notion and an image of itself that was defined by a particular sense of Catholic loyalism and underwritten by a devotional sensibility that was fundamentally different to the religious ethos of the colony in the time of St Leger is a more appropriate measure of that change.

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