USE OF THESES

This copy is supplied for purposes of private study and research only. Passages from the thesis may not be copied or closely paraphrased without the written consent of the author.
William Bernard Ullathorne and the Foundation of Australian Catholicism 1815-1840

PAUL COLLINS

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University

March 1989
This Thesis is entirely my own work.

(Paul Collins)
ABSTRACT

William Bernard Ullathorne was Vicar General of New South Wales from 1832 to 1841. While Catholics had arrived in the First Fleet in 1788, it was not until the 1830s that the church's ministerial structure was put on a permanent footing. In order to place the decade of the 1830s in context, I have outlined the early history of Catholicism in Australia and examined why Fathers Therry and Conolly failed to put down permanent roots. The thesis then goes on to argue that Ullathorne was the key person in establishing permanent ecclesiastical structures.

The Catholic Church had begun in Australia in 1820 as an official convict chaplaincy. Church-state relationships were of fundamental importance. It was Ullathorne who negotiated a working relationship with the colonial government of New South Wales.

The thesis argues that his success in Australia was based on his own clerical professionalism. The professional clergyman was a newly emerging species in the 19th century. After outlining his early life and experience, the emphasis shifts to the reasonably sound priestly formation he received at Downside Abbey. It was there that he imbibed a definite conception of the role of the clergyman in society. The function of the priest was to re-enforce Christian morals through the supervision of the Catholic community, to celebrate the rites of
transition and to support the faith of Catholics through the evolution of a sense of identity. Much of his achievement in Australia is based on this sense of mission and the practicality of his personality.

His writings, both polemical and apologetic, helped Catholics in New South Wales gain a sense of identity. By casting Catholics in the role of the persecuted underdog, he helped the church community define itself over and against the other groups that made up the fabric of Australian society. This was re-enforced by the 'Irishness' of Catholicism. His willingness to enter into controversy with other church leaders also helped in the development of a sense of identity. Tragically inter-church controversy quickly led to the blight of sectarianism.

Despite his professionalism and his willing co-operation with government, he did not always conform to the prevailing attitudes. His close contact with the realities of convict transportation and assignment eventually led him to oppose the whole system. He saw it as a complete failure. The thesis argues that Ullathorne emerged from 1835 onwards as a major social critic in New South Wales. This led to his nickname "the Agitator General"!

I have already mentioned the 'Irishness' of the Australian Catholic Church. After a recruiting drive in Europe and the United Kingdom (1836-1838), he recognised that the church
was not only made up of Irish laity, but that the vast majority of the clergy would also be Irish. He immediately perceived the injustice of the Australian Church being ruled by English monks. Archbishop Polding of Sydney could never face this. Ullathorne's realisation of the 'Irishness' of the Australian church led him to leave New South Wales in 1840.

But his interest in and influence on the Australian church did not cease with his departure. Within five years of leaving he had refused five Australian bishoprics. He became the Roman Curia's major source of information and advice on Australian affairs, especially in the 1859 crisis in Sydney. Despite neglect by historians he is, without a doubt, a pivotal figure in the foundation of Australian Catholicism.
Many people have assisted me in the writing of this thesis. I am indebted especially to the archivists and librarians, both in Australia and overseas, who have made documents, books and their own expertise freely available to me. I am particularly grateful to the librarians of the Australian National University, the Australian National Library, the Mitchell Library and the NSW State Archives. My special thanks are also due to the Sisters of Charity who gave me generous access to their archives. Sister Moira O’Sullivan helped me understand Ullathorne’s relationship with the Sisters of Charity. I am also deeply grateful to Saint Mary’s Cathedral Archives and to Mr. John Cummins.

In England, Miss Elizabeth Poyser of Westminster Archdiocesan Archives and Father Peter Dennison of Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives assisted me greatly. I am indebted to the staff and students of Oscott College in Birmingham and Allen Hall in Chelsea for their friendliness and help during extended stays in both seminaries. Both also have excellent libraries which I found most helpful. During two extended stays at Downside Abbey I was helped greatly by Dom Philip Jebb and Dom Aiden Bellinger in their excellent library and archives. In Ireland, I was assisted greatly by Professor F.X. Martin and by the Dublin Archdiocesan Archives.
This thesis was made possible by a scholarship from the Australian National University. I lived at Ursula College within the University during the bulk of the period while writing the thesis. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Ursuline Sisters, especially to the Principal of the College, Sister Madeleine Ryan.

My thanks are also due to the staff and students of the History Department in the Research School of Social Sciences at ANU. Among the many people from RSSS whom I should thank, I want to mention especially Dr. Chris Cuneen, Dr. Joy Damousi, Mrs. Bev. Gallina, Professor Ken Inglis, Ms. Philippa Mein-Smith, Professor John Malony, Dr. Avner Offer, Dr. John McCallum, Sister Mary Pescott, Dr. John Ritchie, Dr. Barry Smith and the staff of the Australian Dictionary of Biography. These people provided much stimulating conversation, sound historical judgement and human support over the long haul.

Above all my thanks are due to Dr. Judith Champ of King's College, London, who is preparing a biography of Ullathorne, to Dr. Stephen Foster and Dr. J.J. Eddy, S.J., my supervisors, and especially to Professor Oliver McDonagh who has guided this thesis from beginning to end. It has been my privilege to have worked under the care of such a fine historian. Without all of these people there would have been no thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACR</td>
<td>Australasian Catholic Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Australian Dictionary of Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANL</td>
<td>Australian National Library (Canberra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAA</td>
<td>Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDC</td>
<td>Bibliographical Dictionary of English Catholics (Joseph Gillow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birt</td>
<td>Benedictine Pioneers in Australia (N. Birt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. Sec.</td>
<td>Colonial Secretary (New South Wales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Downside Monastery Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAA</td>
<td>Dublin Archdiocesan Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNB</td>
<td>Dictionary of National Biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR</td>
<td>Downside Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRA</td>
<td>Historical Records of Australia (Series I + III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Historical Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACHS</td>
<td>Journal of the Aust. Catholic Historical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRH</td>
<td>Journal of Religious History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTBU</td>
<td>Life and Times of Bishop Ullathorne (C. Butler)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Mitchell Library (Sydney)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSWSA</td>
<td>New South Wales State Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW V+P</td>
<td>Votes and Proceeding of the Legislative Council of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push</td>
<td>Push from the Bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office (Kew)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prop. Fide</td>
<td>Congregation of Propaganda Fide Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAHSJP</td>
<td>Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSCG</td>
<td>Sisters of Charity Archives (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCA</td>
<td>Sisters of Charity Archives (Potts Point, Sydney)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC</td>
<td>Saint Patrick’s College Archives (Manly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDA</td>
<td>Westminster Archdiocesan Archives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ULLATHORNE**

| PART ONE | The Role of Ullathorne in Australian Catholicism | 1 |
| PART TWO | Ullathorne's *Autobiography* | 2 |

**CHAPTER ONE: THE FORMATION OF YOUNG WILLIAM**

| PART ONE | Childhood and Travels | 13 |
| PART TWO | Forming the Professional Missionary | 29 |
| PART THREE | Ordination and Appointment to New South Wales | 56 |

**CHAPTER TWO: A FALSE START**

| PART ONE | London and Rome Negotiate | 68 |
| PART TWO | Unsuccessful Attempts to Lay Foundations. The Ministry of Therry and Conolly | 95 |

**CHAPTER THREE: WBU IN NSW. SETTING UP A CHURCH**

| PART ONE | Arrival | 116 |
| PART TWO | New South Wales in the 1830s | 118 |
| PART THREE | Founding a Church: Immediate Problems of Church and State | 123 |
| PART FOUR | Founding a Church: The Development of Ministry | 147 |

**CHAPTER FOUR: SEE HOW THESE CHRISTIANS LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

| PART ONE | Introduction | 190 |
| PART TWO | The Position of the Church of England | 199 |
| PART THREE | Whigs Tories and Colonial Churches | 202 |
| PART FOUR | The Folly and Madness of Sectarianism- Again | 211 |

**CHAPTER FIVE: THE AGITATOR GENERAL**

<p>| PART ONE | The Formation of an Abolitionist | 251 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART ONE</th>
<th>Anti-Transportation Tracts</th>
<th>261</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART THREE</td>
<td>Before Molesworth's Select Committee</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FOUR</td>
<td>The Agitator General Under Attack</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FIVE</td>
<td>Ullathorne and the Female Convicts</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART SIX</td>
<td>The Agitator General as Social Reformer</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER SIX: TO EUROPE AND BACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART ONE</th>
<th>To England and Back</th>
<th>297</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART TWO</td>
<td>In Rome on Australia's Behalf</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART THREE</td>
<td>Raising Money for the Mission: the Propagation of the Faith and Vienna Fund</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FOUR</td>
<td>Recruiting for New South Wales</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FIVE</td>
<td>The Sisters of Charity</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART SIX</td>
<td>The Return Voyage to Australia</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE RETURN TO ENGLAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART ONE</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>330</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART TWO</td>
<td>Activities 1838 to 1840</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART THREE</td>
<td>Why Ullathorne Left Australia</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FOUR</td>
<td>The Return to England</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART FIVE</td>
<td>The Establishment of the Australian Hierarchy</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART SIX</td>
<td>The Refusal of an Australian Mitre</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART SEVEN</td>
<td>Ullathorne and Later Australian Affairs</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART EIGHT</td>
<td>The Final Years</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION: ULLATHORNE IN AUSTRALIA - AN ASSESSMENT | 402 |
INTRODUCTION

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ULLATHORNE
PART ONE - The Role of Ullathorne in Australian Catholicism

The Catholic Church claims to be a universal church. But it was not until the late 19th century that this began to be a geographical reality. The decades after the Congress of Vienna saw the church emerge from the chaos of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars with renewed energy. At the beginning of the century, with the exception of Latin America, the church was almost wholly confined to Europe. By the end of the century Catholicism was established on all continents. The total world Catholic population in 1815 was about 118 million of whom 100 million were in Europe and 15 million in Latin America. By the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Catholics had increased to 382 million of whom 194 million were in Europe.¹ The establishment of Australian Catholicism was a tiny part of that geographical and numerical expansion.

A strange paradox emerged, however, in the inner life of the church. During the 19th century the church (and especially the papacy) rejected the prevailing liberal philosophy and became increasingly self-enclosed. The most obvious element in this was the steady advance of ultramontanism. After the First Vatican Council (1870), papal centralism was strengthened and the Vatican continued to claim that the church had a right to a privileged position in society. In one sense this was a return to the

pre-revolutionary status quo - the union of throne and altar. But in another sense it was a new claim: no longer was the church to be subservient to the state, as in the old Gallican and Febronian theories. Rather it was the duty of the state to protect ecclesiastical rights and to exclude any challenge to the doctrinal position of the church. The argument ran: if the Roman Church was the true church, then the state had the obligation to suppress untruth, especially when it took the form of philosophies or sects which threatened Catholicism. With the exception of Leo XIII (1878-1903), the popes of the 19th century rejected the consequences of the Revolution - liberalism, equality and a democratic form of government.

However, in the 19th century Catholics often challenged the papal doctrine of church-state relations, both theoretically and practically. In common with their co-religionists in other developing liberal societies, such as the United States, Canada, Belgium and Ireland, many Australian Catholics based their claim to freedom of religion and government support for the ministry of the church on the liberal principle of equality. The Catholic lay leader, Judge Roger Therry, told the Anglican Archdeacon, William Grant Broughton just before Ullathorne arrived in Australia: "Our respective (religious) claims will probably remain undecided until we all appear before Christ, but until then each must be allowed to act upon his own conviction".2

---

This was a far cry from the papal view which had been expressed the previous year by Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) in the encyclical letter *Mirari vos*. The letter was directed against a group of French liberal Catholics led by Hughes-Felicite de Lamennais. He was the fountainhead of 19th century French Catholic liberalism. He advocated religious freedom, liberty of association and freedom of the press. As an anti-Gallican he had hoped that the papacy would lead a liberal revolution - a vain hope in the case of Gregory XVI, who excommunicated him! In *Mirari vos* the Pope attacked ideas of tolerance and religious freedom, condemned democracy as "sheer madness" and castigated freedom of expression as "abominable and detestable". Thus Catholics in New South Wales found themselves in the ironic situation of claiming a right which had been outlawed by the Pope, and which their co-religionists were unwilling to grant to others in predominantly Catholic countries.

For in the United States, Canada and the Australian colonies the Catholic Church faced a new situation. In Europe it was the established church with a long history of influencing both politics and society. In the new world a range of unique challenges emerged. The most important of these was the task of establishing Catholicism in a new political and social environment. The papal ideology of the right relationship between church and state simply did not apply.

---

In the Australian colonies there was a de facto separation of church and state from the beginning (despite the early attempts of the Church of England to gain an established status). But separation was never pushed to the extent, nor given the theoretical and constitutional underpinning that it had in the United States. Contrary to the ideas of both contemporaries and later historiography, the Colonial Office was not opposed to Catholic clergy going to New South Wales after 1815. In fact, it was in the interest of the British government to bring order to colonial church affairs and to use the clergy as agents of pacification and social order, especially among the convicts.

From the ecclesiastical perspective, the Australian colonies were not strictly mission territories, like Africa or Asia, for many of the people who came to them from Europe were already Catholic. But the whole social situation was radically different from the United Kingdom. In Australia there were opportunities for the emergence of new social, political and economic ideas. The church had to find a new way of relating to society. Lemannais' ideal of a "free church in a free state" was to become a reality in remote Australia.

This thesis focuses primarily on the unique process of the insertion and early development of the Catholic Church in the colonial society of New South Wales. Clearly, there are parallels with other countries such as the United States, but the uniqueness of Australia should never be forgotten: it began as a penal
colony and the Catholic Church originated as nothing more than a convict chaplaincy. There were no exact parallels anywhere else.

If the situation was unique, the protagonists were also a new breed. The early 19th century saw the emergence of the clergy as a professional group with the primary ministerial and jurisdictional responsibility within the church community. Catholicism had been a clericalised and hierarchical church since the early Middle Ages. But clergy, in the modern professional sense, only gradually emerged between the 17th and 19th centuries. By the early 19th century, they had assumed wide-ranging social as well as liturgical functions within the Catholic community. In the new world they also became the key institutional organisers, as well as the central ministerial figures in the church.

New South Wales began - like the United States - with an acute shortage of clergy and a far-away bishop (at first in London and then in Mauritius). Most of the first clergy to arrive were sick or unsettled (men like O'Flynn, Therry, Coote and Power). But the situation was rapidly regularised with the recruitment of better trained priests of greater ability (such as John McEncrooe and William Ullathorne).

This thesis argues that Ullathorne was the most important of this new breed of professional priests in early New South Wales. He was of middle class origin, with a solid spiritual and intellectual formation and able to comprehend and adapt to the new situat-
ion in which he found himself. He recruited the first large group of clergy and the first order of sisters to come to Australia. The organisational structure that he had provided meant that the newly arrived priests and sisters could begin a ministry throughout the settled areas of the colonies.

Thus Ullathorne stands out as the pivotal figure of the period of foundation (1815-1840). It was he who organised the institutional structure of the church. He negotiated regular financial assistance from the colonial government and established a working relationship with officialdom. Through his pamphlets he became a defender of the church and gave Catholics a sense of identity. He was an outspoken social reformer in his opposition to the worst aspects of convictism. It was he, more than any other, who inserted the Catholic Church into New South Wales society.

Ullathorne's role in the foundation of Australian Catholicism has been neglected by historians. Certainly his contributions have been noted, but no one has emphasised his central role in organising the church between 1830 and 1840. When he arrived in New South Wales at the beginning of 1833 the Catholic Church was in a chaotic state with no organised structure and, at best, an ad hoc ministry. When he left at the end of 1840, the church was an organised body with a ministry reaching to the limits of settlement in all colonies, except Western Australia. Later church leaders, such as Archbishop Polding, were able to build on the foundations laid by Ullathorne. On his return to England he
used the experience he had gained in Australia to become one of the most significant figures in the formation of English Catholicism in the 19th century. Strangely, he has also been neglected by English Catholic historians.

The argument of the thesis does not necessarily contradict contemporary Australian Catholic historiography, but it certainly complements it. The foundation period of Australian Catholicism has not been seriously studied since the work of Eris O'Brien, and the organisational and ministerial aspects of the period have been neglected. O'Brien's focus is on Therry as the "founder" of Australian Catholicism. While Therry's importance cannot be denied, the incoherent nature of his work meant that nothing permanent was established until the arrival of Ullathorne. Monsignor J.J. McGovern and T.L. Suttor were the first historians to shift attention to the pioneering work of the English Benedictines, and Suttor particularly gave due recognition to the work of Ullathorne. However, his admiration is more for the priest's supposed intellectual ability than for his practical achievement. Also an excellent insight into the community within which Ullathorne worked is provided by James Waldersee in his work on


5. McGovern seemed to have a particular distaste for Ullathorne. His hero was Polding. See his long series of articles entitled 'John Bede Polding' in the ACR (11(1934) and the following issues). For Suttor see Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870. Melbourne. 1965.
the early Catholic community in New South Wales. 6

But no one to this point has tried to see the foundation period up to 1840 as a whole. This is what this thesis attempts to do. I have chosen 1840 as the cut-off point for several reasons. It was the year that Ullathorne finally left New South Wales. It was also the year that transportation to that colony ceased. As convictism declined, free settlement grew and the church no longer acted primarily as a convict chaplaincy. By the end of 1840, Sydney was already a diocese and the church had developed sufficiently for three new dioceses to be mooted: Hobart, Adelaide and Perth. Finally, as a result of the Church Act (1836), Catholicism had become an integral part of the established structure of the colony of New South Wales.

Thus there are good grounds for a serious study of the role of Ullathorne in Australia. He should not be seen in isolation. He was certainly shaped by the forces that surrounded him, especially the unique penal character of New South Wales. But his own creativity also helped to shape the future of the colony through the church whose foundations he laid. He returned to England to carry on a similar function there, leaving others in Australia to build on the foundations he had laid.

Ullathorne is one of those rare persons who has left us with an assessment of his own career. He wrote an autobiography and the larger part of it focuses on his time in Australia. It was not unusual for Victorian ecclesiastical worthies to write histories of their spiritual opinions or to express intimate thoughts and experiences in print - John Henry Newman is a case in point - but it was unusual for a member of the English hierarchy. Ullathorne was exceptional. There was a blunt openness in his personality; he was honestly convinced that his life and experiences were worth recording.

He began to write the book in the early 1860s. It was not intended for publication, but for a group of Dominican sisters. He ceased work on the original manuscript in 1868. It describes his life up until his appointment as Vicar Apostolic of the Western District in 1846. In the last year of his life, while living in retirement at Oscott College, he tried to revise the manuscript.

The Autobiography is like Ullathorne himself: straight-forward

7. Ullathorne had been instrumental with Margaret Mary Hallahan in establishing the Dominican Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena at Stone in Staffordshire. See Drane, R.F.: Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan. London. 1929.

8. This is held in the Stone Convent Archives. I am indebted to the Dominican Sisters and especially to Sister Mary Crispin for generous access to the Stone Archives.
and to the point, colorful and always interesting, with acute observations of people and events. After his death both versions came into the possession of the Dominican Sisters. Mother Frances Raphael Drane edited the text drastically, omitting any material which, to her late Victorian sensibilities, seemed scandalous or indecorous. This meant that all of Ullathorne's most trenchant comments, asides and obiter dicta were deleted. It was Drane's revised version that was published in 1891 under the title *The Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*.  

It was not until 1941 that a full version of the original revised manuscript was available. This was edited by Shane Leslie. Leslie was a professional writer and a convert to Catholicism and in 1936 he wrote to the then Dominican Provincial, Mother Imelda Raymond-Barker, asking her permission "to see the famous Autobiography in Mss". He commented "I think Mother Drane kept it very close in her time". His intention was "to write a 40pp memoir based on what has appeared and what I can find". By 1939 Leslie had read the original manuscript and had requested permission to publish it as it stood. Raymond-Barker sought the advice of Dom-

---


inican Father Walter Grumbly. He told her:

Certainly the ms must be printed as it stands, it is not fitting to do anything else. I look upon the Abp (sic) almost as a Father of the Church, and I think it would be an impertinence to tamper with it. The past is not our business and no reason exists for S. Leslie to refer to M. Drane's pruning, cutting or omitting... We can safely and piously presume that the Abp himself agreed to it. Certainly that is the impression M. Drane herself gives in her preface which clears her memory of any impertinent reference... But all the same I do expect that a certain amount of his rugged Grace has been toned down.13

Raymond-Barker also wrote to Archbishop Thomas Williams of Birmingham. She informed him that the Dominicans had lent Leslie the original manuscript and she quoted Leslie's comments on it:

The Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne is safe. I have been going through it page by page with the printed volume which I find very different. A great many incidents are omitted and the language is often changed... I am suggesting to Burns + Oates (the publishers) that it would be an interesting thing to reproduce this manuscript as it stands with a careful introduction... It is a real missionary classic and a wonderful revelation of the old man's character. Certainly, reading the MS., it has come upon me like a fresh book.14

It was published in 1941 as From Cabin Boy to Archbishop. Leslie says that he edited the manuscript during blackouts (he was in the Home Guard) and he assured the Dominican Provincial that "the great old man lives again in his own feathers".15 Ullathorne would have appreciated that!

As a historical source the Autobiography is generally accurate.


14. Leslie in Raymond-Barker to Williams, 3 May 1939. Stone Convent Archives, Ullathorne Papers, Box 1.

15. Leslie to Raymond-Barker, 15 April 1941. Stone Convent Archives, Ullathorne Papers, Box 1.
However, as I will show, Ullathorne's memory failed him on several major points and on various minor details. I will refer to these in detail in the course of the thesis.

16. A detailed comparison of the text of From Cabin Boy to Archbishop with the original manuscript reveals mainly typographical errors and minor misreadings of the text by Leslie. No doubt his editing work was occasionally distracted by the activities of the Luftwaffe!
CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATION OF YOUNG WILLIAM
"I was born at Pocklington in Yorkshire in the year 1806, on the 7th of May, as the old Bible entry used to tell me, at six o'clock in the morning".¹ Pocklington is a pleasant market town, twelve miles east of York. Much of the town's Victorian character is still preserved. At the time of Ullathorne's birth the population was about 1520 persons. Politically the borough was solidly Tory.²

Ullathorne's background laid the foundation for the personal solidity of character that was to characterise him as a missionary in Australia, and for the rest of his life as a priest and bishop in England. The Autobiography and the detailed knowledge that is available about his early life provide a fascinating and important glimpse into the English Catholic community in the early 19th century. But the most significant aspect of the information that we have about his youth is that it provides us with a real insight into that evolving and important emerging middle class group - the professional clergyman. This question of clerical professionalism will become even more important in considering his formation as a priest at Downside.

¹. Autobiography, p 1.
Fundamentally, there was a real consistency in Ullathorne's life; to understand the mature missionary, you must understand the boy, especially the time he spent at sea. The convictions that formed the foundation of his view of life emerged very early, and the independence and the toughness of mind that characterised him as an adult are obvious from very early in his development. Thus it is essential to review his childhood and youth in detail.

He says that his father was "a grocer, draper and spirit merchant etc, in short he did about half the business of the town, selling coals also, and in the absence of a bank, discounting bills".\(^3\) The family was middle class and became increasingly wealthy as the business developed. John Bossy and J.C.H. Aveling maintain that from the middle of the 18th century the social focus of English Catholicism shifted from the gentry to the middle class.\(^4\) The Ullathorne family certainly bear this out. Pocklington also provided an example of the collapse of a Catholic gentry family: the Dolmans had been Catholic for generations, but in the mid-18th century they fell into debt and the eldest son was forced to become a doctor and the youngest a tanner.\(^5\) In 1792 they sold off their estate. Thus this Catholic gentry family was unable to survive the social and economic changes of the 18th

\(^3\) Autobiography, p 1.


\(^5\) Neave, op. cit., pp 22-23.
century. According to Aveling, by the early 19th century, in "a changing Catholic community...leadership had passed decisively to the middle class".

However, he argues that these middle class Catholics looked nostalgically for some sign of respectable gentry origin:

The aristocratic view has had an immensely long innings. It remained strong even among undoubted plebeians...William Bernard Ullathorne...was, in some ways, unashamedly lower middle class. He dropped his 'h's, his tastes were plebeian. His father was a convert small town shopkeeper...Yet secretly Ullathorne cherished the thought that his family had intermarried with impoverished gentry through whom he was descended from Sir Thomas More.6

It is correct to say that Ullathorne was lower middle class. However, he was not "plebeian" - whatever that might mean! Apart from the factual error that his father was a convert - he was a born Catholic - Aveling overstates his case. Links with Sir Thomas More were part of the Ullathorne family lore, but the claim does have some basis in fact.

Modern interest in genealogy has led to a serious study of the Ullathorne family by Basil Leonard Kentish.7 Kentish traces the origin of the family to the mid-fifteenth century at Sleningford near Ripon. The original progenitors were yeoman farmers and there is no evidence that they remained Catholic after the


Reformation. The family is extensive. The line from which William Bernard was descended originated with William Ullathorne, a yeoman farmer who died in York in 1599 and whose grandson was the Reverend John Ullathorne, the Vicar of Ampleforth. In turn, his grandson was another John Ullathorne (1725-1794), of whom William Bernard says: "He was a gentleman of small property who married Miss More, the lineal descendant of Sir Thomas More". After careful examination Kentish concludes that Ullathorne is here reporting an inaccurate family myth, and that the woman John Ullathorne married in 1749 was Mary Binks (1726-1788). She was, however, directly descended from Sir Thomas More. The Binks family had remained Catholic since the Reformation. Kentish also shows that there was no basis for William Bernard's claim that John and Mary Ullathorne lost her fortune through their support for the Stuart uprising of 1745. The couple were important nonetheless, for it was at this point that Catholicism re-entered the family. Thus William Bernard's grandfather John was a Catholic. He settled as a farmer in the neighbourhood of Everingham. His wife, Mary Robinson, from Pocklington, was probably also a Catholic.

William Bernard's father was William Ullathorne (1780-1829). He went to London as a young man and there met his future wife,
Hannah Longstaff (1781-1860). "My father met her in London, where they were both engaged in Townshend's great drapery business in Holborn, converted her to the faith, and then married her".10 Hannah was from Halton Holegate, near Spilsbury in Lincolnshire. Ullathorne claims that her father was "chief constable" of the county. Her cousin and next door neighbour was Sir John Franklin (1786-1874), sailor, Arctic explorer and later Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land from 1836 to 1841.11 Sir Joseph Banks was a frequent visitor to the Franklin home.12

William and Hannah Ullathorne were married at Saint Mary-le-bow, London, in 1805. Conscientious Catholics usually exchanged vows in the Established Church and then renewed them before a Catholic priest. Ullathorne comments: "My father, a man of considerable humour and cleverness, used to boast and delight in provoking his Protestant friends by saying that he had married twice but never had but one wife".13 The Ullathornes moved back to Pocklington soon after their marriage. "Some six of their ten children were born, I think, at Pocklington, of whom I was the eldest".14

13. Autobiography, p 2. The reference here is to the marriage act of 1753, Lord Hardwicke's Act, which denied validity to all marriages not celebrated before an Anglican clergyman in the Established Church.
Despite having six children between 1806 and 1814, his mother continued to work: "She was engaged the long day in business but she continued to keep us in good order and discipline".

Ullathorne's imagination was well developed as a child. This was reflected not only in his reading and his determination to go to sea, but later in his religious vocation and possibly in his acceptance of an appointment to the Australian mission. The Autobiography reveals a man of both imagination and practicality, and the realistic side developed with increasing experience. His first sight of York minster as a child impressed him: "The cathedral gave me an impression of awe and grandeur, a sense of the power of religion". Such numinous experiences in childhood are important components in the development of a truly spiritual person.

There was a small Catholic chapel at Pocklington. The priest was Abbe Fidele, a venerable French Emigrant. Fidele was


16. Autobiography, p 4. The chapel was - and the present Catholic Church still is - at 54 Union Street. The building described by Ullathorne was probably the first of three which have stood on the site. This is shown on an illustrated map of 1856 held in the Beverley Local History Library (unnumbered). The 1983 English Catholic Directory dates the erection of the parish from 1807. This is probably the date of the establishment of a mission in the town.

17. The historian of the French emigre clergy, Dominic Bellinger, has found no reference to Fidele other than in Ullathorne's Autobiography (Personal interview, Downside Abbey, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, March 1984). See Bellinger's articles
eccentric. Age and a foreign language and culture developed odd traits among many of the emigres. They were generally welcomed to England, but their impact on the small local Catholic Church was limited. Many were aged and in ill health. An exception was Nicholas Alain Gilbert (1762-1821), who is also mentioned by Ullathorne: "Other French emigrant priests occasionally came. One was Dr. Gilbert...He was afterwards raised to an important prelacy in France". Gilbert was from the Diocese of Saint Malo and had been ordained in 1785. He spoke excellent English and settled as a missioner at Whitby in 1794. He returned to France after the fall of Napoleon, worked as a missionary in de-christianised parts of the country and was appointed a Canon of Rennes Cathedral. He resembles the mature Ullathorne in many ways: he was a successful pastor, a popular and prolific spiritual writer, controversialist and a genuine missionary.

Ullathorne's early religious formation was influenced not only by the Catholicism of his parents, but also by Methodism. While he learned his prayers at his mother's knee, his nurse was a "bitter Methodist". There was a strong Methodist influence in Pocklington and Wesley himself made eighteen visits to the town, the


first in 1752. Ullathorne witnessed the effects of conversion to Methodism during his early education, and they did not impress him. These experiences of religious enthusiasm...were not without their practical influence in opening my mind to the then existing state of Protestant and sectarian life. They awakened my curiosity, but certain 1 y presented no attraction to my youthful mind.21 Consciously he may have rejected this Methodist influence, but his own later religious awakening at Memel manifested elements of a "conversion".22 Also his later popular preaching style shows considerable Methodist influence.

"I suppose I must have been nine or ten years old when my father changed his residence and business to Scarborough". An article in the Scarborough Mercury says that the family came to the town around 1815.23 Seven years after the arrival of the Ullathorne family, Edward Baines described the town on the Yorkshire coast as an attractive place.24 From the early 18th century it developed as a minor port. In Ullathorne's time it was also a health resort, famous for its beach and mineral springs. Baines records that the population in 1821 was 8183. It was here that Ullathorne

first saw the sea.  

William Ullathorne senior set up in Scarborough as a grocer, draper and wine merchant. After his death in 1829, his wife inherited the business and continued it with her two unmarried sons, Owen Joseph (1807-1850) and James (1808-1865). Their address (65 Newbro Street) placed the shop away from the waterfront, in the newer and more elegant part of town and it clear that the Ullathorne family were prosperous.

The Autobiography says that William and his brother Owen were sent to Mr. Hornesy's school. "Hornsey was a genuine pedant...a well-meaning man was he, of the high and dry Protestant type, conspicuous from afar with his portly figure...and decided strut". He was the first of a number of teachers from whom Ullathorne claims to have learnt very little. The boy's mind was far more occupied with books of travel and voyages. He read

27. A copy of William Ullathorne senior's will is held in the Borthwick Institute, York.
28. The Scarborough Mercury article (7 September 1956) says that the Ullathorne business was at 56 Newbro St. This does not square with Baines nor with the address given in a New General Directory of the Borough of Scarborough published in 1846 and held in the Scarborough Public Library. The Mercury article has probably inverted the number.
travel books from the two circulating libraries in town, as well 
as "many rubbishy novels and romances".\textsuperscript{30} 

As his education was perforce in Protestant schools, his father 
was disappointed to discover that Mass was celebrated only once 
every six weeks in Scarborough. Two visiting priests shared the 
ministry: "Mr. Haydock, the editor of Haydock's Bible, came once 
in three months (from Whitby), and Mr. Woodcock of Edgton Bridge 
came once in three months".\textsuperscript{31} Haydock was a well known as a 
scholar and a prolific writer who edited the Douai Bible and the 
Rheims New Testament, texts that were widely used by English 
Catholics in the nineteenth century. When the priests were not 
in Scarborough, morning and afternoon services were conducted by 
William Ullathorne senior and a Mr. Pexton, "an Ushaw church 
student who had given up the idea of the priesthood".\textsuperscript{32} 

The Autobiography describes these prayer services: "First the 
usual prayers before Mass were said aloud, then all in silence 

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Autobiography}, p 10. The two libraries were probably 
those run by Jane Ainsworth and John Cole, who also doubled as a 
paper hanger. See Baines, op. cit., pp 530, 533 and the Scarborough 
Mercury (7 September 1956).

\textsuperscript{31} George Leo Haydock was a Douai priest, born in 1774 and 
ordained for the Northern Vicariate in 1798. After further study 
and teaching, he came to the mission of Ugthorpe near Whitby in 
1803. In 1816 he moved to Whitby in succession to Abbe Nicholas 
Gilbert. See Gillow, J. in BDEC, III, pp 215-221 and Gillow, J.: 
The Haydock Papers. A Glimpse into English Catholic Life Under 

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Autobiography}, p 10. Leslie has rendered this name 
Paxton. The original ms clearly has Pexton.
said the prayers for Mass in the *Garden of the Soul*, making a sort of spiritual communion...then the lector...read one of Archer's sermons". The afternoon service consisted of psalms, prayers and catechism. When the priests were in Scarborough, they ate at the Ullathorne home.

It is worth noting here that young William had thus come under the influence of two well-educated, French-trained priests, Gilbert and Haydock. Both men had continued their education after ordination through wide reading. Through their lectures, sermons and publications they communicated their knowledge to a wider public. Men of this high calibre probably served as role models for Ullathorne's own development as a priest.

Ullathorne left school at the age of twelve and worked in his father's business. He was obviously unhappy there. His wide reading had given him the itch to travel. His parents naturally resisted the idea of his becoming a sailor, but it says something for their openness that they eventually yielded without too much of a struggle. Haydock was not so easily persuaded. "He spoke seriously against it and was evidently distressed".33 Because of his own determination, and Haydock's mishandling of a stubborn adolescent, Ullathorne did not receive first communion before he left Scarborough to go to sea.

---

He sailed on two ships based in the town, the Leghorn and Anne's Resolution. The Leghorn had been launched on 21 July 1819. This gives a specific date for the beginning of Ullathorne's career at sea, for he was in the first crew. He was just over thirteen years old. The brig was seventy four foot in length and weighed 160 tons. Anne's Resolution was also a seventy four footer, and weighed 157 tons.

It is difficult to sort out the exact order of his voyages as it is obvious from the Autobiography that he had not recalled an exact chronology himself, and he had a habit of conflating several related events into a single narrative. But his memory was rich with recollections of maritime life. His early experiences at sea prepared him for the hardships of his later extensive travel. Also mixing with sailors, seeing their strengths and their weaknesses, would have been a valuable preparation for a practical ministry in colonial Australia.

His first journey as a cabin boy was to the Mediterranean. The ship carried a general cargo from Newcastle to Livorno and returned via Barcelona and Tarragona with a cargo of nuts for Hull. On this trip he had his first sight of Gibraltar.

---

34. Autobiography, pp 12, 19. For the two ships see Buckley, James: Ships Registered at Scarborough from 1786-1918. Private Printing. No date. Available Scarborough Public Library. The Leghorn was built by George Woodhouse Porritt, an important name in Scarborough ship building and civic life. Anne's Resolution was built by George Dale Smith. It was re-registered in Newcastle in April 1830.
I was in a sort of romantic rapture. My familiarity with the great seige made Gibraltar classic ground to me.\textsuperscript{35} On the return journey, in the Bay of Biscay, the ship experienced a terrible storm. For a number of days it was thought that it had sunk with all hands.

The second journey took him from Portsmouth to Saint Petersburg with a cargo of horses. Ullathorne fell in love with the Baltic. In the \textit{Autobiography} he mentions Elsinore, Copenhagen and the beautiful land-locked bays of Norway and Sweden, the short nights and the magnificent sunrises. He describes Saint Petersburg in detail. Approaching the city through the Gulf of Finland, the ship passed Kronshtadt and the imperial Russian fleet. They sailed up the Neva to moor near the Winter Palace. This was also close to Saint Isaac's Cathedral and the Hermitage. The young sailor had difficulty understanding the Russian Orthodox: "The Churches seemed to me Catholic, yet not Catholic; I was greatly struck with the religious spirit manifested by the people".\textsuperscript{36} He noted the way in which religion was integrated with life: "The blending of religion with the habits of life showed externally even more visibly than in Italy or Spain". He felt that he was among a "religious people".

The vessel returned to London with a cargo of hemp. Because of an

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{35} \textit{Autobiography}, p 12.
\item \textsuperscript{36} \textit{Autobiography}, p 15.
\end{itemize}
economic downturn, Wrougham, the captain and part owner, leased the ship and it went into the Newcastle-London coal trade. This was a real come-down for the beautiful vessel. The new skipper was coarse and harsh and Ullathorne became most unhappy. He jumped ship in London and took refuge with his uncle. Soon after he was released from his indenture and returned to Scarborough.

After a winter at home, during which he studied navigation, he went to sea again on *Anne's Resolution*, a ship owned by the Catholic Craythorne family of Scarborough. On this ship he worked at first among the ordinary seamen "whose conversation was the vilest imaginable". He then returned to the job of cabin-boy. The ship returned to the Baltic, making voyages to Kronshtadt and Memel. It was here that he had his conversion experience. It was an important turning point for him for he was tiring of the sea. After his second voyage to the Baltic, he returned to Scarborough and to his father's business. But he was not there for long.

Before discussing his entry into the monastic life, I want to examine the conversion experience which he describes in some detail in the *Autobiography*. On the second Baltic voyage he went to Mass at Memel at the invitation of the captain, George Cray-
thorne. Ullathorne says that the church was "exteriorly not unlike a barn". As he entered the building, the combined effect of the liturgy, the chanting of the litany of Our Lady and the whole ambience threw me into a cold shiver and turned my heart completely round upon itself. I saw the claim of God upon me, and felt a deep reproach within myself.

As a result he began regular spiritual reading: Marsollier's Life of Saint Jane Chantal and Gobinet's Instruction of Youth. As he later realised, these books balanced each other. Marsollier introduced him to the French mystical tradition of the early 17th century represented by Saint Jane Frances de Chantal (1572-1641) and Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622), a tradition of spirituality which tried to make mysticism available to all Christians. Gobinet's Instruction was a moralistic text which assisted Ullathorne in spiritual self-analysis and examination of conscience.

I have already mentioned the influence of Methodism on the young Ullathorne. This would have pre-disposed him toward a conversion.

38. In the Autobiography (p. 21) Ullathorne refers to Craythorne as the 'mate'. As he owned the ship it is much more likely that Craythorne was the captain.

39. Jacques Marsollier (1647-1724) was a French historian and theologian. Ullathorne is probably referring to an abridgement of La vie de la bienheureuse Mere de Chantal, fondatrice, premiere religieuse et superieure de l'Ordre de la Visitation Sainte-Marie (Paris, 1715. 2 Vols) translated into English in 1752.

40. For Gobinet see footnote 66.
"experience". He claims in the Autobiography that while he was not overtly religious during his time at sea, he always asserted that he was a Catholic. His constant references to religion in the Autobiography reflect not only the ageing bishop, but also the religious nature of his adolescent psyche. In his conversion experience there are both Methodist and Catholic elements. His background was the dull liturgical routine of low-key English Catholicism. But he had grown up in a region where Methodism was influential and he had experienced something of it in his early schooling. So it was natural that when his religiosity asserted itself, it would do so in terms of conversion to fuller Christian living. But his enthusiasm was not deliberately induced through preaching and mass psychology. It was more profoundly Catholic. It resulted from the ambience of the church at Memel - up to that point he had only experienced unostentatious English Catholic chapels - and from the liturgy and piety of the congregation. His conversion expressed itself not only in external witnessing, typical of the enthusiastic Protestant approach, but in a profound change of life direction.

Ullathorne was a tough, independent child who had been given remarkable latitude by his parents, who had twice allowed him to leave his father's business and to go to sea. What was his own later assessment of his life as a mariner? He was thankful to God for having carried him through that "perilous time without being utterly scathed".41 At the same time he learned a tolerance for

the pressure under which human beings, especially sailors, live. Ullathorne considered that life at sea was not easy and he felt that his experiences with them gave him "a deep insight into the natural hearts of men, and especially of Man as he is isolated from the ordinary conditions of society". When he came to moral theology he discovered that he already understood "the working of...men's hearts". His experiences at sea would have prepared him to deal with the harsh conditions of the penal society of Australia. It also led him to be less tolerant of clerics like Bishop John Bede Polding, who was to be his novice master at Downside and later his bishop in Sydney. Finally, his early life at sea prepared him for the long journeys to and from Australia and for his constant travel around the colonies.

After returning to Scarborough, Ullathorne resumed catechism and took French lessons from Pexton, who seems to have influenced him toward the priesthood. Hearing about Downside Monastery by accident, he decided immediately to enter the Benedictines. His tolerant parents again gave their consent. The packet sloop on which he embarked for the south in February 1823 was forced into Harwich by a severe gale, and he completed the journey to the monastery by coach from London.42

42. A description in DR (1(1880-1882), pp 15-16) provides details of the journey from London to Bath in 1817. It took about 14 hours - which was then considered very fast.
Downside Abbey is situated in Stratton-on-the-Fosse, thirteen miles south west of Bath. The Benedictine community came there in 1814 from Saint Gregory's Monastery, Douai, where they had been resident since the seventeenth century. Driven out by the French Revolution, they returned to England and eventually adopted Downside as their permanent home.\(^43\) An unnamed contemporary describes Ullathorne at the time of his arrival:

He was undoubtedly a rough specimen when he came to Downside. He wore a blue tail-coat, with trousers a good deal too short for him, and speckled stockings. I do not think he took much part in games and when he was prefect he almost always had a book in his hand.\(^44\)

Soon after his arrival "all the respectability of the immediate vicinity" arrived for the official opening of the new school and chapel (10 July 1823).\(^45\) High Mass, a sermon "abounding in Latin and Greek quotations...a proper cold collation...served up in one of the new gothic rooms" and a specially composed Mass with seventy two "Amens" at the end of the creed must have impressed the new arrival from Scarborough. The time that Ullathorne spent in the Abbey - 1823 to 1830 - were prosperous and peaceful years for Downside. This was by far the longest time that he ever spent living in a monastic community. While he was a monk by training,


\(^{45}\) Butler, art. cit., pp 26, 27.
he quickly became an active priest by avocation.

Saint Gregory's Abbey was one of a number of monasteries making up the English Benedictine Congregation. The English Congregation has developed along unique lines. It is important to understand the English Benedictine structure to comprehend the ministry of Ullathorne and the ideals of Polding for the Benedictines in Australia. Normally Benedictine monasteries are self-governing and independent. Their life is based on a stable community. But the English houses were more like modern religious orders, for they had strong links between communities and a centralised authority. While some monks lived in community, others worked as parish priests in England, caring for specific missions. Thus English monks could follow a conventual or missionary life. Ullathorne clearly opted for the missionary life. The active priests were subject to provincials, the conventual to the local prior. Overall authority lay with a President and a chapter that met every four years. The missionary-convventual antithesis has

46. The other original abbeys in the English Congregation were firstly, Saint Lawrence's, originally from Dieulouard in Lorraine, which eventually settled in the village of Ampleforth in Yorkshire (where Ullathorne's ancestor had been Vicar); secondly, the community of Saint Edmund's, Paris, which, after a period in England, eventually settled in Saint Gregory's old home in Douai (this community has now returned again to England); and thirdly, the foundation at Lamspring near Hildersheim in Germany.

led to considerable tension which has boiled over several times in the history of the English Congregation.\textsuperscript{48}

At the time of his entry to Downside Ullathorne had been to confession occasionally, but he had not made his first communion. He had not been confirmed and he had never attended benediction.\textsuperscript{49} The dignity, piety and kindness of his new superiors attracted him, but he was shrewd enough to notice "the absence of worldly knowledge or experience in them...Mr. Polding was our prefect and also our director".\textsuperscript{50} He was later to be Ullathorne's novice master, philosophy teacher and bishop.\textsuperscript{51} He says that he was the twentieth boy in the school when he arrived at the age of sixteen. The Prior, Father Bernard Barber was, according to Ullathorne, a man of dignity, kindness and common sense who delegated authority and was an excellent spiritual director in the tradition of the 17th century English Benedictine mystical writer, Father Augustine Baker.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{48} The David Knowles 'affair' at Downside is a case in point. For details see Morey, A.: \textit{David Knowles: A Memoir}. London. 1979.

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Autobiography}, p 31.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Autobiography}, pp 31-33.


When he went to Downside Ullathorne entered into the long Benedictine tradition of learning and spiritual formation. The community had inherited its own English spirituality, with roots reaching back to the Middle Ages, and had also experienced the reform of the French Church and seminaries in the 17th century.

There is no doubt that the Benedictines offered their students a good education and contact with a broad cultural tradition. Inheriting the French concern with seminary formation, student priests at Downside were given a solid professional and practical training.

However, it is easy to be uncritical and to be carried away with the romance of Benedictine history. T.L. Suttor falls into this trap when describing Ullathorne's formation. Suttor maintains that the English Benedictines had "the finest traditions, scholastic rigour...prayer...and a broad human culture". He says that Ullathorne "was without doubt the greatest product" of this tradition, "unrivalled in his combination of patristic, scholastic and modern learning with a practical sagacity and a strong vein of mysticism". This is a big claim! Ullathorne was intelligent and he certainly had "practical sagacity". But he was hardly "unrivalled" in his learning. Even in colonial Australia he had peers, such as Archdeacon Broughton and Father Charles Lovat.

---


54. See chapter six for a treatment of Lovat's background.
Suttor was writing at the beginning of the "rehabilitation" of the Benedictines in Australian Catholic historiography. Prior to the 1960s, the contribution of the order had been neglected in favour of the role of the Irish secular clergy. The Downside tradition was a good one, but, as my assessment of Ullathorne's education will show, Suttor's superlatives need qualification. With the exception of Father Thomas Joseph Brown, who taught him theology, Ullathorne considered himself largely self-educated, with all the limitations inherent in that. To speak of "a strong vein of mysticism" in Ullathorne is misleading. His spirituality was much more matter-of-fact and evangelical. In fact, he has much in common with that strand of nineteenth century spirituality which was suspicious of any form of mysticism.

Suttor's claim that he was the "greatest product" of Downside also needs qualification. He was certainly not the peer of Cuthbert Butler, David Knowles and Bishop Christopher Butler, all major theologians and all Downside monks. Ullathorne's strengths were more practical. In the intellectual wilderness of early New South Wales, his education and intelligence were superior. But he was fundamentally a shrewd pastor and a practical missionary with professional theological and pastoral competence.

As I will show in the next chapter it was his systematic approach to the difficulties that faced him that equipped him to be the institutional founder of the Catholic Church in Australia. His
insight and professionalism contrasted sharply with the ad hoc and unsystematic approach of the first priests, Fathers Therry and Conolly. But Ullathorne's many achievements in New Holland (and later in England) do not make him the great intellectual that Suttor describes.

There were serious deficiencies in Ullathorne's intellectual and religious formation before coming to Downside. His reading was advanced, but it was self-directed and he had never been formed in the discipline necessary for serious study. He says of his education at the monastery that he "was pushed up much too rapidly".55 His strong motivation to learn led him to develop his own methodology and his memory was considerable. His "newly imbibed ascetic feelings" inspired him to avoid competition with the other students, but the mature Ullathorne, writing later in the Autobiography, commented that "this was not pure humility but a touch of disdain".56 Like so many others beginning their training for religious life before and since, he was taking himself and his "spirituality" far too seriously. As a young man he was pompous and judgemental, and like many religious persons he needed ministerial experience to bring him down to earth.

Ullathorne has left details of his schooling, which he completed

very quickly. Latin was basic to any classical education. He got "no Greek, but picked up its rudiments later in teaching a class of beginners". He learned the basics of French and seems to have dabbled in Italian, Hebrew and Spanish. In his later career he became a reasonably fluent Italian speaker. (This was necessary in order to deal with the Roman Curia). Shakespeare's plays were "thoroughly comprehended". English composition, elocution, geography, mathematics and algebra were all taught; but as he mentions no textbooks, it is hard to assess standards. As late as 1826 there were only three priests on the staff of the school, and Polding was the only one engaged there full-time. He was not a teacher of broad scholarship. In a supercilious, but probably accurate comment, Ullathorne said: "Dr. Polding was not himself a very deep or persistent thinker".

"History was a favourite study at the college". He says that there were separate courses in ancient, modern, church and Roman history and he gives titles of the textbooks used: Goldsmith's English and Roman Histories, Rollin's Ancient History, Hooke's Roman History, Reeve's Church History and Finegele's chronology.

57. See Autobiography, pp 33-35. See also The Tablet, 9 December 1848, pp 787-788. The Tablet article needs to be read critically for Ullathorne was trying to prove how good Catholic education was in his time in comparison to general education.

58. See DA, F 435 for a list of the community in 1826. Polding was relieved of charge of the school when he became novice master in 1824, but he continued to teach classics (O'Donoghue, op. cit., p 7).

of history. Goldsmith's histories are uncritical, but they did introduce children with imagination to worlds outside their own experience. Ullathorne also mentions the equally uncritical work of Charles Rollin (1661-1741), a French educator with Jansenist sympathies. Nathaniel Hooke's Roman History was regarded as a fine work in its time. A Short View of the History of the Christian Church by the Catholic writer, Joseph Reeve, was used for Church History.

The emphasis on history in Ullathorne's education was unusual for his time. It probably reflects his own interests as much as his formal education. However, as he entered the school in February 1823 and the novitiate in March 1824, his education cannot have been very extensive. Probably, many of the texts he mentions were studied at other times, for he was a voracious reader. His own published works reflect neither a strong formal education nor a


62. Roman History from the Building of Rome to the Ruins of the Commonwealth. London. 1738-1771. 4 Vols. Hooke was a professional writer, a friend of Alexander Pope and a Catholic.

63. Published in Exeter in 1802. For Reeve see Gillow, BDEC, Vol 5, pp 402-403.
deep understanding of the issues he discusses. The impression remains of a great deal of self-education.

Ullathorne's development at Downside was not limited to the intellect. He was also learning the rudiments of spirituality. He claims that he was different from the other boys: "I was not like the innocent youths around me but carried in my breast the memory of so much...though once more a schoolboy I had the gravity of a man". He thought much and spoke little. At sea he had been nicknamed "Lumpy" because he was fat and awkward. At Downside he was called "Old Plato" because of his seriousness.

My readier habits of converse and lighter moods of speech belonged not to my boyhood or youth. They came to me with middle age.  

The Autobiography suggests a strong, independent youth with a power of silent observation. In itself this could have been a quite attractive trait, but combined with the self-righteousness engendered by an immature spirituality, it produced a judgemental and pompous strain, which he only lost with more experience of life. However, right until the end of his life he remained very sure of his own judgement. A third nickname, "Monsignor Ego Solus", was given to him later in life and it suggests a continuing sense of independence and self-importance. Portraits of him as a younger man reveal a remarkably immature appearance. When he

64. Autobiography, p 32. This is certainly true. As a mature man he lost much of the pretentiousness and pomposity that characterised him up to about the age of forty.
first visited Rome in 1837 as Vicar General of New South Wales, both Cardinal Franzoni of Propaganda and Pope Gregory XVI said "Quel giovane" ("What a youth"). Ullathorne comments self-consciously: "I saw that I was looked on as a mere boy (in Rome) and I therefore kept out of sight".65

Ullathorne lists the spiritual books that influenced him during his formation. The first was Gobinet's *Instruction of Youth*.66 This work emphasises the role of conscious psychological processes in prayer. It is moralistic and practical, but it is also anti-Jansenist. It is the type of systematic approach that would have appealed to Ullathorne. He also mentions two works of Bishop Challoner: *Think Well On't* and what he calls the *Lives of the Fathers in the Desert*, which is probably his recollection of the title *The Wonders of God in the Wilderness*.67 The English Catholic bishop Richard Challoner was influenced by Saint Francis


de Sales, whose aim it was to "de-cloister" spirituality and make it available to the laity. Think Well On't it a realistic work, beginning with directions for the prayerful use of the meditations set out for every day of the month. Challoner's approach to prayer was methodical and non-mystical. Unlike the French writers of a slightly earlier period, he is not anti-mystical, but he emphasises the need for an ascetic discipline and well-schooled virtue, rather than the higher flights of contemplative prayer. Ullathorne's own spirituality is very similar.

Ullathorne also mentions Lorenzo Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat*, "the best work ever penned for laying solidly the foundations of an interior life". Scupoli is a good example of Counter-Reformation spirituality. The *Combat* is a practical work that aims to school the Christian in the basics of a spirituality that focuses on the contemplation of a crucified God. The word "contemplation" is used here in a more Ignatian than Teresian sense. Scupoli's views on prayer reflect the Counter-Reformation emphasis on discursive meditation. The actual textbook used in Ullathorne's novitiate was Rodriguez *Practice of Religious Perfection*. This

---

68. *Autobiography*, p 32. Scupoli (1530-1610) was a Theatine priest. The *Spiritual Combat* is a collection of conferences. For a time Scupoli was suspected of heresy by the Roman Inquisition and the book was published in various forms.

69. Alfonso Rodriguez (1538-1616) was a Spanish Jesuit - not to be confused with the laybrother saint of the same name. The *Practice of Perfection* and of *Christian Virtues* was published in Seville in 1609. The ms. of the *Autobiography* gives an incorrect impression: it calls the book "the Practice of Religious Perfection of Rodriguez". It has rendered "of Rodriguez" as though it
also emphasises self-discipline and discursive meditation and is antagonistic toward any form of mysticism.

Challoner, Scupoli and Rodriguez were not part of the monastic tradition which has always emphasised contemplative prayer, the liturgy and the divine office as the essence of spirituality. The Counter-Reformation writers reflect a spirituality which stresses asceticism, discursive meditation, moralism, a legalistic approach to Christian life and a suspicion of mysticism. This tradition was a major component in the formation of nineteenth century Catholic religiosity. It was non-Jansenistic, but given the strong French influence on early nineteenth century English Benedictinism, a rigid moralism cannot be entirely discounted. In other words, the type of spirituality in which Ullathorne was formed down-graded the mystical and experiential elements in religion and emphasised the formalistic and conformist. Not that it was without its fervid side: nineteenth century Catholic spirituality expressed itself in a vivid devotional life. It had much in common with evangelical Protestant spirituality, where the emphasis was also on both fervour and moralism.

What was missing in Ullathorne's formation was the contemplative and mystical element more typical of the monastic life. It was only in the late nineteenth century that the English Benedictines were part of the title. It is not.
began to return more fully to their own tradition.⁷⁰ As a product of the early nineteenth century, Ullathorne's spirituality was more evangelical in the sense outlined above. It was non-monastic but decidedly apropos early Australia. It contrasted sharply with the monastic notions of Polding and may go towards explaining something of the failure of the Bishop's ideas in Australia.

Ullathorne advanced quickly to the novitiate. Polding became his novice master. The Autobiography says "we were devotedly attached to him", for he was a man "of warm and tender heart". Entry into the novitiate did not mean taking the habit:

> We were in the coloured clothes we had worn as schoolboys without a soutane. The habit...was a small scapular worn under our dress.⁷¹

In fact the first time he was to ever wear the Benedictine habit was in Rome in 1837. The English Catholic clergy avoided any form of ostentation or religious habit, especially when appearing in public.

Through Rodriguez Ullathorne was exposed to the desert fathers and, like many impressionable and immature novices, he felt called to a stricter living of religious life. This was re-enfor-

⁷⁰. Typical of this revival was Cuthbert Butler's book Western Mysticism (London. 1922).

⁷¹. Autobiography, p 34. For some reason Ullathorne replaced the original text in the ms which reads: "We appeared in suits of black clothes, shorts and white cravats in the style of the clergy of the day, and instead of a soutane".
ced by reading De Rance, founder of La Trappe. De Rance was an extremist in the Benedictine tradition with an emphasis on physical austerity. Ullathorne may also have heard stories about the French Trappists who had established a house in England during the Revolution. It was situated on the property of the Catholic Weld family at Lulworth in Dorset. Ullathorne saw in the Cistercian reform a connection with his adopted patron, Saint Bernard (he was given the religious name of Bernard at on arrival at Downside). His longings were re-awakened. He wanted "a grand romantic spiritual ideal, to be somehow acted upon and realised".

So he decided to join La Trappe. He was lucky that Barber and Polding had the sense to divert him from this. He was eventually professed (5 April 1825) as a monk at Downside on the understanding that he could go to La Trappe after a few years if he still felt called. It was a shrewd solution, for time dulls romantic illusions. The novitiate at Downside was an enclosed one, but the influence of Polding's missionary ideas was strong. The task of the novice was to become a good monk and respond to the missionary call if it should come.

72. Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rance (1620-1700) was a reformer of the Cistercian order. This reform was based in the abbey of La Trappe in Normandy from which the term "Trappist" is derived. The book to which Ullathorne refers is De la saintete et les devoirs de la vie monastique. Paris. 1683.

Polding continued with his newly professed charges as teacher of philosophy. The community was small: three priests, five students of theology, six philosophers (including Ullathorne), four novices and one postulant. Most were of middle class background. The daily regimen was monastic, but there was a strong sense that most students were really missionary priests in training.

After profession, Ullathorne began "Rhetoric, Logic and Mental Philosophy". Rhetoric was studied from Quintillian, Longinus, Rollin and a "manuscript by Eustace, the author of Classical Travels in Italy". Rhetoric was important for Ullathorne for he was an awkward adolescent "left-handed and left-legged and more or less indistinct of utterance by reason of a lisp". He was obviously shy and conscious of being "lumpy". The miniature in Oscott College Museum shows that he looked very immature at the age of eighteen (1822). He was still a young looking man with a

74. There is an undated list of the community in DA (F 435). It is probably from 1826 as it mentions Polding as sub-prior.

75. Autobiography, p 36. John Chetwode Eustace (c1762-1815) was an Irish born secular priest who had received part of his education at Saint Gregory's, Douai. He taught Rhetoric at Maynooth and then moved to England. He undertook his first classical tour in 1802 and died on his second in Naples in 1815. His major work is A Tour through Italy exhibiting its scenery, antiquities and monuments, Particularly as they are the object of classical interest, with an Account of the present state of its Cities and Towns, and Occasional Observations on the recent spoliations of the French. London. 1813. The work was expanded and there were seven editions by 1841.

prominent nose and large eyes in 1842.\textsuperscript{77} He had to struggle against gaucherie.

The outline that he gives of the philosophy and theology courses is useful for an understanding of seminary training in the early nineteenth century. Until the neo-scholastic revival in Italy in the middle of the century, seminary philosophy was generally dominated by Cartesianism. Ullathorne, however, indicates a quite different emphasis. Logic and "mental and moral philosophy" were studied from what the Autobiography calls "Watts and the Logic of Port Royal".\textsuperscript{78} This is incomprehensible if it is read as one title. The Watts referred to is clearly Isaac Watts (1674-1748), the famous hymn writer. His enormous output included Logic; Or the Right Use of Reason.\textsuperscript{79} "The Logic of Port Royal" refers to a textbook produced at Port Royal, the main Jansenist centre in Paris.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{77} See the portrait in Butler (LTBU, I, p 75) from the original at Oscott.

\textsuperscript{78} Autobiography, p 38. The original ms reads "Watts, and the Logic of Port Royal". There is no indication of a title in the ms. The comma after "Watts" is the clue that he is referring to two different books. Leslie has missed this comma and From Cabin Boy to Archbishop prints it as though this were the title of one book.

\textsuperscript{79} For Watts see DNB, XX, pp 978-981. The Logic was first published in London in 1725 and went through many editions.

\textsuperscript{80} The Logic was written by Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole. Ruth Clark (Strangers and Sojourners at Port Royal. Cambridge. 1932) shows that the Logic and other textbooks had been translated into English in the late 17th century and went through a number of editions in the 19th.
"We were well grounded in the Scotch philosophy of that day". 81

In the 1820s the Scottish universities were still considered pre­
eminent. They had been reformed just before the Reformation and
were thus, paradoxically, more open to traditional and medieval
thinking. They had also made a conscious effort to integrate the
philosophy of the Enlightenment with Christianity. 82 While Blair
and Campbell were reference books in the Rhetoric course, Reid
was the principal philosophy text. 83 His Enquiry into the Human
Mind on the Principles of Common Sense (1764) attempted to
confront the scepticism of David Hume's Treatise of Human Nature
(1739), arguing from common sense that the very fact that Hume's
conclusions lead him to deny what is obvious to human experience
shows the falsity of his position. "Common sense" here refers to
the intrinsic knowledge, judgement and perception that is innate
in human nature.

This Scottish influence indicates a breadth and openness in
Ullathorne's seminary training. Common sense philosophy would
have appealed to his realistic side and he always had a respect
and tolerance for human experience. Reid's practicality would


82. See Davie, George E.: The Scottish Enlightenment. Lon­
don. 1981.

83. For Hugh Blair (1718-1800) see DNB, III, pp 622-623. His
principal work was Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Lon­
don/Edinburgh. 1743. For George Campbell (1719-1796) see DNB, IV,
pp 809-810. The textbook was Philosophy of Rhetoric. Edinburgh.
1776. For Thomas Reid (1710-1796) see DNB, XVI, pp 879-882 and
the article in the Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Vol 7, pp 118-121.
have appealed to Ullathorne's realism; this element in his personality was to come more to the fore as he matured. Unlike his theology teacher, Father Thomas Joseph Brown, he retained a respect for philosophy: "It became a habit with me, long continued, to trace up things to their principles and origins whenever I could find them". His nickname "Old Plato" was well earned!

He says that, despite his attraction to scripture studies, "...we had no regular course", except the "... Prolegomena, the Psalms and St. Paul". For a future preacher this was a serious deficiency.

It is obvious that Ullathorne considered himself, probably correctly, to be self-taught. Polding was no philosopher: "Doctor Polding was not himself a very deep or persistent thinker". If Polding's later chaotic approach to ecclesiastical problems in New South Wales was any measure, then he was probably not an organised teacher either. Ullathorne was let go his own way and was something of a mystery to the rest of the community. "Old Plato" probably enjoyed being a mystery! The pompous air was still there; he admits himself that he had "a tendency to put his ideas in a laconic and sententious form".

84. Autobiography, p 38.
86. Autobiography, p 38. The original ms reads "...a very deep or assiduous thinker". Ullathorne himself has crossed out the word "assiduous" and replaced it with "persistent".
He began theology in 1828. Unfortunately, he gives us little information about this most important section of the seminary course, but he does tell us that Father Thomas Joseph Brown was "a teacher who really taught, and taught systematically, not only with method, but with solid preparation, but also with a considerable accumulation of knowledge". Brown was to be not only his true mentor, but also his good friend. As a theologian he was later consulted by both Ullathorne and Polding on moral, canonical and ecclesiastical issues. In 1840 Brown was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Wales and he became Bishop of Newport and Menevia with the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England in 1850. It was he who was later responsible for delating John Henry Newman to Rome for his views on the role of the laity.

Ullathorne says bluntly that in the late 1820s Brown was Gallican in his ecclesiology. Brown had been taught theology by Dom Martin Leveaux, a Maurist monk, who had lived with the Downside community, and by the emigre priest, Abbe Elloi, a doctor from the Sorbonne, who had come to Saint Gregory's from Maynooth. There Elloi had been a colleague of Louis-Gilles de la Hogue who taught theology at Maynooth from 1798 to 1820. De la Hogue's *Tractatus de Ecclesia Christi* was unequivocally Gallican. The essence of Gallicanism as applied to ecclesiology was that the Decree *Sacro-sancta* of the Council of Constance (1414-1418), declaring that an ecumenical council is superior to a pope, was still in force and

that the teaching of the pope in matters of faith is not irrefor-
mable unless the consent of the church is given to the papal
teaching. The theory of Gallicanism is expressed in the "Five
Articles" of 1682 and it was fundamentally a way of the French
Church asserting its independence of Rome.

Ullathorne also mentions the French theologian Honore de Tour-
nelly, professor at Douai and then the Sorbonne. A seminary
abridgement of his textbook Praelectiones theologicae was avail-
able from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. The Autobiography
also refers to the popular and widely used textbooks Compendiose
institutiones theologicae, usum seminarii Pictaviensis.

But Ullathorne was not satisfied with the Gallican positions in
ecclesiology and Brown was displeased when he caught him reading
Joseph de Maistre's Du Pape. This book had a tremendous influ-
ence on the development of ultramontane ecclesiology in the 19th
century. De Maistre's views promoted a non-theological (and
non-traditional) 'traditionalism' which emphasised the need to
enhance papal power. Du Pape fits squarely into the context of
the romantic movement by emphasising the idea of an absolute

88. See Dubruel, M.: "Gallicanisme" in Dictionnaire theolog-
ique catholique, VI, Cols 1097-1137.
89. See Riviere, J.: "Theologie dite de Poitiers, puis de
toulouse" in Dictionnaire theologique catholique, XV, Cols. 503-
504.
90. First published in Paris in 1819.
papal "monarchy" and the central role of religion in the (medieval) past. Traditionalism was a reaction against the egalitarianism of the French Revolution and the chaos of the Napoleonic wars. Ullathorne slowly shook off his Gallican background and developed into a moderate ultramontane. He never sympathised, however, with the extreme ultramontanism represented by the Oxford converts William George Ward, Frederick William Faber and Henry Edward Manning.

Ullathorne does not make clear what texts were used for the courses on the trinity, grace and the incarnation. He says that when he studied theology, Saint Thomas Aquinas "was then a closed book on this side of the Alps". The fact is that Aquinas was a "closed book" on the other side of the Alps as well at the beginning of the nineteenth century! It was not until the middle of the century that the Thomistic revival got under way. The moral theology followed was that of Saint Alphonsus Liguori. Liguori influenced Ullathorne - as he influenced many Catholic clergy in the nineteenth and early twentieth century - not only in moral theology. He was also a major source of a populist ultramontane religiosity which dominated Catholicism right up until the Second Vatican Council. Reacting against the rational-

91. Butler, LTB, II, pp 48-52. See also his letters from Vatican Council I held in the Stone Convent Archives.
ism of the Enlightenment and the pervasive influence of Jansenism, Liguori stressed that

Meditation on the condescension of God becoming man, his redeeming activity and the forgiveness of past sin, and his provision of the means to preserve in a life of sanctifying grace would produce motives of love. These were to be mixed with motives of fear, resulting from meditation on the justice of God and his terrible judgement. Working together, Alphonsus believed, these two sets of motives served to attach souls to God.94

Elements in this religiosity struck a chord in the emerging romanticism of the nineteenth century. Ullathorne mentions Liguori in the context of moral theology, and it is here that his influence was strongest. Liguori's aim was to break Jansenist influence on confessional praxis. The view that he espoused was called "equiprobabilism" or "moderate probabalism". It stated that before a person could act freely in a doubtful moral situation, there had to be equal or approximately equally good reasons for ignoring the law as there were for obeying it. His intention was to allow freedom - however limited. But a mechanistic interpretation of his views by subsequent generations of clergy has meant that his limited ideas on freedom have been interpreted in a rigorist sense!

The Autobiography says that theology at Downside was influenced also by "the Praxis of Blessed Leonard de Porto Mauritio; this most probably saved us from the rigid teaching of Collet".95

94. Quoted in Sharp, art. cit., p 64.
95. Autobiography, p 41.
Saint Leonard of Port Maurice was an eighteenth century Italian Franciscan, famous for preaching parish missions. Leonard also tempered severity with mercy in his confessional praxis. Pierre Collet (1693-1751) was probably the most famous French theologian of the 18th century. While anti-Jansenist, he tended toward the moral rigidity characteristic of the Gallican theologians.\textsuperscript{96}

It is significant that in practice Ullathorne followed the popular and realistic Italian mission preachers, Alphonsus and Leonard, rather than the more theoretical French. In this, as in so many ways, the young Ullathorne was typical of the new model of priest emerging in the early decades of the century.

By following the Italians in moral theology, Downside avoided the French tradition that could have so easily have pervaded a monastery whose institutional roots were in France. A broad moral formation and a tolerance of the possibilities of human depravity, would have been a very necessary preparation for a convict chaplain in New South Wales.

Ullathorne also read Saint Paul, Tertullian, Saint Augustine, Saint Bernard and Bossuet. His interest in patrology developed. While at Ampleforth he read either the \textit{Mystical Theology} or the \textit{Celestial Hierarchy} of Pseudo-Dionysius, probably the former. He encountered here mysticism in the full sense, theology integrated

\textsuperscript{96} For Collet see \textit{Dictionnaire theologique catholique}, Vol. 3, Cols. 364-367.
into a high spirituality. It gave him another perspective from
the down-to-earth spirituality in which he had been trained. It
also introduced him to the roots of the western monastic tradit-
ion.

It is important to place the details of Ullathorne's formation
into the broader perspective of the model of priesthood which
predominated at the time of his ordination. In the early 19th
century a profound change was occurring in the role and function
of the clergy. Their status in relationship to society was
changing as they became increasingly professionalised. A number
of writers have commented on this.97 Geoffrey Best says that
within the Established Church there was a growing feeling of
"clerical independence" and a recovery among the parish clergy
"of a proper sense of self-respect and worth". Clerical educa-
tional and moral standards were rising with a consequent improve-
ment in public estimation. Clergy were becoming respectable, like
lawyers and doctors. Best makes the interesting comment, especi-
ally in the light of some of Ullathorne's declarations later in
New South Wales, that the clergy were also developing into "the
principal agents of social control".98 Alan Haig, however, has

97. Best, G.F.A.: Temporal Pillars. Queen Anne's Bounty, the
Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England. Cam-
books are studies of the clergy of the Established Church, but
they also have implications for the Catholic Church.

questioned the application of the professionalisation model to the 19th century Anglican clergy. He argues that they were not so much professionals in the modern sense, as men occupying an ancient community office struggling to adjust to a new social reality.

Whatever the case in the Established Church, there is no doubt that an increasing professionalism characterised the Catholic clergy in the early nineteenth century. Bossy sees the roots of this reform in the eighteenth century and he argues that the power and influence of the clergy in the Catholic community were enhanced from about 1820 onwards. This professionalisation can be seen in the widening range of social functions which accrued to the clergy. This will be clearly illustrated in the ministry of the convict chaplains (such as Ullathorne) in New South Wales in the 1830s.

Certainly the beginnings of this professionalisation go back a century and a half in the Catholic Church. The Council of Trent had legislated for the establishment of seminaries, but it was not until the mid-17th century in France that this was implemented by Saint Vincent de Paul and especially by Jean Jacques Olier and the Sulpicians. English and Irish clergy, both secular and


religious, had been largely trained in Continental seminaries prior to the French Revolution. They usually received the solid intellectual and personal formation characteristic of French seminary system. The Revolution meant that this formation had to be moved to England and Ireland. Slowly seminaries were established in the United Kingdom, and from the 1820s onwards these had begun to turn out reasonably well-trained clergy with a growing professional sense.

There was little difference between the training of secular and religious clergy. The English Benedictines, for instance, easily adapted to life in local missions in England, and Ullathorne lived like a secular priest in New South Wales - and later in Coventry.

Ullathorne was ordained right at the beginning of the new wave of professional clergy. As I have indicated, his formation had both strengths and weaknesses, and there is a sense in which he was largely self-taught. But he had studied theology comprehensively and given his intelligence he was probably instinctively in touch with the social changes going on around him. He developed into a model 19th century clergyman and bishop. He had a very clear notion of his professional role, as his ministry in New South Wales demonstrated.

Early in his career he was rather pretentious and self-important; this may have been caused by his provincial background (throughout he spoke with a strong Yorkshire accent) and his middle class origins. It would have probably have been re-enforced by the fact that Catholics were still a tiny minority in England, just emerging from several centuries of oppression and persecution. As he himself admits, his kindly, humorous side did not develop until middle age. By then he was a priest and bishop with wide ministerial experience.

PART THREE - Ordination and Appointment to New South Wales.

William Ullathorne Senior died on 24 November 1829. His will was made on 10 September 1829, so there must have been a realisation that death was a possibility. The will entrusts the entire estate to his wife, with the two sons Owen and James as trustees, "for the benefit of my said wife and all my children, except my eldest son Bernard whom I consider amply provided for". 101 However, William Senior thought better of this a little later for a codicil to the will reads: "At the time of executing the above will I have considered to give my eldest son William fifty pounds or more not exceeding one hundred pounds at the discretion of my wife within twelve months next after my decease". William junior

101. The will is held in the Borthwick Institute, York. It is not filed by number but by date and name. It is interesting that the will refers to Ullathorne Junior as "Bernard" his religious name and not "William" his given Christian name.
probably did not return to Scarborough for his father's funeral and the money was used to buy books for New South Wales. It also helped to defray his travelling expenses.

Ullathorne was ordained deacon by Bishop Peter Augustine Baines, Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, on 18 September 1830 and soon after that he was sent to Ampleforth "to assist the new Prior in restoring that monastery and college after their great desolation".\textsuperscript{102} The Ampleforth community had been split by the attempts of the Benedictine Bishop Baines "to establish a great college with something of the character of a university" at the centre of his vicariate in Bath. Both Downside and Ampleforth had refused to co-operate in this ambitious venture, but the Ampleforth community had been split over the issue.\textsuperscript{103} In fact, the former prior and a section of the community had left the monastery to staff Baines' school at Prior Park in Bath. As a result there were real problems at Ampleforth: "The new Prior was not accepted with perfect cordiality, still less two members from Downside".\textsuperscript{104} Ullathorne was made prefect of the school. The Autobiography makes it clear that he recognised his own unpopularity at Ampleforth. He refers to two letters in which "I wrote an account of this state of things to my old superiors and

\textsuperscript{102} Autobiography, pp 47-48.


\textsuperscript{104} Autobiography, p 47.
finding that my letters were carefully read before being posted I wrote all the more plainly, perhaps too plainly".105

The letters were addressed to the President of the Congregation, Father John Birdsall, and they reflect the fact that monastic and school discipline was at a low ebb. There were factions among the monks and the boys tended to reflect the community divisions:

We found the house in great disorder and everything in a state of disorganisation and Mr. Towers (the new Prior) in great difficulty and anxiety of mind...choir was almost deserted in a morning (sic), the Holy Communion forborne, and it was a common thing to see a snuff box handed to each other in chapel and to see religious men with their heads together talking, smiling or remarking during a sermon or catechising...The boys were shockingly neglected.106

This letter did not impress Birdsall, whom Ullathorne describes as "the sternest man I ever knew, stern even to harshness".107 The two never got on. The second letter paints a more optimistic picture, but foresees a difficulty - the return to Ampleforth of Father Edward Clifford, the son of the seventh Baron Clifford of Cudleigh.

The possibility of Mr. Clifford's return has thrown us into a torture of anxiety for the safety of the house...if he does appear again, all is undone. He is so insinuating and can cover himself with such seeming kindness...his family name and dignity add weight to his words...And of his

105. Two letters are preserved in the Abbot's Archives at Downside and these are probably the ones to which he refers: Ullathorne to Birdsall, 11 May and 22 July 1831. DA, Abbot's Archives. No number.

106. Ullathorne to Birdsall, 11 May 1831. DA, Abbot's Archives. Interestingly, Ullathorne himself was to become an inveterate snuff-taker.

principles, or more truly his want of principles, we all know too much.  

Birdsall reacted very badly to this letter. Clifford was an Ampleforth monk who had been an ordained priest for five years. Ullathorne was a visitor. The letter is judgmental and smacks of class-consciousness. "I received a short and peremptory instruction to repair back to my own monastery 'recto tramite' - by the shortest possible route". This was the first of many lessons for him that blunt self-righteousness needed to be tempered by sensitivity to others and the need for diplomacy.

While at Ampleforth he had been ordained priest by Bishop Thomas Penswick, Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District, at Ushaw College on 24 December 1831. It seemed that Ullathorne had ahead of him a priestly career in English schools or parishes. He had brief pastoral experience in two small missions, including Easingwold, where his branch of the family had originated. On return to Downside in late 1831, he began to teach in the school. But he was not to be there for long.

In 1819 the English Benedictines assumed responsibility for the Vicariate Apostolic of Mauritius, in which New Holland was

---


109. Both the original ms of the Autobiography and Leslie render the bishop's name as "Painswick", which is incorrect. It is clearly Penswick on the ordination certificate. See ordination certificate, BAA, B 73.
included. By 1829 negotiations were under way for the replacement of the Vicar Apostolic there. After a long delay the Mauritius mitre went to Bishop William Placid Morris, a Downside monk. One of his major concerns was placing a priest with authority in Australia. He had great difficulty in recruiting suitable volunteers for both Mauritius and Australia. The first mention of Ullathorne in his plans is found in a letter to Birdsall:

I have been led to hope that Mr. Ullathorne who was, or is now at Ampleforth, might wish to labour in the other Hemisphere, if he could be spared for this. I have not applied about or written to him on the subject; nor should I think it prudent or just to name it to him, till I know whether you would allow him, in the event of his wishing it, to put that wish into execution.

Morris also suggested that "a colony of English Benedictines be established at the Mauritius". He envisaged them working in parishes, much as they did in England. It was Polding who later took up this idea and established the model in New South Wales.

In his reply Birdsall made no reference to Ullathorne, and this omission was to become significant on the eve of Ullathorne's departure for New South Wales. But word had certainly got around about him, for Brown wrote:

Ullathorne has also got permission, but has not yet concluded his arrangement. Now I have my misgivings about (his) go-

110. For the background to this see my article "Australia's First Bishops", ACR, 64(1987), pp 189-200.


112. Birdsall to Morris (draft), 27 April 1832. DA H 434. See also Birt, I, p 80.
ing, I mean whether we ought to allow it, as he would, I think, be a very useful missioner in England. 113

Since Brown had known Ullathorne since his first entry to Downside, it is significant that he had already recognised the talents of the young man and envisaged him within the context of the English mission. It should also be noted that Brown was consistently opposed to English Benedictine monks serving in the overseas missions. He felt that there was already too much for them to do in England.

The decision concerning Ullathorne's departure seems to have been taken rather suddenly. His own comment was rather unenthusiastic: "he (Morris) was told by the Superiors that if I was asked I should probably not be unwilling to go". He says that it was Polding who told Morris he might volunteer. Morris had originally asked him to go to Mauritius: "I replied to Dr. Morris that I had about a hundred reasons against going to the Mauritius, and almost as many for going to Australia". 114 Probably the presence of Clifford in Mauritius was one of the reasons against going there. Ullathorne claims that he had the permission of Birdsall: "The General...gave me up entirely to Bishop Morris". 115 He used his father's legacy to buy books.

I set to work in London to make up a select library of about

113. Brown to Deday (southern provincial) 1 May 1832. DA H 437. See also Birt, I, p 81.


five hundred volumes. Although chiefly ecclesiastical, I added some of the choicest classics in all of the languages of which I knew anything.

From what can be re-constructed of this library, his choice was wide indeed. The books that he brought to Australia on this and on his subsequent trip back to Europe were absorbed into the Benedictine monastic library in Sydney.\textsuperscript{116} Thus Ullathorne was also the originator of Catholic culture in Australia.

The books identified as Ullathorne's reflect an unusually wide culture. As well as the Scottish philosophers and some standard 17th and 18th century French theological texts, he brought Shakespeare's \textit{Collected Works}, Sarah Austin's \textit{Characteristics of Goethe, from the German of Falk von Muller}, Johannes Buxtorf's \textit{Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldaicum}, Richard Whatley's \textit{Remarks on Transportation}, Wiseman's \textit{Lectures on the Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church}, and Thomas Maurice's \textit{The History of Hindoostan. Its Arts and its Sciences}.\textsuperscript{117} In Dublin in 1837 Ullathorne picked up a 19 volume first edition set of Luther and Melanchthon's sermons and pamphlets. "Always looking after opportunities to add something choice to that library which I

\textsuperscript{116} This library is now held at Saint Patrick's College, Manly. John Fletcher (ACR 54(1977), pp 169-181) has outlined the history of the library and he refers to the significant contributions of Ullathorne. A careful search of the library brought to light 16 books with Ullathorne's inscription on them. Fletcher has discovered several more purchased by Ullathorne. At least three more are held in the Sisters of Charity Archives in Sydney.

\textsuperscript{117} In the light of subsequent events in Hobart, this volume carries the interesting inscription "James Hackett's gift to the Rt. Rev. W.".
left in Australia, I picked up a great rarity in a shop in Dame Street...They cost me but half a crown a volume".118

At first Ullathorne expected to have to pay his own fare to New Holland, but "a dispatch had come from the Governor of New South Wales...which changed my position". The Governor, Sir Richard Bourke, had asked for "a Catholic ecclesiastic...invested with authority" to settle the disputes that centered around Father Therry.119 Morris proposed to the government that Ullathorne be made Vicar General. This was accepted by the Colonial Office and he was duly appointed.

In consequence of the strong representation which has been made to me by the Revd. Dr. Morris...in favor of the Revd. William Ullathorne, I have deemed it expedient...to appoint, at once, the Clergyman above named to the Roman Catholic Establishment at New South Wales. Mr Ullathorne will proceed to the Colony in the character of "Vicar General" upon a salary of two hundred per annum...Mr Ullathorne has received the usual sum of one hundred and fifty pounds to defray the expenses of his passage.120

Thus Governor Darling's wish at the time of Therry's sacking in 1825 was fulfilled. He had told the Colonial Office: "I would beg...that, in selecting a Catholic priest for this Colony, it is

----

118. Autobiography, p 105. Fletcher (art. cit.) has identified this shop as Grant and Bolton's. Ullathorne describes in the Autobiography (pp 105-106) how his Irish publisher and friend Richard Coyne tried to persuade him to surrender them to him. These priceless books are still in Saint Patrick's College Library.


120. Goderich to Bourke, 7 September 1832. HRA, Series I, Vol 16, p 727.
most important that an Englishman should have the preference, the Catholics here being, I believe, nearly all Irish".121 Thus a pattern was set of English ecclesiastical government of Irish Australians that was to last - at least in Sydney - until the appointment of Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran in 1884.

The question of the leadership of the Catholic Church in New Holland was kept before the Colonial Office by Bourke's dispatch of 2 April 1832. This reported the appropriation of revenues by the Legislative Council. In the dispatch Bourke supported a resolution of the Council calling for the appointment of two additional Catholic chaplains.122

In a letter to Birdsall on 31 August 1832 Ullathorne clearly refers to Bourke's 2 April dispatch:

Last week...documents arrived from Sydney of a very liberal character urging further religious assistance and support for the education of Catholics in the Colony..(the government) is prepared to do everything for the C. religion but they must have some person there in a superior capacity to put a stop to the dissensions raging among the clergy there".123

121. Darling to Bathurst, 28 May 1827. HRA, Series I, Vol 12, p 544.

122. Bourke to Goderich, 2 April 1832. HRA, Series I, Vol 16, p 589. This dispatch took four and a half months - about 136 days of sailing - to reach London in the ship Dryade, departing Sydney on 11 April and arriving in the last week of August - a remarkably quick trip. See also Autobiography, p 53.

123. Ullathorne to Birdsall, 31 August 1832. DA H 468. This shows that Monsignor J.J. McGovern is incorrect when he asserts that there is "...no such specific dispatch as that mentioned by Dr. Ullathorne" (ACR 11(1934), p 299). This is not the only time
Ullathorne received his letter of appointment as Vicar General and faculties from Bishop Morris on 7 September 1832. Iironically, both the letter of appointment and the faculty sheet were counter-signed by his old antagonist at Ampleforth, Father Edward Clifford. The letter of appointment gave Ullathorne authority to act as Vicar General with the right to grant faculties to priests engaged in the work of the mission. The Vicar General's faculties were, by modern standards, limited, especially in view of the distance and time involved in communicating with Morris in Mauritius. He had faculties for all parochial duties, including the sacrament of confession. He could celebrate Mass twice in one day, although he was warned that this permission is "to be used only rarely if (and only) if there is a serious reason". His powers regarding marriages were limited. Given the chaotic state of marriage in New South Wales, this was soon to become a problem for the new Vicar General.

By the end of August 1832 he was ready to sail. But a last minute McGovern is incorrect when he impugns Ullathorne's memory. He also asserts that Ullathorne was mistaken when he asserts that Polding refused appointment as Vicar Apostolic of Mauritius. As O'Donoghue has shown (op. cit., p 13) Ullathorne was correct; Polding did turn down the mitre. McGovern does not hide the fact that he disliked Ullathorne.

124. Morris to Ullathorne, 7 September 1832. See BAA, B 108 and SAA, file Ullathorne.

125. Technically, he should have been designated a "Vicar Delegate" rather than "Vicar General" (See Woywood, S.: A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law. New York. 1943. Vol 2, p 587).
hitch occurred. He wrote to Birdsall announcing that all his arrangements were complete and he thought it proper that "I should ask and obtain your concurrence".126 Birdsall's reply is not extant, but it threw Ullathorne into a "feverous state of anxiety".127 Birdsall had either refused permission or expressed considerable annoyance at the presumption of Morris and the new Vicar General. A previous letter from the President to Morris had certainly indicated an implicit permission for Ullathorne to go. He says clearly: "If the Superior of Mr. Ullathorne...be willing to share him with your Lordship I shall not put any hinderance to the proposal".128

Birdsall's attitude is hard to understand, as he had consistently supported English Benedictine monks going overseas as missionaries. He was especially supportive of Polding when he left for Botany Bay. As we have seen, there was no love lost between Birdsall and Ullathorne; possibly he found the self-confident young man a little hard to take. How the issue was finally settled is not clear, but presumably permission was granted, for Ullathorne finally sailed from London for Australia on the Sir Thomas Munro on 18 September 1832.

126. Ullathorne to Birdsall, 31 August 1832. DA, H 468.
127. Ullathorne to Birdsall, 5 September 1832. DA, H 469.
CHAPTER TWO

A FALSE START
Ullathorne was not only a pivotal figure in the foundation of Catholicism in Australia; he was also the first to write its early history. In *The Catholic Mission in Australasia* he reported the popular version of the origin of the Australian church, current when he arrived in New South Wales in 1833.¹ Basic to this popular version of Catholic history is the myth of the religious persecution of the Irish convicts (most of whom were presented - inaccurately - as political prisoners) by English colonial administrators. Referring to the pre-1820 period Ullathorne writes:

Indeed, the Irish Catholic was often, at that time treated with extreme rigour. Clerical magistrates of another creed, awarded the scourge and darksome imprisonment for refusing to enter the Protestant churches, and to mingle in a worship which his conscience disallowed...On one occasion a priest was even required to lay his hand on the post at which some of his people were flogged, because they, not he, had risen in revolt to recover their freedom.²

This version of events was repeated by Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran in his *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*.³ Moran maintained that Irish convicts were "prisoners for political offences" and they were prevented from practising their religion

¹. First published in Liverpool in 1837. It was reprinted in Sydney in 1838. As well as a "history" of the Catholic church in Australia, the book contains an attack on the evils of transportation. Henceforth Ullathorne, *Mission* with page reference.


by being forced to attend the Protestant service. "Attendance at Protestant service or the lash was the rule strictly enforced for these poor Catholic exiles".\(^4\)

This anti-English theme was also taken up in the 1920s by Eris O'Brien in his *The Dawn of Catholicism in Australia* and *The Life of Archpriest J.J. Therry*.\(^5\) O'Brien was more significant as a historian than Moran, but he comes to substantially the same conclusion: Irish Catholics were the subject of persecution by the English colonial administrators, who were unalterably bigoted toward the church. James G. Murtagh claims that "Catholics, who were mainly Irish rebels and their descendants, formed a quarter of the population, but their religion was unrecognised and their spiritual needs unprovided for".\(^6\) However, as Patrick O'Farrell correctly points out, all religion was neglected during the first twenty five years, when the colony was struggling for survival. While I would not agree with O'Farrell that Australia was "the first genuinely post-Christian society", it is true that New South Wales was established at a time of religious decline and indifference in England, and that this spirit permeated the


\(^{5}\) For bibliographical references see *Introduction*, footnote 4.

early period of the colony's existence. I shall argue, however, that after 1815 concern with religion emerged as an important issue for the colonial administration.

The myth of persecution of Catholics has been critically examined by James Waldersee. He shows that there was very little difference between the behaviour of English and Irish convicts. Only a very small percentage of the Irish were in any sense political prisoners. This is confirmed by George Rude's study which shows that only about one in forty five of all transported convicts were political or social protesters. Certainly the number of Irish protesters was higher than the British, but they still only comprised an insignificant proportion. Further there is no evidence of a coherent pattern of persecution of Catholics, nor any specific intention to deny them their rights. Thus the views of Ullathorne, Moran, O'Brien and Murtagh need to be viewed critically.

The fact is that from 1815 onwards the Colonial Office took an increasing interest in religion in all British colonies, and New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land were no exceptions. In this

chapter I will argue firstly that the British government after 1815 was not opposed to sending Catholic chaplains to New Holland and providing them with some support if the priests chosen were suitable for the post. Certainly, the home government was not pro-Catholic, but neither was it anti-Catholic. Its approach was realistic and pragmatic. Priests, as Ullathorne later pointed out, could be used as "vigilant, zealous, disinterested police, added to the functions of pastor and overseer".\(^{10}\) Religion fulfilled the socially useful function of helping to control the lower orders and of working for their reform. Such functions were very important in a convict colony.

Secondly, I will argue that the first priests who ministered in Australia (O'Flynn, Therry, Coote, Power and Dowling in New South Wales and Conolly in Van Diemen's Land) neither had the opportunity, nor were equal to the task of founding a church. Several of them were effective as pastors in ministering to the needs of their communities, but lack of training and breadth of vision, personal idiosyncrasies, illness, loneliness, fractious Catholic laity and the pettiness of minor colonial officials prevented them from establishing anything permanent. Without a church structure their pastorate was ad hoc and piecemeal. It was not until the arrival of Ullathorne that a permanent and regular structure of ministry was established. The Vicar General had the

\(^{10}\) Ullathorne to Alexander McLeay (Colonial Secretary), 29 April, 1833. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2175.2.
support of both church and state and the personal talents to establish an institutional infrastructure to underpin this ministry.

The year 1815 was a pivotal one not only in European history but also in British colonial affairs. At the end of the Napoleonic wars a number of key strategic areas changed hands between the European powers. Britain emerged as a dominant influence with colonies reaching right around the globe. In a number of these colonies, Catholics constituted a majority of the population (for example in Lower Canada, Malta, Mauritius and the West Indian islands of Grenada, Trinidad and St Lucia). In several others, including New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, Catholics were a significant minority. Thus British colonial administrators, most of whom had grown up in a milieu that was at best unsympathetic to Catholicism, found themselves having to deal with the Roman Church.

In England the situation of Catholics had been gradually improving. The Relief Act of 1791 had granted a limited measure of freedom to them. From the 1790s onwards the Catholic question began to loom large in politics. In Ireland the question included both religious and political issues and it centered around the nature of the relationship between Ireland and England. Led by O'Connell from 1805, the majority of Irish Catholics demanded complete emancipation. English Catholics and the English Vicars
Apostolic, with the prominent exception of Bishop John Milner, were willing to compromise with the government. Their aim was to obtain liberation from the remaining penal laws.\textsuperscript{11} 

During and after the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars Catholicism came to be viewed in a more favorable light in England. The arrival of large numbers of emigre priests aroused considerable sympathy. The imprisonment of Pope Pius VII by Napoleon and the emergence of the emancipation question kept Catholicism before the literate English public. The personal relationship between Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1812-1822) and the papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Ercole Consalvi, meant that the United Kingdom and Rome maintained a diplomatic connection.\textsuperscript{12} Just before the opening of the Congress of Vienna, Consalvi visited London and was received at court.

The immediate context of British decision-making about the colonies was the domestic scene in England and Ireland. The Catholic question was central to British politics between the Napoleonic Wars and 1829. It made and unmade cabinets. While the Colonial Office was something of a backwater of the bureaucracy, it could not but be influenced by the importance of the Catholic question in domestic politics as it dealt with the position of Catholics


The period 1809 to 1829 saw the triumph of Irish Catholic popular politics, stirred and organised by Daniel O'Connell. A key factor in his eventual success was his ability to swing a large majority of the Irish clergy to his side. From 1809 onwards, all the Irish Catholic bishops were for emancipation, although some of them (such as Troy in Dublin) were inclined to the older style of subservience to the British. The Catholic clergy had rapidly become politically educated and radicalised. They were no longer content to keep a low profile. From 1810 Catholics in Ireland began to call for civic equality. For instance, they demanded that Catholic priests be allowed to officiate at Catholic funerals and that Catholic chaplains have the right to minister to Catholics in foundling homes and jails. I mention this because in New South Wales these issues became major points of contention between the Irish priest Father Therry and colonial officials.

The new assertiveness of Irish Catholics led to other results that effected Australia. In Cork, Father John England had established the idea that there should be ministerial care for Catholic convicts before they began the voyage to Australia.

All of this was of obvious concern to the British government. As a way of trying to ensure the loyalty of the clergy throughout the empire, it became common for the Colonial Office to insist on the appointment of English priests as bishops and superiors where
there was a significant number of Catholics. This was operative as early as 1818, when negotiations were under way for the appointment of a Vicar Apostolic in Mauritius. Bishop William Poynter, the London Vicar Apostolic, told Edward Bede Slater, the English monk who was to be appointed to Mauritius: "The minister proposed this rule that Catholics in our colonies should be ruled in spiritual affairs by an ecclesiastical superior who is a British subject". Poynter indicated that the Colonial Office was ambivalent about the appointment of Irish priests to the colonies and emphasised that they would not be considered for colonial bishoprics. Ullathorne's own appointment is a later example of this same rule in operation: the young English priest was appointed to take charge of a mission staffed entirely by Irish secular clergy.

This does not indicate that after 1815 British governments were somehow "pro-Catholic". They were not. But at the level of high policy the drift was toward the abandonment of all forms of discrimination against the Catholic Church. However, it is easy for the historian to emphasise this and to neglect the petty anti-Catholic tyranny of minor officials and bureaucrats at the local level. It was with these people that Irish Catholic priests and people had to deal, and it was at this level that the

conviction of persecution entered into popular history.

External political realities, especially Irish agitation for reform, provided the motive force for the major actors to co-operate in establishing a Catholic institutional structure in New Holland (and elsewhere in the Empire). There were three key participants in this process: the Colonial Office, the Roman Congregation of Propaganda Fide and Bishop William Poynter. A paradoxical situation developed: while Catholic emancipation was still being debated at home, the Colonial Office was increasingly liberal in its treatment of Catholics abroad, even to the extent of financial assistance to pay clergy, build churches and establish schools.

What policy did the Colonial Office adopt? As J.J. Eddy remarks, it is impossible to speak of an official "policy". General principles, however, can be discerned. During the tenure of Lord Bathurst as Colonial Secretary (1812-1827) there was certainly a bias in favour of the Established Church. Bathurst was a High Church Tory and he had an abiding interest in ecclesiastical affairs. As Helen T. Manning says: "He was a devout member of the Church of England, a leader among the laity of the High Church party and an enthusiastic supporter of the expansion of the

Anglican establishment in the colonial world. During his tenure as Secretary of State, bishops and leaders of the Anglican Church had ex officio seats on the colonial legislatures or councils. Senior clergy of the other denominations did not. In New South Wales he supported the establishment of the Church and Schools Lands Corporation (1825).

Bathurst was particularly opposed to Methodists and sectarians. His attitude to Catholicism is more difficult to characterise. After the Napoleonic Wars complex negotiations were carried on between the Colonial Office and the Roman Curia concerning the government of the Catholic Church in many of the colonies. The key figure linking Rome and the Colonial Office was the Catholic Vicar Apostolic of London, Bishop William Poynter. In negotiations with him Bathurst manifested considerable friendliness toward Catholicism. In practice, religious toleration existed in many places (from 1820 onwards this included New South Wales) and small stipends (always considerably less than that paid to the clergy of the Established Church) were available for Catholic priests.


16. Manning, (op. cit., pp 235-242) details the negotiations concerning the appointment of Catholic bishops in Lower and Upper Canada. WDA contains a large amount of material concerning these negotiations.
Throughout the decade 1820-1830 the situation gradually changed, so that by that by the early 1830s it was clear that the principal denominations would be treated equally. James Stephen - at the time legal counsel to the Colonial Office - wrote in 1829: "the state of the world is very unfavorable to the maintenance of Exclusive Ecclesiastical pretensions and it is evident that the exclusive privileges of the English Church ...cannot be supported - except at the expense of great unpopularity".17 Stephen was also critical of the "high pretensions of the Episcopal clergy" and he made it clear that in the colonies there was to be not only religious freedom, but also a participation by the other churches "in the endowments of the Crown". Stephen insisted on toleration and equality for all Christians and the abolition of legal disabilities based on creed.18 This is significant for it shows that once Bathurst left, there was no long-term support in the Colonial Office for the views of the High Anglicans in New South Wales nor for the Church and Schools Corporation.

This does not mean that there were no problems in granting aid to the Catholic Church and participating in the appointment of its clergy. In Canada and Malta serious legal difficulties emerged. In colonies such as New South Wales, where there was no tradition of a Roman Catholic establishment, the attitude of the government


toward Catholicism tended to be pragmatic from the first. After 1815 there was a tacit recognition that Catholicism was the religion of the majority of the Irish convicts and that this should be respected. There was a genuine willingness to negotiate with Poynter, under whose jurisdiction New Holland originally came.

To understand the utter pragmatism of the government in relation to religion in Australia, it is useful to consider the interaction of Bathurst and Poynter. To place this material in perspective it is necessary to set out the relative roles of the Colonial Office and the London Vicar Apostolic with reference to Catholics overseas. As Britain began to deal with the question of Catholic emancipation, Ireland and the post-war problems of the colonies, it became increasingly important to establish contact with the Roman Curia. The London Vicar was the natural link. As a Vicar Apostolic, Poynter was legally dependent on Rome. Thus the Colonial Office was in the ironic situation of dealing with a cleric who represented the papacy directly.

Poynter became London Vicar Apostolic in May 1812. He died in 1827, and was succeeded by his co-adjutor, Bishop James Yorke

---

19. As a Vicar Apostolic Poynter only had delegated jurisdiction. If he had been a residential bishop his jurisdiction would have been ordinary - that is he would have ruled a diocese in his own right. But England was still considered "missionary territory" and was thus directly subject to the Propaganda Congregation. The hierarchy was re-established in England in 1850.
Bramston. Thus Poynter's administration spans the vital period when Catholic emancipation was being seriously debated. As London Vicar he held faculties for all Catholics in the Empire who were not already subject to an ecclesiastical superior. This left him with a vast jurisdiction and no resources! Nevertheless, he was the first London Vicar who tried to confront the problems of colonial Catholics systematically.

His policy was one of co-operation with the Colonial Office for he realised that it was only by working with the bureaucrats that permission and support could be obtained to place clergy in the colonies. This willingness to co-operate with the government led Bishop John Milner (Vicar Apostolic of the Midlands) to call Poynter a "tame Spaniel", and later historians (such as O'Brien) to see him as a "stooge" of the British government.

These are unfair judgments. Poynter saw his role as that of an intermediary between Propaganda and the Colonial Office, but the inaction of both these bodies sometimes forced him to assume the

20. For biographical details see Gillow, BDEC, Vol IV, pp 358-361.

21. The London Vicar had held faculties for Catholics in the Empire, including North America, since 1688 (Ellis, John T.: Documents of American Catholic History. Chicago. 1967. Vol I, pp 127-128). These faculties were renewed and clarified in a Decree of Propaganda (11 December 1812) which granted Poynter jurisdiction over Catholics in America and elsewhere in the British empire where there was no properly constituted ecclesiastical authority (Propaganda (Monsignor Quarantotti) to Poynter, 11 December 1812. WDA, Poynter Papers, Propaganda, I C).
responsibility for making his own decisions. He had to satisfy both these authorities, and that was often difficult. His chief problem was that, because of lack of resources in his own Vicariate, he had to try to persuade others to carry out these decisions.

In the latter part of 1817 and throughout 1818 Poynter was engaged in negotiations concerning the appointment of Catholic bishops in several British colonies. Cardinal Lorenzo Litta of Propaganda had written to him in June 1817 seeking advice on episcopal appointments in the British West Indies, India and Mauritius.22 The Cardinal asked for the names of possible candidates, for suggestions concerning the extent of the new episcopal jurisdictions and for advice concerning the attitude of the British government. These negotiations were carried through to their conclusion by Poynter, the Colonial Office and Propaganda. It was presupposed in the negotiations that the Colonial Office had the right to intervene in the appointment of Catholic bishops. Thus the privilege granted to Catholic rulers was now extended to the Protestant government of the United Kingdom.

The foundation of Australian Catholicism fits into this wider picture, which has so far been neglected by Australian Catholic historians. Throughout the British empire church and state were

beginning to work together. The aim of the church was to expand its mission and to regularise church affairs in the far-flung new world. The papacy increasingly took control of missionary initiatives and encouraged the centralising tendencies that became strong in Catholicism after 1815. Missionary expansion and the development of ultramontanism were intimately interconnected. The pragmatic purpose of the British government was clear: to maintain order in society and to re-enforce social cohesion.

During the negotiations about bishops for the colonies, a sideshow had developed. This centered around the Irish priest, Jeremiah Francis O'Flynn. O'Flynn simply pre-empted the London discussions by arriving in New South Wales on 9 November 1817, with permission from neither the Colonial Office nor Poynter. He had been appointed a Prefect Apostolic by Propaganda. Rome had been influenced by the anti-vetoist Irish Franciscan, Father Richard Hayes, whose brother Michael was an emancipist in Sydney. (The "veto" referred to here was the proposal that the British government have the right to turn down unacceptable candidates nominated for Irish Catholic dioceses). The appointment of O'Flynn as Prefect Apostolic was a direct insult to Poynter (who was pro-veto) and it was the work of those in the Roman Curia

23. The details of the O'Flynn affair can be found in my article "Jeremiah O'Flynn. Persecuted Hero or Vagus?". ACR 63(1986), pp 87-96 and 179-194.

24. A Prefect Apostolic has the same function as a Vicar Apostolic except that he is not ordained as a bishop.
sympathetic to the anti-vetoist party.

O'Flynn was the first of number of priests to came to Australia between 1815 and 1833 who were incapable of establishing the foundations of an institutional church. The most they could offer was an ad hoc ministry. O'Flynn's whole career showed him to be a "vagus", a wandering cleric, living off his wits. The Catholic community in New South Wales would have to wait for both church and state to realise the need for a cleric in Australia vested with sufficient authority, and endowed with sufficient ability, to get the situation under control. It was not until Ullathorne arrived in 1833 that anything permanent was established.

The British government was not adverse to some Catholic clergy going to New South Wales. That had already been made clear. Father John England (who worked with convicts in Cork before they left for Australia) wrote to Sir Henry Parnell about the need for Catholic chaplains in the penal colony. Parnell replied that the Colonial Office assured me that no difficulty would be placed in the way of any person going out in that character, provided that he complied with the regulations which are required from anyone who wishes to go to that settlement...the colonial department will always give permission to anyone to go to Botany Bay, upon his producing a certificate of his character being correct, etc - Government will not, however, grant a free passage.25

25. England to Parnell, 3 and 17 June 1816 and Parnell to England, 11 and 19 June 1816. In the wake of the O'Flynn affair in New South Wales, England published his correspondence with Parnell in the Cork Mercantile Chronicle. It was subsequently
O'Flynn arrived in Sydney on 9 November 1817. Governor Macquarie was suspicious of the priest and he told Bathurst that he considered him an impostor and that he was worried that "a designing, artful priest" could cause trouble among the Catholic convicts.26 Macquarie was also faced with a persistent clique (among whom Samuel Marsden was a key figure) who opposed his emancipist policies. Approval for an Irish popish missionary would have made the Governor's position even more difficult. Nevertheless O'Flynn began a discreet ministry among the more committed Catholics.

Despite orders to quit the colony, and promises to do so, O'Flynn was still in Sydney in May 1818. From Macquarie's perspective, resistance to the general orders of the colony would have been more important than the dangers of popery. Macquarie was cautious about the arrival of sectarian preachers of any sort. This caution was not based on religious grounds, but on the need for public order. The small colonial population could not accommodate sectarian strife. It is quite clear that Macquarie wanted to get rid of O'Flynn, not specifically because he was a Catholic, but because he had arrived in an unauthorised way, and because the governor foresaw trouble arising from his presence in the colony. Macquarie invited O'Flynn to leave when the Duke of Wellington reprinted in the Orthodox Journal 7(1819), pp 30-41. For John England see Guilday, Peter: The Life and Times of John England, First Bishop of Charleston (1786-1842). New York. 1927. 2 Vols.

(the ship on which he had arrived) sailed. But the priest "retired to some skulking place in the country where he could not be found". He emerged full of apologies to the Governor. Macquarie was reluctant to resort to forceful measures, but ships came and went in the ensuing months and the priest continued his activities. Eventually, on 20 May 1818 the Governor was forced to deport O'Flynn.

What was the result of O'Flynn's Australian adventure? In the short term, he achieved very little. Bathurst approved of the deportation. But the fiasco did have two long-term effects. It put pressure on both Bathurst and Poynter to act more quickly with regard to the needs of Catholics in New Holland. Secondly, his expulsion brought the state of Catholics in the Antipodes before the literate public.

In February 1819 O'Flynn's abortive mission was mentioned in the House of Commons. Thus some public interest in the Catholics of New South Wales was generated. The debate arose on a motion before the House concerning the committee of inquiry into the question of transportation. In the course of his speech Henry Grey Bennet referred to the expulsion of O'Flynn who, he claimed,

"had gone from house to house, and exerted himself in the most laudable manner in promoting the comfort and correcting the morals of the people". While Bennet assured members that he was no friend of the Catholic religion, he was equally certain that "there was no doubt that good morals under forty religions was better than immorality under one". The source of Bennet's information about O'Flynn was none other than Marsden! The parson was prepared to use any means to attack Macquarie, even to the extent of appearing to support popery. O'Flynn had now become part of the agitation that followed the appointment of John Thomas Bigge as Commissioner of Inquiry (September 1818).

Challenged by Bennet, the Undersecretary of State for Colonies, Henry Goulburn, replied that "measures were about to be adopted", in conjunction with the Catholic hierarchy, whereby priests would be sent to New South Wales. The issue was reported in The Times and quickly summarised for Catholic consumption in the Orthodox Journal.30 The O'Flynn affair was 'news' in Ireland. All this rendered more urgent the discussions already under way for the appointment of priests to New South Wales. Bishop Milner commented: "Though Mr Flynn has failed in his heroical undertaking, I hope he has prepared the way for some one or more good Irish missionaries to succour the poor souls in the other hemis-

30. Orthodox Journal 7/69(1819), pp 83-84.
phere". Here Milner had put his finger on the key issue. The O'Flynn affair had highlighted the lack of Catholic clergy in New South Wales and had forced the Colonial Office and Poynter to act quickly.

Complex negotiations between Rome, London and Poynter had been under way before the O'Flynn affair concerning the appointment of a Vicar Apostolic at the Cape of Good Hope and Mauritius. The Vicariate had been entrusted to the English Benedictine Congregation and Edward Bede Slater was appointed Vicar Apostolic on 29 June 1818. Despite the resistance of Propaganda, the British government was determined that Mauritius would be the centre of Slater's vicariate, so that the French clergy and laity there would be under the control of an English bishop. Rome wanted Slater to reside at the Cape and for Mauritius to remain under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Paris.

Suddenly New South Wales appeared in these protracted negotiations. The suggestion did not come from the Church but from Bathurst. He wanted Australia to be subject to Slater's jurisdict-

31. Milner to Richard Coyne (Dublin publisher and bookseller) 22 February 1819. DAA, 30/4 (46).

32. Poynter to Propaganda, 18 December 1818. WDA, Poynter Papers, and Poynter to Gradwell, 20 December 1818. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 3.
tion in Mauritius.\(^{33}\) Again a long and complex negotiation ensued before the matter was settled. The government took the initiative in asking for a regularisation of Australia's ecclesiastical situation. This was motivated by the Colonial Office's determination that the O'Flynn affair would not be repeated. London had been pressurised by the parliamentary discussion of O'Flynn's deportation, but it also wanted to achieve order in colonial church affairs. This initiative has been neglected by historians of Australian Catholicism. The real problem was not the supposed anti-Catholicism of the British government, but the difficulty of getting clergy to volunteer for the mission. As O'Farrell points out it was often "the clerical leftovers" who put themselves forward for ministry in Australia.\(^ {34}\) Thus the church was unable to put down firm foundations. The problem of shortage of capable clergy was to continue until it was resolved by the recruiting drive of Ullathorne in Europe in the late 1830s.

Rome eventually gave way before the insistence of the British government and Mauritius was made the centre of the new Vicariate. It was to consist of the Cape of Good Hope, Madagascar, Mauritius and the East African coast. There was still no mention of New Holland.

\(^{33}\) Poynter to Gradwell, 14 November 1818. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 3. See also Frances O'Donoghue in "Australia's Connection with Mauritius" in ACR 53(1976), pp 70-80.

\(^{34}\) O'Farrell, op. cit., p 17.
The inclusion of Australia was the next step in the formation of Slater's vast vicariate. He was ready to accept the additional territory. Poynter communicated this to Rome and Slater was confident of "an extension of his powers to New South Wales".35 If the jurisdiction was not given to Slater, Poynter undertook to try to find "one or two proper persons...[to be] sent thither".36 After considerable opposition Propaganda approved the extension on 5 April. Cardinal Fontana informed Slater of this in a letter of 10 April.37 The problem had been Propaganda's justifiable fear that Slater was undertaking too much.

The letters of Poynter throughout the first part of 1819 reflect the pressure of the Colonial Office on him. Since August 1818 he had been in correspondence with Archbishop Troy of Dublin concerning the recruitment of priests for New South Wales. Troy informed him that a Reverend Mr Nowlan was ready to go and accordingly Poynter recommended him. Nowlan, however, disappeared as quickly as he had appeared.38 The issue was discussed again in December, but neither Troy nor Poynter had priests who were

35. Poynter to Gradwell, 3 February 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 3.
36. Poynter to Gradwell 19 February 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 3.
37. Gradwell's Diary, 5 April 1818. WDA, Gradwell Diary E 7. Propaganda (Fontana) to Slater, 10 April 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, Propaganda, I C.
38. Troy to Poynter, 3 August 1818 and Poynter to Troy, 19 August 1818. WDA, Poynter Papers, II C vi - Irish Bishops.
willing to volunteer.\textsuperscript{39} The arrival of Slater in London in February 1819 revived the issue. Poynter commented: "I am anxious to find some clergymen to go (to New South Wales), we have none here certainly - Dr Troy tells me he has none fit and ready to go".\textsuperscript{40}

The Colonial Office offered a "considerable portion of land" for the support of missionaries in New South Wales if the colony was placed under the jurisdiction of an English bishop. Thus it is clear that the government was willing to support priests in New South Wales, but it was determined that ecclesiastical leadership be in the hands of an Englishman. Poynter was unequivocal on this: "Lord Bathurst is desirous that the priests in the various colonies, if they cannot at first be all English, or be at least under the jurisdiction of an English bishop, on this he is very strong" (sic). Thus the government and Poynter wanted New Holland placed under the jurisdiction of Slater. Slater was talking about establishing a seminary to supply priests for the Mauritius, New South Wales and the "other islands in the Indian seas".\textsuperscript{41}

By early May, Slater was in Ireland "priest hunting for New South

\textsuperscript{39} Poynter to Troy, 17 December 1818 and Troy to Poynter, 24 December 1818. WDA, Poynter Papers, II C vi - Irish Bishops.

\textsuperscript{40} Poynter to Gradwell, 19 February 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 30.

\textsuperscript{41} Poynter to Gradwell, Maundy Thursday 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 30.
Wales". He told Poynter that he had found three or four with whom he was satisfied, including one very respectable clergyman who had "spent ten years in Botany Bay".\(^{42}\) This probably refers to Father James Dixon who had been transported to New South Wales in 1800 and who had exercised a brief official ministry between 1803 and 1804. Slater eventually succeeded in obtaining definite commitments from two Irish priests for service in New Holland: Fathers Philip Conolly and John Joseph Therry. He also obtained a priest for the Cape, Father Patrick Scully. He had commitments from two of his fellow Benedictines as well.\(^{42}\) Slater left for his vicariate in late September 1819, arriving in Cape Town on 1 January 1820.\(^{43}\)

Scully remained at the Cape as pastor and Slater sailed on to Mauritius. At both the Cape and Mauritius things went from bad to worse. Slater was simply too busy dealing with his own problems to worry about far away New Holland. Thus the two priests there were left largely to their own resources. They were often forced by default to work through Poynter and later Bramston. There were always long delays before Slater responded to their letters and many requests remained unanswered.

\(^{42}\) Poynter to Gradwell, 4 May 1819. WDA, Poynter Papers, B 30.

\(^{42}\) See Birt, I, p 21.

Before turning to the ministry of the first priests, I want to place the negotiations leading to the sending of clergy to Australia within a larger historical framework. Firstly, it is clear that the Catholic Church and the English state had evolved a unique working relationship. This was not state support for the church envisaged in the papal doctrine of church-state relations. Nor was it the strict separation of the two, insisted on by the constitution of the United States. Rather it was a realistic recognition by the Colonial Office that the British government had a role to play in the regularisation of the position of Catholics in the colonies.

As I have already indicated, New South Wales was one of a number of colonies where there was a majority or a large minority of Catholics. Given the erastian background of the British government and the growing evangelical sense that religion was an integral part of public morality, it was natural for the officials of the Colonial Office to try to regularise situations where there were large numbers of Catholics. Strategic considerations and questions of public order were also integral to British attitudes. The Colonial Office (whose full title until 1854 was the Department of the Principal Secretary of State for War and the Colonies) wanted to make sure of the loyalty of colonial Catholics through the appointment of a loyal local hierarchy, especially in strategic places like Mauritius, Malta, Lower Canada and even in the "thief colony" of New South Wales.
Secondly, while the aim of the Colonial Office was common to all the colonies, the differences between them determined different approaches. For example, the situation in French Canada (partly governed by treaty provisions) was vastly different from that of New South Wales. The situation in the strategic Catholic island of Malta was different from the situation of Catholic free settlers in Upper Canada. The government adapted its solutions to each place. Also Australia needs to be seen in perspective: in strategic and geographic terms it was remote. Its population was small and Catholics were only a minority in a colony that was largely convict. But for the O'Flynn fiasco, it would have been a minor priority for the Colonial Office, Poynter and Propaganda.

During the two decades spanning 1820 to 1840 the Catholic Church in Australia gained increasing freedom and growing state support. The earlier governors (Macquarie, Brisbane, Darling and Arthur) attempted to limit and direct the ministries of Therry and Conolly. In Therry's case they were largely unsuccessful. The attitude of the governors represented the erastian Tory approach that the church was an instrument of the state. An example of this is the set of instructions presented by Macquarie to Conolly and Therry soon after their arrival.44 The price of state support was a degree of state direction. While Catholicism was tolerated, it was certainly not promoted. The patronage of the Governors of

New South Wales and Lieutenant-Governors of Van Diemen's Land was reserved for the Church of England. The smaller stipends granted to the Catholic chaplains indicated their place: they were not the equals of the clergy of the Established Church. Conolly understood the arrangement and largely acquiesced in it. Therry never accepted it and was determined to fight.

Both men also encountered minor officials in the colonies who were bigoted and resented the presence of Irish 'popish' priests. For instance, they were excluded from the orphan schools and Catholic convicts on assignment or in chain-gangs were sometimes prevented from attending mass. As they tried to deal with these problems the priests constantly appealed to the fact that they had the approval of the home government, and they used this as a claim to the support of the governors and others in authority in the colonies.

The Tory attitude began to disappear with the arrival of Sir Richard Bourke in New South Wales in 1832. He increased state support for Catholicism and allowed Ullathorne far more latitude in running the church, while, at the same time, retaining supervision over issues which concerned both state and church, such as marriage and ministry to the convicts. But the pattern had changed in favour of parity between the Anglican church and the other churches.

My second major contention in this chapter is that, whatever their other strengths, Therry particularly, and Conolly to a lesser extent, failed to lay firm foundations for the structure of the church. This is contrary to the view of O'Brien who argued that Therry was the founder of the Australian Catholic Church. But when Ullathorne arrived in 1833 the community was sharply divided, either for or against Therry. Father Daniel Power (Therry's successor in the official chaplaincy) had been driven to an early grave and Father Christopher Vincent Dowling (Power's successor) had retired sick to the Hunter region. All that existed was the shell of a large church near Hyde Park. Therry was far too divisive a person to be the "founder" of a church in any real sense. Part of the problem lay in Therry's background and training.

As I have already noted the first two decades of the 19th century were periods of transition for the Catholic clergy of the English speaking world. Up until about 1820 seminary training in Ireland was disorganised. It was not until after the Napoleonic wars that a full classical, arts and divinity course was taken by most ordinandi. Personal and spiritual formation gradually became increasingly strict. Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth was the

46. O'Brien, Therry, passim.
centre of this renewal of the Irish clergy. Therry and Conolly, however, were examples of "pre-professional" priests - men trained and ordained just before the beginning of the new era. As I emphasised in the previous chapter, Ullathorne, who was sixteen years younger than Therry, was an example of the "professional" clergy. The two Irish priests, however, had been trained in the first two decades of the 19th century.

Until the French Revolution Irish clergy were formed in continental seminaries. As in the case of the English Benedictines, these seminaries were forced to close after the outbreak of the Revolution (although the Irish seminary in Lisbon remained open throughout the revolutionary period). Various ad hoc arrangements were made in Ireland and the French influence on seminary formation remained strong. Several of the early professors at Maynooth, for instance, were Frenchmen. However, lack of resources sometimes meant poorly educated students. A rapidly increasing population led to an acute shortage of priests at the beginning of the 19th century and this put pressure on the seminaries to ordain candidates who were not suitable, or those who had not completed the course. Also the 'Maynooth priest' was widely criticised as more involved in politics and more


rigorist in moral theology.\footnote{49. See Corish, Patrick: The Irish Catholic Experience. A Historical Survey. Dublin. 1985. pp 160-163 especially p 162.} One of the effects of the penal laws in Ireland had been the breakdown of episcopal authority. Local congregations, often led by their clergy, resisted the centralising authority of bishops. Priests were sometimes fractious and this resulted in "damaging and divisive internal disputes".\footnote{50. Conolly, op. cit., p 69.} They also participated in many lay activities.\footnote{51. Conolly, op. cit., pp 65-67.}

In the light of this Therry emerges as a fairly typical Irish priest of the early decades of the 19th century. Throughout his life he was difficult and opposed to all authority. In New South Wales he was supported by a clique of laity. He was also involved in lay activities such as land speculation. At the same time his personal life was governed by a Jansenistic moral code. His intellectual and spiritual formation seems to have been superficial. He had attended Saint Patrick's College, Carlow and was ordained "before completing his course of studies".\footnote{52. O Brien, Therry, p 13.} This may help to explain Ullathorne's supercilious, but probably accurate comment that Therry

was neither a preacher nor a man of business...He could not put together two ideas on any subject, had a quite limited education, and yet continued to exercise his singular influence on public opinion.\footnote{53. Autobiography, p 62.}
Therry and Conolly had been recruited for Australia by mid-1819, but it was 5 December 1819 before they sailed from Cork on the ship Janus.\textsuperscript{54} It carried 105 female convicts and 26 children. The women were systematically prostituted on the way out by both officers and crew. This was a common problem on female transports and both priests gave evidence to the bench of magistrates which investigated the Janus.\textsuperscript{55}

Therry dominated Catholicism in New South Wales for thirteen years from 1820. Much of the responsibility for the lack of firm foundations must be laid at his door. A lot of his energy went into maintaining his own position. His dismissal from the official chaplaincy by Governor Darling was a turning point; he claimed that it was not just a personal attack on him, but on the freedom of the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{56} The dismissal was the culmination of the struggle between the priest and Darling concerning marriage regulations, the priest's right of access to the orphan schools and the question of government grants for the building of the Catholic chapel. Therry was impetuous and almost impossible to deal with – as successive bishops later discovered. Darling, on the other hand, was a Tory and a strong supporter of the

\textsuperscript{54} Conolly's letters to Therry during this period are preserved in the Therry papers at ML MSS 1810/52.


\textsuperscript{56} O'Brien, Therry, p 76.
Established Church, but he was also willing to carry out the instructions of the home government, which included maintaining a Catholic convict chaplain.

Despite the cries of "persecution" by contemporaries and Catholic historians, Darling was probably right in sacking Therry. In March 1830, writing to report the death of Father Daniel Power, Therry's successor, Darling advised the Colonial Office:

In selecting individuals for the Situations in question (the Catholic chaplaincy), I would take leave to suggest that the Principal Person should be capable of asserting and supporting the rights (if I may so term it) of his Situation; otherwise Mr. Therry will assert the same independence.\(^{57}\)

Darling's distaste for Therry, however, did not prevent his asking for two Catholic clergymen, "it being quite impossible that any one person can discharge the duties, which the Roman Catholic clergy have to perform in this colony".

Power had arrived in December 1828 to take over the chaplaincy.\(^{58}\) He made it his business to co-operate with the Governor and Darling consistently supported the priest in his ministry. Power also identified with the non-emancipist elements in colonial society. This put him in conflict with Therry. After the death of Power (14 March 1830), Father Christopher Vincent Dowling was appointed official chaplain and the Secretary of State told

\(^{57}\) Darling to Murray, 16 March 1830. HRA, Series I, Vol 15, pp 382-383.

Darling that he hoped that he might be "capable of contending successfully against Mr. Therry". But Dowling was also quickly defeated by the Therry clique and retired sick to the Hunter Valley region.

Waldensee has shown the malicious nature of the attacks on Power and later on Dowling by the group of Catholics who supported Therry. There is no doubt that the priest either consciously or unconsciously orchestrated these attacks. Even Archdeacon Thomas Hobbes Scott had sought advice before he left England as to the best way to deal with Therry. Warned by his experience of him when he was secretary to Bigge, Scott asked for an interview with Poynter before leaving London concerning "the character of some of the Irish clergy of the Catholic persuasion there".

It first sight it could be argued that the pro-Therry clique may have been influenced by the 19th century idea of lay trusteeship, common especially in the United States. I do not think that this is correct. Catholic laity had been in Australia since 1788,


60. Waldensee, op. cit., pp 24-25.

61. George Silvertop to Poynter, 8 July 1824. WDA, Poynter Papers, VI C. Silvertop acted as an intermediary by introducing Scott to Poynter.

thirty two years before the arrival of permanent clergy. Virtually all of them had come as convicts. Their early years in New South Wales consisted largely in a struggle for survival. The background to early Australian Catholicism is totally different from that of the United States where Catholics came as free settlers to a country of ethnic diversity. As I will argue in a later chapter, even after emancipation few Australian Catholics did anything to set up the church on a permanent basis, and there is simply no evidence of a movement toward lay trusteeship prior to the arrival of Ullathorne and Polding. The pro-Therry clique was precisely that: a group of supporters of the priest against Darling and those who were perceived to be the Governor's minions — especially Power and Dowling. The pro-Therry laity never claimed any rights over church property. They would have been given short shrift by Therry if they had! Their aim was simply to support their priestly hero.

In Therry's defence it must be said that he was successful in his ministry, especially to convicts and to the most deprived. He had to confront the bigotry of petty colonial officials. This is illustrated by their consistent refusal to allow him access to orphans of Catholic parentage held in the Protestant run orphan school. This was still a problem under Governor Gipps: in March 1839 Ullathorne was complaining that Catholic children were being sent to the Protestant orphanage by the supervisor of the

63. O'Brien, Therry, pp 89, 92-95.
Parramatta Female Factory (George Bell).\(^6\) A grant had been made under Bourke to support a Catholic orphan school, but due to what Ullathorne described as "the exceeding scantiness of the grant", the Catholics were having difficulty paying for the children who had been admitted.

The fact that Therry indefatigable in his ministry and unfailing-ly kind to the underdog meant that he forged strong links with ordinary Irish Catholics. There can be no doubt about the commitment of Therry to the struggle for justice for Catholics, nor about the difficulty he faced in his first years in the colony when he had to minister to a congregation spread over such a vast area. The problem with him lies in the ad hoc nature of so much that he did and in his inability to compromise. Thus, as we shall see in the next chapter, when Ullathorne arrived he was faced with cliques for and against Therry.\(^6\)

While much has been said about Therry, Conolly has been largely neglected by historians. It is only recently that some attention has been paid to the priest.\(^6\) The fact that he has been ignored

\(^{64}\) Ullathorne to Colonial Secretary 8 March 1839. SCA H 301/47-51.

\(^{65}\) Autobiography, p 61.

is largely due to Ullathorne. The Vicar General also played a major part in Conolly's suspension from priestly functions in 1836. In the Autobiography, the Report to Propaganda and The Catholic Mission in Australasia, Ullathorne described Conolly as severe, negligent and often in the company of Protestants.\textsuperscript{67} He told the Roman Congregation of Propaganda in his Report in 1837 that when he visited Hobart in 1833:

Religion was in a state of complete decline: the sick were rarely visited, and only when 'in extremis'. Two or three families only frequented the Sacraments; the poor were treated with such harshness that they dared not approach their pastor. Father Conolly spent most of his time in the society of Protestants, and especially with two Protestant ministers who were notorious drunkards.

Aside from the incorrect statement about "ministers" who were drunkards (Conolly only had one minister friend - Reverend Robert Knopwood, an Anglican - and the evidence about his drinking habits is ambivalent), this is a unfair and biased treatment of Conolly's isolated and difficult ministry in Van Diemen's Land. I will describe the priest's ministry in some detail, firstly to show the injustice of Ullathorne's judgement of Conolly and secondly because his career has been largely neglected by Catholic historians. It is only by seeing the full story that the

\textsuperscript{67} Autobiography, pp 57-59; Catholic Mission, pp 1-11; the Report to Propaganda was translated into Italian in Rome by Father Bernard Collier. There is a printed copy in DA.
inaccuracy of Ullathorne's estimation of the priest can be placed in perspective.

As Conolly was "absent on his annual visit to Launceston" when Ullathorne first arrived in Hobart in 1833, the Vicar General stayed with "Mr. Hackett, a distiller, a native of Cork, a man of influence and information in the town". No doubt much of this "information" concerned Conolly, for this same James Hackett was to be chairman of the lay Catholic committee which petitioned the London Vicar Bramston in a letter highly critical of Conolly, for additional clerical assistance, a need arising from "the supineness of the present incumbent".  

Ullathorne too readily believed the stories he heard about Conolly and left with a sad impression of affairs in Van Diemen's Land. His subsequent visits reinforced this opinion of Conolly. The Autobiography accuses him of personally alienating "a large plot of land granted by the government for a church" and is critical of him for not establishing a school. Ullathorne forgets that Therry could be accused of the same thing in Sydney. He also omits the fact that the Catholic Church had no legal status in the early 1820s; thus both priests held church land in

---

68. Hackett to Branscomb (sic), 8 February 1834. DA, Morris Papers, I 174. See also Birt, I, pp 95-96. N.B. Birt refers to Hackett as "Haskett".

69. Autobiography, p 58. See also Southerwood, Lonely Shepherd, pp 89-111.
their own names. Certainly, they should have set up trustees but Conolly was no better nor worse than Therry in this regard.

Conolly had some caustic comments to make on Ullathorne. He told Morris in Mauritius:

> Your Lordship will pardon me when I state that nothing surprised me more than the appointment of so young a man as Vicar General of New South Wales, unacquainted as he is with the habits and manners of the Irish...Many persons cannot make their confessions but in Irish. What can an English priest do in such cases? The appointment of a Vicar General without any report received from me, or any fault found with me, is what I have not been able to comprehend.70

Conolly's complaint about lack of consultation is justified, for he had been appointed superior of the Australian mission when sent out by Slater in 1819.71 This was a serious oversight on the part of Morris, but it was typical of the way in which Conolly continued to be treated by the Benedictines.

How are we to assess Ullathorne's criticisms of Conolly? Until recently the Irish missionary has had few defenders. O'Farrell, I think, gives an accurate summation of what happened. Ullathorne was young (he was 26), totally inexperienced, and "with little tolerance and unfamiliar with the problems of this difficult mission...(he) judged Conolly's performance promptly, fastidiously and too harshly".72 Ullathorne was obviously taken in by

70. Conolly to Morris, 16 August 1833. DA, Morris Papers I 85.


Hackett and Conolly's other lay critics and he sided too readily with them.

To do justice to Conolly he must be seen within the context of early Van Diemen's Land. John Cullen has shown that he carried on an active and extensive ministry during his first decade in Hobart. Any estimation of his effectiveness must take into account the isolated and difficult nature of his task. Van Diemen's Land was governed as a penal colony and there were very few Catholics of the "respectable class". The vast majority were convicts or emancipists, who were not able or not disposed to support the church. Thus Conolly was dependent on his government salary. His stipend was less than half that paid to the clergy of the Church of England - and in 1833 it was half that paid to the new Vicar General. As early as February 1826 Governor Arthur informed Bathurst that Conolly's salary was "quite inadequate to his support". He added:

> The conduct of this gentleman was very favourably spoken of by my predecessor, and...he has always merited my approbation, and I do not hesitate to inform your Lordship, that, in my opinion, it would not be possible for any person to perform the duties required by his office, which in a Protestant community are often of a delicate nature, with more satisfaction to the government.

---

73. Cullen, op. cit., p 54.

74. In 1834 the Church of England clergy received 250 pounds per annum plus rents or glebe. Conolly was still receiving 100 pounds. See Barrett, W.R.: History of the Church of England in Tasmania. Hobart. 1942. pp 4-5.

75. Arthur to Bathurst, 1 February 1826. HRA, Series III, Vol 5, p 93.
The request for an increase met with a terse refusal, despite the fact that six months earlier the Colonial Office had informed Arthur that "the manner in which Mr. Conolly appears to have discharged his duties, has deservedly received your countenance and support". Arthur's praise would not have been easily earned, so Conolly's ministry must have been effective from the government's perspective. The Colonial Office bureaucrats would, no doubt, have compared him with the truculent Therry.

Conolly, like Power and Dowling, was obviously determined to cooperate with the local authorities. This is demonstrated by the testimonials, quoted by Southerwood, obtained by Conolly before leaving Ireland. Two of these, interestingly, are by Church of England clergymen. His attitude was clearly "ecumenical" and cooperative from the start. He reflects the pre-O'Connellite attitude of many of the Irish clergy: they set out to cooperate with the British authorities. Here is the essential difference between Conolly and Therry: Conolly worked with the authorities while Therry identified with the emancipist opposition. Conolly was openly critical of his Sydney's colleague's attacks on authority and "his great want of discretion".


77. Conolly to Poynter, 15 November 1826. WDA, Poynter Papers, VI C. See also Conolly to Poynter, 16 January 1826, 16 February 1826, 19 April 1826. WDA, Poynter Papers, VI C. See also Conolly to Power, 27 October 1827. SPCA, O'Brien Papers.
But this does not mean that Conolly's ministry was totally subsumed to government preoccupations, nor that it was ineffective. It was largely confined to the convicts who constituted almost half of the population of Van Diemen's Land. Ullathorne says that Conolly was absent on his "annual" visit to Launceston when he arrived. Cullen points out the unfair imputation that Conolly visited the second city of the colony only once a year:

The priest had been in the northern areas at least four times during the preceding twelve months (1833). It is beyond dispute that he officiated in Launceston several times every year.78

Working from baptism records, newspapers and personal letters Cullen has shown that Conolly also regularly visited Georgetown, Campbelltown, Ross and Longford. Ullathorne was clearly incorrect in suggesting that Conolly was neglectful of his ministry.

Conolly's authority had been challenged previously by the unannounced arrival of Father Samuel Coote, a wandering priest of the O'Flynn stamp.79 The "Coote affair" illustrated the problem of sending unsuitable priests to Australia. Despite Conolly's assertion of "his utter unfitness for this mission", Coote took "active steps" to supersede Conolly as senior priest. Coote had arrived in Van Diemen's Land with approval from Poynter and the Colonial Office, but he had not been in contact with Slater to

78. Cullen, op. cit., p 54.
79. For background see my article on Coote "Mystery Priest or Maverick?" in Footprints 5/12(1986), pp 21-26.
obtain priestly faculties.

Clearly Poynter had made a mistake in recommending Coote to the Colonial Office. Arthur also became embroiled in the dispute between the two priests. Conolly explained to Poynter the problems associated with Coote:

I gave him...permission to celebrate Mass but no authority to baptise or administer any other sacrament. I directed him to a house in the country, where he could live without expense and where I thought he might do something towards reforming an old stubborn sinner who...had grown rich here ...He soon distinguished himself by associating with the lower class of convicts, drinking with them at public and private houses, singing for them and conducting himself so much like themselves as to please them.80

As a result Conolly withdrew Coote's permission to say mass and refused to communicate with him. He had also written to Slater to inform him about the situation for in August 1825 the Vicar Apostolic informed Coote that as his Vicar in Van Diemen's Land, it was Conolly who granted faculties. Slater instructed Coote to cease troubling "the peace of the little church in Van Diemen's Land" and to leave the colony.81 Coote departed from Hobart in December 1825 went from there to Sydney and then to Mauritius.

As Cullen suggests, Conolly was on the downward path by the early 1830s. The population was rapidly increasing (Conolly himself

80. Conolly to Poynter, 9 September 1825. WDA, Poynter Papers, VI C.

81. Slater to Coote, 2 August 1825. WDA, Poynter Papers, VI C. This letter did not reach Coote until early January 1826 and its late arrival helps to explain Conolly's exasperation with Slater.
estimated that there were about 6000 Catholics in Van Diemen's Land in 1833) and he was at first optimistic about the new arrivals.\(^8^2\) But it was precisely these newcomers who were to be his undoing. They expected much of their priest. But the years of isolation in a brutalised environment had taken their toll on Conolly and he was obviously unable to adjust to changing circumstances. John Kenney, who observed Conolly when he was a lay teacher in Hobart in 1835, said that he was a man "of no small ability and attainment, but he had grown rather antiquated in his manner on account of being so long by himself".\(^8^3\) This judgement is probably accurate.

Ullathorne also accused Conolly of consorting with a "suspended Anglican parson" and with "Protestant ministers who were notorious drunkards". As already mentioned, the parson referred to was Reverend Robert Knopwood, the senior Church of England chaplain. He was never "suspended", but retired in 1823. That Conolly and Knopwood were close friends is shown by Knopwood's Diary.\(^8^4\) That they were publicly drunk is an exaggeration that can only be sustained by hearsay evidence of a later period and the word of

\(^8^2\) Conolly to Morris, 16 August and 16 September 1833. DA, Morris Papers, I 85 and I 100.


Ullathorne. Writing in 1905 J. W. Beattie says that they were "boon companions" and that they were often "seen going through the town arm in arm, particularly after they had been loving the bottle". Southerwood can find no evidence that Conolly was an alcoholic. The need for companionship for Conolly and Knopwood in the isolation of Van Diemen's Land would have been great. In a small community the peccadillos of parson and priest would have been eagerly seized upon and exaggerated. Ullathorne, having been trained in a less tolerant and more controversial age, would have emphasised the superiority of Catholicism over Protestantism and thus would have disapproved of Conolly's "ecumenism". To the Vicar General it would have seemed like consorting with the enemy.

The last years of Conolly's life were soured by a dispute with a group of his parishioners. The "Friends of the Catholic Religion" led by James Hackett might have been the beginnings of a lay trustee movement. But more likely, they were just another example of the colonial tendency to infighting and personal vituperation. What is more difficult to explain is the fact that Ullathorne sided with them against Conolly and probably persuaded Polding to


do likewise. On the part of Ullathorne it was a case of immature bad judgement and a clash of two different notions of the priesthood. Conolly was a priest of the old, "pre-professional" school. No doubt he had grown careless about the maintenance of the chapel and altar, had become tired and depressed by the conditions of his work and antiquated in his attitudes. There is also evidence of a severe, legalistic streak in him (it was he who publicly proclaimed the rigid Tametsi decree concerning marriage in Australia).

The dispute between Conolly and the "Friends of the Catholic Religion" was initiated when the clique determined to replace him with "an exemplary divine who will be qualified to educate our children". Conolly described the lay group as "depraved" and "profligate" and branded their resolutions "libellous". The contention became so bad that Ullathorne was forced to come to Hobart (May-June 1834). In a report to Morris the Vicar General described Conolly as "a well-meaning man but reluctant to act and harsh to his people". Ullathorne said that his presence suspended hostilities "but it will not be very easy...to induce Mr. C. to


88. Conolly to Bramston, 8 February 1834. DA, Morris Papers, I 175.

89. Ullathorne to the Colonial Secretary, 21 April 1834. NSWSA Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.
change his mode of managing a congregation". The Vicar General's later actions showed that he had sided with the lay group.

The dispute between Polding and Conolly centered around the ownership of church property and was a further development of the dispute with the laity. The Vicar Apostolic visited Hobart on his way to Sydney in August 1835. By this stage the lay committee was fighting Conolly over the ownership of church land. As I have already noted, Conolly failed to distinguish between personal and church property. Polding tried unsuccessfully to conciliate between priest and laity. Protracted legal action followed and Conolly eventually lost the case (30 September 1837). Meanwhile Polding had returned to Hobart with Ullathorne in May 1836. When Conolly refused to hand over the property, Polding suspended him from his priestly faculties. Ullathorne played a major role in this precipitate and unnecessary action. It was the Vicar General who read out the suspension publicly at mass. The grounds were that Conolly had not

(given) an account of the property of the Church...(and) refused to place in (Polding's) hands a sum equal in amount to the collections made in the chapel, or otherwise obtained from the faithful for religious purposes and not yet carried into effect...you returned an insolent reply as regards us your superior...[and] a charge of harshness and cruelty towards certain individuals.

The priest was condemned without trial. There can be no doubt

90. Ullathorne to Morris, 23 October 1834. DA, Ullathorne Papers, Box 756.

91. For a complete text see Southerwood, art. cit., p 455 and Lonely Shepherd, pp 105-112.
that he was treated shabbily. Conolly sued the bishop for libel, but Polding hid behind the skirts of the government and Conolly remained suspended from priestly functions.

When he died in August 1839 most of Hobart turned out for the funeral. He had been reconciled to the church by Therry, who had just arrived as Vicar General in Van Diemen's Land. The death of Conolly signaled the end of the pioneering period. The day of the professional priest had arrived. Ullathorne ushered in a systematic approach to the business of founding a church and establishing a ministerial pattern. Therry and Conolly were transitional figures, men who, in different ways, represented a church just emerging from the era of the penal laws. The stage was now set for the new model of priest - well-trained, efficient and with a strong sense of identity as a Catholic clergyman - to work with an equally efficient government.

For Ullathorne's bureaucratic contemporaries were also beginning to see themselves as professionals. They too were better trained and efficient and they were determined to organise and administer Britain's enormous empire. In the next chapter I will examine the professional churchman Ullathorne interacting with the increasingly efficient colonial administration of Governor Sir Richard Bourke.
CHAPTER THREE

WBU IN NSW. SETTING UP A CHURCH
After a journey of 152 days, including stops in Cape Town and Hobart, the Sir Thomas Munro arrived in Sydney on 18 February 1833. The ship had first touched the Australian coast at Circular Head (present day Stanley), the headquarters of the Van Diemen's Land Company. The manager at Circular Head was Edward Curr "an English Catholic and the brother of a priest for whom I had letters". Curr had been a supporter of Conolly in the early days of the Church in Hobart. He was later to become a prominent Catholic in Melbourne. During the visit Ullathorne baptised three of the Curr children, but he was quite offended because he was not invited ashore to stay in the Curr house.¹

From Circular Head the Sir Thomas Munro sailed for Hobart. The new Vicar General was struck with the sheer natural beauty of Storm Bay and the Derwent, with Mount Wellington towering over the whole scene. Curr's Account of Hobart maintained that the town was "substantial and well constructed", but that it was very expensive and it was often difficult to procure the basic necessities of life. Ullathorne landed on 30 January 1833. He had no jurisdiction in Van Diemen's Land. As I have already noted,

Conolly was absent so the Vicar General lived in the house of James Hackett.

Ullathorne stayed six days and then proceeded to Sydney. "I made it a point of policy not to send any previous notice of my coming, and when we arrived there after about a fortnight's sail, I walked straight up to the priest's residence".\textsuperscript{2} He had thought out his plan of action during the voyage. It was a direct approach and, at first, it worked. He assumed control immediately, ignoring the patronising comments of Therry and his housekeeper, Mary Dwyer, about his youthful appearance. Therry was politely but firmly told by Ullathorne that "For the present, in New South Wales, I am the Church, and they who gather not with me scatter". It was not very subtle, but it was effective. On the Sunday after his arrival Ullathorne "announced (his) powers from the altar, and declared that I suspended everything that was in course of proceeding for a fortnight...and would then call a public meeting".\textsuperscript{3}

The new Vicar General arrived at an opportune time. New South Wales in the 1830s was undergoing profound change and Ullathorne was able to seize the opportunity that was offering. He had an interview with the Governor the day after he arrived. He was fulsome in his praise of Bourke. According to Ullathorne he was

\textsuperscript{2} Autobiography, p 60.

\textsuperscript{3} Autobiography, p 61.
one of the most accomplished men that I ever knew. He received me with great kindness and we at once understood each other...he had a sincere respect for the Catholic religion".4

Ullathorne suggests in the Autobiography that he was very close to Bourke and that a strong friendship developed. There is little other evidence of this. Hazel King has shown that Bourke was a kind, welcoming man and that grief at the death of his wife Elizabeth (in May 1832) was never far below the surface.5 Bourke was anxious to solve the disputes that had plagued the Catholic community as a result of Therry's machinations, so it was in his interest to support the new Vicar General. Catholics were supportive of Bourke in his attempts at liberal reform and in his education policy. Certainly Bourke communicated his plans to the Vicar General about what was eventually to become the Church Act (1836). But after Ullathorne's attack on transportation and his critical comments on the moral state of the colony, Bourke became less friendly. He spoke of Ullathorne's "monomania" when describing his evidence to the Molesworth Committee.6

PART TWO - New South Wales Society in the 1830s

Ullathorne's arrival in New South Wales was coterminous with the beginnings of major social change. The colony was moving slowly


from a penal to a free society. Michael Roe has expressed this in terms of a shift from the authority of "brute force" to the authority of what he calls "moral enlightenment".7 If brute force was the characteristic of conservative regimes that preceeded it, "moral enlightenment" was the hallmark of the more liberal government of Bourke. In other words, liberal principles rather than authoritarianism determined the norms according to which human action was to be judged. Roe maintains that from the early 1840s onwards (with the advent of W.A Duncan and the Australasian Chronicle) Catholics stood squarely on the side of liberalism, tolerance, rectitude and culture - the major ingredients of moral enlightenment.8

However, I would argue that it goes back further than the 1840s and that the Catholic community in the 1830s was already liberal in its attitudes. Certainly Ullathorne and Polding often acted in an authoritarian manner in the internal administration of the church, but that did not stop them using both the rhetoric and social and financial advantages that flowed from a culture of moral enlightenment. From the time of Bourke onwards the Australian Catholic Church was only too happy to co-operate with the liberal regime, for it had much to gain from it. Ullathorne arrived at the beginning of Bourke's governorship and he was glad

to leap onto the liberal bandwagon. As we shall see, he was a staunch defender of the principles of moral enlightenment. These principles were to be basic in his opposition to transportation and his call for the moral reform of convicts, emancipists and free settlers alike.

But as Roe perceptively hints, the Catholic Church in Australia (and in similar societies) had an essentially ambivalent attitude towards liberalism. The 19th century popes, particularly Gregory XVI and Pius IX were totally opposed to the principles of freedom and democracy, especially in the Papal States. As experience in the 1840s was to show, Australian Catholic hierarchs, such as Polding, became as absolute as any Tory potentate when their ecclesiastical authority was questioned. In his controversy with the Vicar General, the Anglican Bishop Broughton shrewdly pointed out that the weakness of the Catholic alliance with liberalism, was that it would eventually lead Catholicism into a relativity which would be destructive of the Roman Church's claim to absolute truth. But this was only a premonition in the early 1830s. It was not until the decade of the sixties that the Australian Catholic Church turned away decisively from a colonial liberalism which had become progressively more secular.

Despite the growing influence of ideas of moral enlightenment, conservatism was still a strong force in New South Wales society.

through the influence of the exclusives. This was the wealthy landed class, powerful in the time of Governor Darling and still influential through their representation on the Legislative Council, their lobbying in London, their newspaper outlet, the Sydney Herald and through Broughton's leadership of the Church of England. While the Colonial Office was not always sympathetic to their views, it saw this group as the repository of respectability in New South Wales. But the change of government in Britain, the Reform Act (1832) and the arrival of Bourke led to the slow contraction of their power base to that of an entrenched clique.

As we shall see, Ullathorne's willingness to tackle the leaders of the Church of England, especially Broughton, identified him as an enemy of exclusives. In the late 1830s the question of the cessation of transportation and assignment brought to light real divisions in exclusive ranks.

The emancipist element in New South Wales society claimed that the colony had been founded by convicts and it was among them that the notion of being "Australian" first developed. Essentially, they argued that the same liberal principles should apply in Australia as in Britain itself. There was a considerable identification of interest between Catholics and emancipists. At the beginning of the 1830s, in the wake of Catholic Emancipation in the United Kingdom, Roger Therry and John Hubert Plunkett, two
Irish Catholics, joined the legal establishment in New South Wales. Throughout the 1830s Catholics became more evenly distributed across the socio-economic spectrum. As ideas of moral enlightenment gained ground, the idea of an exclusively penal colony became increasingly repugnant to the social consciousness of many in the colony and the idea spread that there should be basic freedoms granted to all in New South Wales. Ullathorne sympathised with this view and emerged as a key figure in the anti-transportation movement in the late 1830s.

The Vicar General had also arrived in Australia at the beginning of a major geographical expansion outward from the original nineteen counties. This was the area bordered by the Manning River on the north, Bathurst in the West and the Shoalhaven River in the south. A regulation of 1829 had limited settlement to the nineteen counties (the "limits of location"). But exploration had created a land hunger and a demand for fine wool in England led immigrants with some capital to begin squatting beyond the limits of location. Many simply decamped on empty crown land and began sheep runs.

For instance, in 1829 there were 60,000 sheep in New South Wales; in 1838 there were two and three quarter million. The colony expanded northward in the early 1830s into the New England region and toward the Queensland border. In the late 1830s there was a

south westward expansion following the route of the explorer, Sir Thomas Mitchell, toward Port Phillip and a south eastward movement toward the Snowy Mountains and the far south coast. By 1836 the growth of the wool trade persuaded Bourke to allow squatters to occupy crown land under license. Life was very rough and isolated on the frontier and there was constant friction between whites and Aborigines, whose lands were being occupied. Throughout Ullathorne's ministry in Australia the dispossession and decimation of the aboriginal people continued apace. Violence towards Aborigines and convicts was an unspoken, but ever-present concomitant of colonial society. In south eastern New South Wales many of the squatters were Catholic and, as Waldersee has shown, the church was established very soon after first settlement.

PART THREE - Founding a Church: Immediate Problems of Church and State.

It was Ullathorne who first began the process of inserting the institutional church into this changing society. He had the energy, resourcefulness and, above all, the authority to get the church onto its feet. Bourke was happy with the new Vicar General. He had, he said, "the greatest reason to be satisfied" with Ullathorne's discretion and character. "I am inclined, however, to think that the salary of 200 pounds a year is too low


for the office and that it might advantageously be raised to 400 pounds to enable the Vicar General to visit frequently the chapels in the interior". But Ullathorne's stipend was never increased; he was still on 200 pounds in 1840.

Of the other three priests in New South Wales at the beginning of 1833, two (Therry and McEncroe) were living at the Chapel House in Sydney and Dowling was living at Windsor. As Therry's Diary shows he was an indefatigable traveller, constantly on the move. The restlessness of his personality meant that he never acted according to a coherent plan, but responded ad hoc to the most recent stimulus. Thus few firm foundations were laid. Ullathorne was the antithesis of this. McEncroe was still struggling with alcoholism at this stage. Therry recorded in his diary (14 February 1833), five days before Ullathorne's arrival, "Rev Mr Mc very ill for some days". In typical fashion, Ullathorne was more specific:

He was subject from time to time to have his mind overcast with a terrible melancholy, accompanied by a great internal heat and a peculiar twitching of the corners of the mouth; and then came on an intense longing for drink on this otherwise really sober man. If then I took his shoes and his hat and locked his door to save him sallying forth, he so far lost his sense as to get out of the window as he was and to cross the park to some Catholic house, where he would implore the people for the love of God to put the light wine used in the country down his throat. And I used to have to


14. The Therry diaries are held in the Mitchell Library (ML MSS 1810/72) and in SAA (Therry Papers). These record travel, Mass intentions, baptisms and other activity.
go and seek him out and drive him home in my gig like a log.\textsuperscript{15}

McEncroe eventually overcame this illness. However, even during his period of struggle, Ullathorne trusted him and referred to him as his best informant and counsellor.

Dowling was the outsider of the three. His Australian ministry was spent largely in the area west and north of Sydney – in Windsor, Maitland and Newcastle. Again Ullathorne does not mince matters; he describes him as "a man of fervid popular eloquence and heated imagination". The Autobiography records the scene of Therry and Dowling struggling over the collection box after Mass, both dressed "in their vestments or surplices".\textsuperscript{16} Ullathorne totally failed to take account of the difficult situation of Dowling as he struggled to take the place of the dead Power.

The condition of the Catholic community immediately before Ullathorne's arrival is described by McEncroe in a letter to Archbishop Murray of Dublin.\textsuperscript{17} He reported that Dowling was in poor health in Windsor. McEncroe himself had obviously assumed some control, although Dowling was technically the senior

\begin{itemize}
\item[{15}]. Autobiography, p 123.
\item[{16}]. Autobiography, p 64.
\item[{17}]. McEncroe to Murray, 2 November 1832. Quoted in Moran, op. cit., p 142. Moran also quotes a long letter from the layman, John O'Sullivan, to Murray. The letter gives some sketchy details of the state of the ministry and it emphasises the need for priests, but it is principally an apologia for Therry. It is dated 23 May 1830. See Moran pp 125-129.
\end{itemize}
priest. The work pressure was great: "Five or six zealous priests are absolutely wanted here". Eight hundred pounds had been voted for Catholic needs and the Governor was friendly. Schoolmasters were also required: "each would get about 50 pounds a year". McEncroe suggested that Edmund Rice's Irish Christian Brothers might wish to come. This was the first of several attempts to get the Christian Brothers to come to Australia. The Vicar General also initiated efforts during his first visit to Ireland in 1838. The Brothers eventually came in 1843, but left in 1847 owing to the dictatorial attitudes of Polding and his Vicar General Gregory.18

In his letter to Murray McEncroe estimated that there were 16,000 to 18,000 Catholics in the colony "not one half of whom hardly ever see a priest". In common with all of the early clergy in Australia, McEncroe emphasised the need for Catholic reading material. The background to this was the development of evangelical tract societies and the widespread attempts of Protestants to convert Irish Catholics.19 It also indicates something of the growing literacy, especially in the English language.

Catholic books are very much wanted...If proper application were made to Government, Catholic Prayer Books and Testaments may be given by the Navy Board to Catholic convicts, in place of the Protestant tracts that are and have been


served out to them in such abundance. 

Both McEncroe and Ullathorne emphasised the need for a local bishop. In 1833 Ullathorne wrote to the London Vicar Apostolic Bramston "urging strongly for (sic) the appointment of a Vicar Apostolic". Ullathorne's own conviction was that bishops should be appointed to newly developing missions right from the start. McEncroe told Murray in Dublin:

The Holy See should provide this place with a Bishop. It is the most neglected portion of the Catholic world. The Vicar Apostolic at Mauritius can do but little for this place; by proper care it can become an interesting portion of the fold of Christ.

It was possibly under McEncroe's influence that the Vicar General recommended the idea of appointing a bishop to Bramston and through him to Rome.

---

20. McEncroe to Archbishop Murray. Ibid. This was still a problem in 1841 for Polding had to write to the Navy Board to prevent the distribution of Anglican bibles to Catholic convicts on the trip out. Polding to Murray (?), 19 September 1841. SAA, Box: Letters/Bishops.

21. Ullathorne quotes it in the Report to Propaganda (Birt, I, p 212). For the background to Polding's appointment see O'Donoghue, op. cit., pp 17-20. Neither Birt nor O'Donoghue quote directly from Ullathorne's letter to Bramston and I have not been able to trace it in WDA.


23. McEncroe to Murray, ibid.

McEncroe also praised the faith of the people to Murray: "The youth are docile and enterprising and tenacious of the Faith of their unfortunate fathers." He admitted that he was facing considerable ministerial demands: "I have an arduous mission in Sydney with a Catholic population of 5000 souls and am called at an average of once or twice a week to attend sick calls at a distance of from 20 to 40 miles".

Recollections of his arrival were deeply etched on Ullathorne's memory. The Autobiography gives graphic details of his early encounters with the people who were to be part of his life for the next eight years. The Sunday after his arrival he announced his powers as Vicar General at mass. He had the advantage of surprise, for no one knew that he was coming. He was young and self-confident:

Landing a stranger, with exclusive responsibility amidst peculiar circumstances, I do not remember that I had any fears or much sentimentality. The affairs I had to manage led to no prolonged mental discussions, nor did they greatly distress me. I saw a crooked state of things requiring to be put straight, but was not inclined to hurry things before they were ripe for action. But when I struck, the blow was decisive, and it was soon found that I was not to be turned from my path.25

This passage reflects self-confidence, clarity and decisiveness of mind, as well as a naive pomposity. It is also a post-factum idealisation (he was writing forty five years afterwards) of a series of much more complex and intractable events. He was fortunate to meet McEncroe first. "From him I heard a great deal

of how things stood”. Therry was at Parramatta, but he hurried back to meet the new priest. Inserting a church organisation into colonial society would not be easy. Actually, it was probably Ullathorne's naivety and inexperience that gave him the confidence to push ahead and saved him from excessive worry and concern!

The first problem was internal: how to deal with Therry? Ullathorne had been warned by Morris and Conolly about the priest. Because of Therry's influence, his attitude to Ullathorne would be most important. The young Vicar General acted decisively: he immediately asserted his authority and made it clear to Therry that division in the community was at an end. Ullathorne shrewdly perceived the ambiguity of Therry's attitude to authority: "I am convinced that he has always been disposed to submit to ecclesiastical authority...(but) it has been his misfortune that his warm temperament has been under no control of authority".26

The Vicar General claimed that Therry tried to insinuate himself with him but failed, for the Yorkshireman was appreciative of both his strengths and weaknesses. "He possesses no great learning or eloquence, but has experience, good sense and is much attached to his pious observances". Ullathorne never under-estimated Therry's influence among the Irish. He had stood by them and had been the arbitrator of their difficulties and was their

friend and advisor in trouble.

Both Moran and O'Brien (and more recently Birchley) are critical of the superciliousness of Ullathorne and they contrast the difficulty Therry faced in dealing with governors such as Macquarie, Brisbane and Darling with the generous and co-operative Bourke. But these historians glosses over Therry's fractiousness and ignore the good will often shown by Bourke's predecessors. Nonetheless, Ullathorne was to be the only superior who handled Therry with any success. Later Bishop Willson in Hobart was to suffer for years from the priest's obstinacy.

Linked with Therry was a minor but irritating domestic problem. He had allowed Mrs Mary Dwyer (who acted as housekeeper) and her two daughters and the young John O'Sullivan, to occupy the presbytery. The situation was known to both Bishops Slater and Morris and the latter instructed Ullathorne to deal with the problem. The presence of "these respectable looking young females in the presbytery, constantly about" caused comment and scandal in the colony. Ullathorne reported that the women "do not sit at


28. Mary Dwyer was the widow of Michael Dwyer, one of the last of the Irish rebels deported to Sydney in 1806. He died in 1825. For O'Sullivan see Duffy, C.J.: "John O'Sullivan", JACHS 3/1(1969), pp 1-10. John O'Sullivan had arrived from Cork in 1828 and worked in the Commercial Bank. He was eventually to become manager of the Goulburn branch and to marry Bridget Dwyer. For many years he also managed Therry's complex financial affairs.
the same table with the clergy", but he considered the whole thing "very improper and uncanonical". Mrs Dwyer had made the mistake of patronising Ullathorne when she first met him. Therry had proposed that the daughters constitute the beginning of a convent. Ullathorne commented tartly to Morris that since "they have neither talents nor education or very spiritualised minds neither myself nor Mr. McEncroe or (sic) Mr. Dowling think them fitted for commencing any institution". He also blamed the women for many of the disputes between the priests and accused them of taking "every little tattle to Mr. Therry"; people saw them as his "counsellors". Ullathorne was not over-reacting in trying to get rid of them. However, they were still in "snug possession" when Polding arrived in 1835. It was only after Therry went to Campbelltown that they were removed.

Ullathorne made it clear to Therry right from the beginning that he would not tolerate manipulation. At first Therry required some "management" because

He...tried insinuation. Thank God who enabled me to see through it...I am convinced he is now sincerely with me as the other two clergymen have been from the first.

Things must have settled down, for Ullathorne reported in July


to Morris that "there has been no renewal of party trouble" and Therry "shows me every attention outwardly". Ullathorne perceived the real problem: Therry found it irksome "to have to account to another person" after being in charge for so long. He had talked about visiting England and Ireland. The Vicar General was concerned about this: "He is clever at a scheme, yet I have no right or cause to suspect him". But at least his absence "would enable us to put things better into permanent order".  

Nothing came of this proposal and after the death of his mother in 1837, Therry had no further reason to visit Ireland, and he was to remain in Australia until his own death in 1864.

The pioneer priest continued an active ministry after the arrival of Ullathorne. He also maintained his involvement in the collection of money for Saint Mary's. This led to a confrontation with the Vicar General concerning the methods of collection. This must have elicited a humble reply from Therry for Ullathorne wrote:

I truly appreciate your answer to my letter. The writing of it must have been as painful to you, as I beg leave to assure you, mine was to me...I have never listened to vague representations against you, I have always checked any inclination to prejudice me against you, and taken up your defence against such tattlers.

Ullathorne assured Therry that he was not biased against him and

32. Ullathorne to Morris, 10 July 1833. DA, Morris Papers, I 74.
33. Ullathorne to Therry, 26 September 1833. ML MSS 1810/52.
34. Ullathorne to Therry, 2 October 1833. ML MSS 1810/52.
that he would always listen to his complaints.

After the arrival of Polding as Vicar Apostolic in 1835, Therry was appointed to the Campbelltown area. Ullathorne informed him that the bishop considered it advisable "you should not at present leave your district, which, until it is brought into order and regularity, will demand the whole of your time". The appointment to Campbelltown had led to trouble with Therry's partisans. A Memorial from the Lay Committee of Saint Mary's Church contained a thinly veiled threat: the Bishop's popularity depended on his continuing support of Therry and his continued residence in Sydney. To Polding's credit he did not give in.

While insisting on the move to Campbelltown through Ullathorne, Polding himself was very kind. He granted the priest a stipend of 150 pounds per year in lieu of a government salary and ordered that Mass be offered once a week for him in Saint Mary's. However, as O'Brien has pointed out, it was difficult for Therry to confine himself to one district. People knew him and wanted his ministry. Many believed that the full effects of the sacraments

35. Ullathorne to Therry, 29 October 1835. ML MSS 1810/52. Therry had asked permission to make a trip to Bathurst "for a short time". Even at this stage Ullathorne was the one who did Polding's 'dirty work'; thus it was he who wrote to refuse this permission.

36. Polding to Barber 1 November 1835. Quoted in Birt, I, pp 286-287. See also Polding to Birdsall, 7 June 1836. Quoted in Birt, I, p 293.

37. SAA, Polding Papers (printed).
resulted only through his intervention. He was a guarantee of good luck.\textsuperscript{38} Throughout his life he remained restless. He never lost his interest in land speculation and cattle dealing, all of which necessitated considerable travel. When unable to do it himself, John O'Sullivan represented him in this business.\textsuperscript{39} Much of the proceeds of these dealings went to the Church.

Eventually Therry was re-instated as an official chaplain. In June 1833 he had petitioned Bourke either to grant him arrears of salary or three hundred pounds "to diminish his pecuniary responsibilities and to assist...him to proceed to England by an early opportunity". Ullathorne supported this petition, probably hoping to get rid of him.\textsuperscript{40} The home government hesitated until it received a report from Polding who, it hoped, would have sufficient authority over him "to prevent him from giving any further trouble, if so disposed, to the Colonial Government".\textsuperscript{41} Bourke recommended to the Colonial Office in November 1836 that Therry

\begin{enumerate}
\item [(38).] O'Brien, op. cit., p 175.
\item [(40).] Therry (and Ullathorne) to Bourke and Legislative Council, June 1833. Copy in SAA, Therry Papers.
\item [(41).] G.K. Holden (Private Secretary to Bourke) to Ullathorne, 20 August 1836. Quoted in O'Brien, op. cit., pp 182-183.
\end{enumerate}
be re-instated.\textsuperscript{42} Glenelg approved this recommendation in June 1837.\textsuperscript{43} There was no further talk of his going to England and he remained in charge of Campbelltown until his departure for Van Diemen's Land as Vicar General in 1838.

As well as the issue of Therry, Ullathorne faced a range of other problems from the time of his arrival. These centered on the completion of Saint Mary's church and the opportunities offered by the policy of Bourke. The mess surrounding the church had to be dealt with first, for litigation was pending. There were four interconnected problems: firstly the claim of the government that Therry had occupied more land than had been originally allotted to the site of Saint Mary's church; secondly the financial chaos surrounding the still incomplete building; thirdly the need for the appointment of trustees; and finally the necessity of completing the building.

Two of the problems were dealt with quickly. Ullathorne arranged for the election of three lay and three clerical trustees to whom supervision of Saint Mary's church property could be conveyed.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42} Bourke (and Polding) to Glenelg (Secretary of State), 21 November 1836. HRA, Series I, Vol 18, pp 591-593.

\textsuperscript{43} Glenelg to Bourke, 23 June 1837. HRA, Series I, Vol 18, pp 793-794.

\textsuperscript{44} The trustees were elected at a meeting held on the third Sunday after Ullathorne's arrival - in mid March 1833. He describes the event in his letter to Morris (17 April 1833. DA Morris Papers, I 39). See also Autobiography pp 64-65.
Ullathorne and the trustees were also able to negotiate with the government the extent of the land to be granted to the Church. 

I think we shall probably obtain about four acres attached to the church, and a further grant somewhere near the town for a seminary. The laws here will not allow of burial near the church, we have a burial ground of about four acres a mile from Sydney.45

But the problem of Saint Mary's finances remained.46 This must have been a great frustration to the efficient shop-keeper's son. The difficulty was that Ullathorne could "procure no regular accounts of the monies received from the people and expended, with the how expended, on the building (sic)".47 The Vicar General's best estimate was that six thousand pounds had been collected over thirteen years, that five thousand pounds had been spent on the church and one thousand pounds on the chapel house and on St Joseph's chapel. Ullathorne was forced to cut his losses and to try to complete the church building. Further money was forthcoming from the government: in 1833-1834 three hundred and forty two pounds were contributed to complete the roof and floor; in 1835-1836 three hundred pounds were provided for plastering work and completion of the ceiling; in 1837 five

45. Ullathorne to Morris, ibid. For the actual grants of land for St Mary's church see O'Brien, op. cit., p 370.


47. Ullathorne to Morris, 10 July 1833. DA, Morris Papers, I 73.
hundred pounds were given toward the completion of the church; in 1838 a further three hundred and fifty pounds were provided. In 1839, when asked for more money, the Colonial Auditor, William Lithgow, informed the Legislative Council that since 1823, two thousand three hundred and thirty one pounds had been advanced from the treasury toward the building of the church. The Council determined that no more than one thousand pounds more could be contributed and then only on a pound for pound basis.48

From the beginning Ullathorne was faced with another tactic of Therry: the use of professional collectors whose services were paid for by a percentage of the collection.49 They also gathered Easter dues for Therry. The Vicar General was forced to take strong action against this. He demanded an explanation from Therry in September 1833.50 Four months later Ullathorne told Therry: "I likewise think it my duty to intimate that no collections for ecclesiastical or clerical purposes should henceforth be originated or set on foot without my knowledge or consent".51 On 31 January 1834 he warned the Catholic community:

48. For amounts granted for the completion of the church see NSW-LC V+P, Statements of Expenditure for each of the years mentioned. See also NSW-LC V+P, 5 September 1839, p 4.


50. Ullathorne to Therry, 26 September 1833. ML MSS 1810/12 -14.

51. Ullathorne to Therry, 8 January 1834. Ibid.
The Catholic inhabitants of this Colony are hereby cautioned that no Person or Persons have any right or title to call upon any individual for any subscription, due or other contribution for any purpose of the Catholic Church or Clergy, unless such a person have some testimonial of their being authorised by me to that effect.52

One issue annoyed Ullathorne particularly: Therry's decision to build Saint Joseph's chapel to avoid dependence on Power. The problem was that after he had been dismissed as official chaplain, he refused to share the Courthouse with Power as the normal place for Sunday Mass. Therry siphoned off money from the Saint Mary's appeal to build Saint Joseph's chapel and to improve the chapel house (from which Power was excluded).53 Ullathorne estimated that Therry spent one thousand one hundred pounds on this project. The situation was no better after the arrival of Dowling who accused Therry of retaining

forceable possession of the Chapel and the Chapel House... (he) has continued to annoy and insult me in every possible manner, treating me with personal violence, etc, etc, etc as he did my unfortunate predecessor... whom he and his lay associates, particularly one Sulliovan (sic), an obscure clerk who lives with him, consigned to an early grave by continued persecution.54

Eventually Slater wrote to impose a modus vivendi on the two priests. As Waldersee points out Therry had lost all sense of distinction between personal and church property. This was a

52. See the *Australian*, 23 January and 7 February 1834.

53. O'Brien, op. cit., pp 140-145 outlines the problem of identifying specifically where St Joseph's chapel was situated on the St Mary's block.

common problem because until 1829 the Catholic Church did not exist as a legal entity under British law. Therry, however, should have appointed trustees.

In his first year Ullathorne dealt with all these issues. It was a remarkable achievement for the youngest priest in the colony; he was twenty six when he arrived in 1833. His success in healing the breaches in the community and his respectful firmness with Therry indicated the leadership qualities which were to characterise his long career.

Now that some order had been brought to the internal affairs of the church, energies could be turned to more positive ends. Several issues need to be considered: the good relationship established between Ullathorne and the colonial government, the building of a real structure to serve the Church community and the need for more priests and ultimately for a bishop.

Ullathorne's official letters to the New South Wales Colonial Secretary between 1833 and 1836 show him at work inserting the church into colonial society and setting up the infrastructure to support the church's ministry. The Vicar General and the

55. In 1833 Therry was forty three, McEncroe thirty seven and Dowling thirty six. See O'Brien, Life, p 12 and Ullathorne to McLeay, 28 July 1834. NSWSA, Col Sec., 4/2224.1.

56. These letters are in NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1, 4/2175.2, 4/2270.1, 4/2305.3. With this material are found the monthly returns of the announcement of the banns of marriages of
In my office of ecclesiastical Superior or head of a department, to use the official term, I also had a fair amount of occupation of another kind. I had relations and correspondence with the Colonial Secretary's Office, the Survey Office, the Architect's Office, the Audit Office, the Treasury, the Military Department and the Convict Office.57

Ullathorne reports that "I always found the heads of departments friendly and considerate, and the official dinners at Government House strengthened our good understanding". The fact that he was an Englishman no doubt helped him gain entree to the colonial elite. The situation had changed since the departure of Darling. The Church was only too happy to co-operate with the administration in order to establish itself. At the centre of all this was the flexible Vicar General.

This belies the picture of a "persecuted" Catholicism presented, for instance, by O'Brien in his life of Therry. As Birt accurately points out:

Evidence exists in plenty to show that government officials were neither always wholly unreasonable nor unduly antagonistic if approached properly; as is proved by all that Dr. Ullathorne at once succeeded in securing when he brought tact and knowledge of the world to bear upon the same men who had opposed Father Therry's truculence with impassiveness or open opposition.58

The Catholic Church was not a marginal and mendicant religion

57. Autobiography, p 73.

opposed to official structures; it was an integral part of the administration of the colony, especially the penal establishment. Clergy were seen as both government employees and priests. This is illustrated by the distinction made by Bourke when responding to a request of Ullathorne for an allowance for the travel in which the Vicar General was involved. In a marginal note on Ullathorne's letter, Bourke granted him a guinea per day when he was travelling, but only if he travelled as Vicar General. The marginal note clearly distinguished Ullathorne's two roles: "By Vicar General I mean the general superintendence of the Catholic clergy and establishment throughout the Colony and not attendance on individuals seeking his offices as a priest".\textsuperscript{59}

Ullathorne sought to insert the church into society by stressing that it fulfilled an administrative and moral role in New South Wales. Soon after his arrival in the colony he wrote to Bourke concerning the relative weakness of the Catholic Church due to "the want of spiritual pastors". His argument was that the government should supply this need because

The good order of society and obedience to the laws depend on the morality of the members who compose it, personal immorality and the violation of the laws would receive a great check amongst Catholics by the influence and exertion of pastors permanently residing amongst them. They would put a stop to much strife and public discord. They would be more often resorted to as arbiters of their disputes, as counsel-lors in their difficulties or helpers in their distresses, they would produce all the good effects of a vigilant, zealous and disinterested police (my emphasis), added to the

\textsuperscript{59} Ullathorne to Bourke (marginal notes), 9 December 1833. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2175.2.
functions of pastor and overseer.60
Here the clergy are clearly seen as the enforcers of the moral order. Ullathorne considered that the priest's task was to oversee the lives of the Catholic people and to promote good order in society by the teaching of moral principles. Thus in Ullathorne's view the church had a clear role to play in society and it was on the basis of this role that he justified requests for increasing amounts of state aid.

Soon after his arrival Ullathorne sent to the Colonial Secretary, Alexander McLeay, reports concerning the exact state of the Catholic Church in the colony.61 He stressed that Catholics had no completed church building. In Sydney they still used the lower part of the old courthouse in Castlereagh St. The Vicar General reported that an average of 1,000 people attended the two masses celebrated there each Sunday. At Windsor a barn was used with 150 to 200 people attending. The infamous guardroom at Parramatta, vividly described in the Autobiography, held an average of 400 persons each Sunday.62 Mass was also celebrated in the courthouse at Campbelltown, the Factory at Parramatta, the convict hospital at Liverpool and in other public institutions and private houses.

60. Ullathorne to McLeay, 29 April 1833. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2175.2. A copy can also be found in DA, Morris Papers, I 39.

61. See especially Ullathorne to McLeay, 13 April 1833. DA, Morris Papers, Box 702.

62. Autobiography, pp 75-76.
As the Catholic population of the County of Cumberland in 1833 was 9,490, we can get some idea of the average percentage of Catholics attending Mass each Sunday. Ullathorne maintained that approximately 1,600 attended at Sydney, Windsor and Parramatta. We can probably add three to four hundred more to cover Campbelltown and Liverpool. Thus approximately 2,000 Catholics attended Mass on an average Sunday. If these statistics were correct, then about 27% of Catholics in the County of Cumberland practiced their faith each Sunday. This average is probably too high, as it was always to the advantage of the priests to inflate their numbers in reports to the government. There is no doubt that this average would drop if children and convicts attending under duress were taken into account. An informed guess would be that perhaps 20% to 22% of the Catholic community in the Sydney area attended mass on any given Sunday.

Ullathorne also inserted the church into New South Wales society by moving quickly to organise Catholic schools; he again he saw an opportunity and seized it. As a result of the dismantling of the Church and Schools Lands Corporation, an educational vacuum had been created. The Church of England could no longer claim government patronage and the colonial administration was still struggling to evolve an official educational policy. Ullathorne saw the chance to get Catholic schools organised. Before his arrival there had been considerable concern among Catholics, both

63. See Waldersee, op. cit., p 279.
in Sydney and Hobart, about education. Therry had organised schools in Sydney and Parramatta, but these had not lasted long. In August 1832 the Sydney Catholic community asked Colonial Secretary Goderich for a further sum because "their Children are nearly deprived of all opportunity of Education in consequence of the very limited funds granted for that purpose". Catholics had not been inactive. The Church had established schools in Sydney, Parramatta and Liverpool, and these had been in receipt of a small amount of government aid. The Sydney Catholic school, for instance, had 215 pupils enrolled in November 1832, although the actual attendance of students was often irregular.

In his first nine months in the colony Ullathorne arranged for the establishment of Catholic schools in the Rocks (Sydney) and Maitland. He told Morris that "His Excellency (Bourke) has likewise consented to my establishing poor schools in all the remaining principal towns, as soon as I can meet with proper individuals for schoolmasters". It was not easy, however, to get suitable teachers. Ullathorne suggested the possibility of procuring the services of "half a dozen Brothers of Christian

64. Memorial of Roman Catholics of NSW to Viscount Goderich, 20 August 1832. HRA, Series I, Vol 16, pp 709-710.
66. An attendance roll for November and December 1832 survives among the Therry Papers in SAA.
Doctrine" (he is referring to the Irish Christian Brothers). Soon after his arrival he informed the Colonial Secretary that he had rented two rooms in Cumberland St, the Rocks, as a temporary school.68 James Hayes and his wife were proposed as teachers at twenty pounds per annum and a per diem allowance of 1/2d per pupil. The Colonial Treasury was to pay for the school.69 The Vicar General outlined for McLeay the type of building required: male and female children were to be kept entirely separate by folding doors and the building could double as a chapel for Sunday worship.70 The plan was adopted and the building (which still stands) was erected at public expense (April 1835).

A different situation unfolded in Maitland. Here Ullathorne suggested the use of the toll house as a school building and he proposed one Peter Cooke as schoolmaster.71 This was approved but a different location for the school was nominated. Ullathorne informed the Colonial Secretary in January 1834 that he had dismissed Cooke as schoolmaster because "his conduct had been

68. Ullathorne to McLeay, 26 June 1833. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2175.2.
71. Ullathorne to McLeay, 29 August 1833. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2175.2.
very disorderly, drunken and scandalous".\textsuperscript{72} Cooke was replaced by Thomas and Mary Lynch.\textsuperscript{73} A Catholic school was re-established in Liverpool late in 1833 with John Nicholson as schoolmaster.\textsuperscript{74} Early in 1834 the Vicar General was taxing the government with the problem of Catholic schools "in the interior townships of the Colony". The teachers were too poorly paid to engage rooms; mentioning Maitland specifically, he noted that where there was no clergyman "a respectable schoolmaster might read a selection of prayers and a lecture for the people on Sunday".\textsuperscript{75} Perhaps he was influenced by the example of his father, who often conducted the Sunday service at Scarborough when the priest was absent.

There were some successes. Ullathorne was able to reassure a suspicious government in 1834 that the high level of attendance at Catholic schools in Windsor and Parramatta was not the result of falsification of returns, but came about through the hard work of teachers and Dowling the closure of two other schools.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{72} Ullathorne to McLeay 29 August 1833. NSWSA, Col Sec., 4/2174.2.

\textsuperscript{73} Ullathorne to McLeay, 29 January 1834. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.

\textsuperscript{74} Ullathorne to McLeay, 6 March 1834. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.

\textsuperscript{75} Ullathorne to McLeay, 11 March 1834. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.

\textsuperscript{76} Ullathorne to McLeay, 24 February 1834. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.
Clearly, both the Vicar General and the government presupposed that the Church had every right to provide education which the colonial administration supported. Church and state worked together in the business of moral enlightenment, even if the state was tight-fisted. Ullathorne always considered the question of education to be important and, as we shall see, he participated fully in the educational debates of the 1830s.

PART FOUR - Founding a Church: The Development of Ministry

Beyond church infrastructure is the reality of the church community. Edmund Campion has suggested that in the earliest period of Australian history, Catholics formed "base communities" that met for informal prayer and worship. The implication is that clergy were not really necessary to build a community of faith. "Almost uniquely in the history of world Catholicism, Australia was not founded by bishops...nor by priests but by the laity - and convict laity at that".

This suggestion needs to be examined critically. It is true that there was a core group of Catholic emancipists - men like James Dempsey, Michael Hayes and William Davis - who formed the nucleus of a Catholic community in Sydney. Numerically, however, they


were a small group. At best they exercised some leadership among some Catholics. The first baptismal register (compiled by Therry) suggests that there was another group of faithful Catholics in the Camden area. But the majority of Irish emancipists were nominal Catholics. They needed conventional clerical leadership to draw them back to the practice of Catholicism. As James Waldensee has shown, most Irish Catholics were uninterested in religion; it was an up-hill task for the clergy in the 1830s to cajole them back to the practice of Catholicism.\(^79\) The vastness of the settlement, the shortage of clergy, the materialism of the settlers, the problems of broken relationships through transportation and assignment, drunkenness and promiscuity all contributed to indifference toward religion.

Then there were the convicts. Did Catholic convicts conform to Anglicanism in the absence of Catholic clergy? There is conflicting testimony concerning this. For instance, for the period prior to 1820, Reverend John Youl in Launceston told the Bigge Enquiry that Catholics would never attend the Protestant Church if they could avoid it. Yet in Hobart, Reverend Robert Knopwood stated: "There is no reluctance on the part of catholics to attend the (Protestant) Church, and catholic Parents bring their children to be baptised by me as readily as Protestants" (sic).\(^80\) Perhaps this was because Knopwood's attitudes were more tolerant than

\(^79\) Waldensee, op. cit., pp 186-199.

those of the other Anglican parsons. After the arrival of Therry and Conolly, there was the possibility of a Catholic ministry. In the 1830s, however, witnesses (such as Ullathorne) were still complaining about the complete irreligion of most of the convicts.

From 1820 onwards a coherent ministry was gradually organised. I have already indicated something of this in the previous chapter. I want to look in more detail now at the 1830s. I will focus on living Catholicism - what I will call "Catholic religiosity". By "religiosity" I mean the way that Catholics lived and experienced their faith. I will also examine the clerical ministry that underpinned this.

As mentioned previously, New South Wales society in the 1830s was changing and Catholicism changed with it. The Church usually aligned itself with democratic and egalitarian forces. Thus the Vicar General opposed the pretensions of the Anglican establishment in his Reply to Judge Burton and he emerged as a leader of the anti-transportation agitation. In contrast, in its internal life, Catholicism in this period became more conservative, hierarchical and ordered, especially after the arrival of Polding. This resulted as much from the imposition of a more "evangelical" spirituality and moralism as from the Bishop's

episcopal style. Clerical control began to make its presence felt throughout New South Wales.

The background to Australian Catholic religiosity was Ireland. The first four decades of the were years of reform, development and innovation in the Irish Catholic community. Major social and linguistic changes were occurring: an urban Catholic middle class was beginning to emerge and English was slowly replacing Irish as the predominant language of the country. This change began in the south east, especially in Kildare, Wicklow, Carlow and Kilkenny. Episcopal reformers, such as James Warren Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin (1819-1834) strove to bring about not only a reform of the clergy and the structure of his diocese, but also to achieve a renewal of fidelity and spirituality among the people. The decades of the 1820s and 1830s saw the beginning and development of a devotional revolution in Ireland, parallel­ing the evangelical movement in Protestantism. This devotional change began to flow into Australian Catholic religiosity in the 1830s.


83. For biographical details on Doyle see DNB, 5, pp 316-317. Ullathorne (Autobiography, p 100) speaks of another Irish Episcopal reformer - Bishop William Kinsella of Ossory (1829-1845) whom he met during his visit to Ireland in 1837. "Travell­ing with him I had the opportunity of seeing the whole system of working an Irish diocese".
In Ireland a strong sense of grievance remained against Protestantism and English rule, especially as the evangelical attempt to convert the Irish poor to Protestantism began to gather momentum in the 1820s. The Catholic Church still saw itself as persecuted. Linked with this was the idea that Ireland was essentially Catholic and that Catholicism and Irishness were interchangeable terms. Both the resentment and the sense of identity between Irishness and Catholicism flowed into the Australian church.

The Irish Church of the early 19th century has been described as ritualistic.\(^\text{84}\) This means that it was "pre-literate" with strong folk elements in it. Popular Irish Christianity probably did have something in common with what Jean Delumeau describes as rural religion in pre-revolutionary Europe.\(^\text{85}\) Folk religion was more in evidence in rural Ireland, especially among Gaelic-speaking people. While O'Flynn and Conolly spoke of the need in Australia for Irish speaking priests in the first decades of the century, the use of Irish seems to have diminished by the time of Ullathorne. By the 1830s the emphasis had shifted to a predominantly English-speaking Irish-Australian population. But elements of folk religion remained: this is illustrated by the belief of some Irish in the colony that baptism by Therry and contact with him brought good luck and special blessings.\(^\text{86}\) Popular religiosity

\(^{84}\) Conolly, op. cit., pp 100-121.


\(^{86}\) O'Farrell, op. cit., p 35.
held that bad luck would result for bushrangers who robbed priests. 87

What was the state of the Catholic laity in Australia in the 1830s? Waldersee says that it was bad. He asserts that there was wide-spread indifference to religion and that the clergy had to battle to bring people back to the practice of the faith. He is reacting against the myth of the pious Irish emancipist suffering religious oppression. While agreeing with his demolition of the myth, I suspect that he goes too far in the opposite direction by presenting the Catholic laity as utterly materialistic and devoid of any religious motivation. 88 He presents a picture of fractious lay leaders and the Catholic lower orders sunk in vice and petty theft. A more balanced picture is given by Ullathorne:

Thank God we are bringing many poor wandering people to their duty. We have a number of fervent penitents who are giving great edification...We had I am told more communicants on Easter Sunday than there has hitherto been in the course of a whole year. 89

Most Irish in Australia were people wrenched out of their normal context by transportation, forced to live a socially alienated existence in a strange and difficult land among a prison population. Certainly some would not have been practicing Catholics before they left Ireland. Keenan's figures for 1834, however, sugg-

88. See Waldersee, op. cit., pp 191-197.
89. Ullathorne to Morris, 17 April 1833. DA, Morris Papers, I 39.
est that Ireland had a fairly high practice rate. However, this does not seem to have flowed over into Australia. Conditions in the penal colony, with the resulting dislocation in people's lives, would, as I have already indicated, have brought about a much lower practice rate.

Some of the Irish emancipists became prosperous and, as the Church became organised, they were willing to support it. But as McEncroe, Ullathorne and Polding realised, clergy were needed as full time workers to set up the institutional structures required to underpin the ministry.

Since priests were becoming increasingly important in the spiritual and moral lives of people, the aim was to have clergy living in the out-lying districts; periodic visits were seen as insufficient. Ullathorne told the Colonial Secretary in 1833:

> These four clergymen (McEncroe, Therry, Dowling, Ullathorne) are anxious to extend the labors of their ministry, as much as possible to meet the exigencies of the people, but the Catholics are too numerous and widely spread for their exertions to be extended to all...it is utterly impossible to effect much permanent good unless the pastor be constantly be with his flock.

Thus in the 1830s the major task of the clergy was to enliven the

---

90. Keenan (op. cit., pp 98-99) gives estimated Mass attendance figures for Ireland for 1834: in Gaelic speaking areas between 20%-40% of the Catholic population; in English speaking areas between 30%-60%; in some towns 70% or more. These figures seem to me very high.

91. Ullathorne to McLeay, 29 April 1833. DA, Morris Papers, Box 702.
Catholic community. But it is was not until very late in the
decade that there were sufficient priests for clergy to be placed
permanently in some of the outlying districts. In the earlier
part of the 1830s contact could only be achieved by constant
travel.

The decades spanning 1820 to 1850 were periods of rapid expansion
in New South Wales. In that time seventy three million acres were
occupied for grazing.92 Thus the ministry of the Church was faced
with an ever-moving frontier. After the arrival of the Vicar
General the aim was to maintain contact with Catholics in the
outlying districts by either a regular or occasional circuit. Un­
til Polding came to the colony the clergy rounds were limited to
a semi-circle bounded by the Illawarra district, Campbelltown,
Windsor and the Hunter River valley, with fairly regular forays
as far afield as Goulburn, Lake George and Bathurst. Ullathorne
also visited Norfolk Island and Hobart. Soon after his arrival he
told Morris:

We are now holding stations in the Interior. Mr. Therry has
set off on a tour of stations previously arranged and
announced in one direction; and Mr. McEncroe in another. I
say two Masses every Sunday in Sydney.93

Later that year Ullathorne told the Colonial Secretary: "I have
had, within eight days, to travel two hundred and fifty miles,


93. Ullathorne to Morris, 17 April 1833. DA, Morris Papers,
I 39.
viz from Sydney to Windsor and back - to the middle of the Five Islands (a name used in the early period to refer to the Wollongong area) and back - to Parramatta and back". The Vicar General was also concerned about the very remote places: New Zealand, Norfolk Island and Port Macquarie.

Therry was the most indefatigable traveller of them all. Fortunately, a detailed diary for 1833 to 1835 survives. It records an extraordinary series of journeys. Before Ullathorne's arrival Therry's activities were confined to a constant round of Sydney, Liverpool, Parramatta and Campbelltown. For instance, in the three months from 4 February to 29 April 1833 he visited Liverpool ten times, Parramatta nine times and Campbelltown eight times. He also fitted in two visits to Appin, one to Mount Druitt and one to the Illawarra district. In the period between February 1833 to February 1835, as well as the constant rounds to Parramatta, Liverpool, Campbelltown and outlying districts close to Sydney he visited the Hunter Valley four times, the Goulburn-Lake George area four times (once he got as far south as the Molonglo River), the Illawarra three times and Bathurst once. Ullathorne's cynical comment on all of this was: "He was in a bustle day and


95. Autobiography, pp 74-75. Ullathorne's memory was inaccurate here; Port Macquarie was closed down as a penal settlement in 1830.

96. Therry Papers in SAA.
night, though it is wonderful how little came out of it".97

This is an unfair judgement, for the diary shows that most of Therry's work was sacramental. (He records show that in 1833 he celebrated sixty seven marriages and two hundred and ten baptisms). It was a constant round of masses, sacraments, funerals and sick calls. Most of the time he stayed at private houses or inns. Mass was said in homes, court houses or inns or in the open air. It was also at this time that Therry began to build up his pastoral holdings. His diary records his complex financial dealings as well as sacramental ministry.98 Again Ullathorne does not hesitate to criticise Therry for these financial dealings:

Large tracts of land had been left to him by will...But he treated it all as his personal property, and yet he never properly looked after it. He did not seem to care for property, and yet he held to it with tenacious grasp...He begged everywhere after his own fashion, and had agents everywhere to raise money for the great Sydney church.99

Ullathorne also did his share of travelling. The Vicar General visited Newcastle, Maitland, Patrick's Plains, Parramatta, Windsor, Campbelltown and Bathurst between February 1833 and the


98. For details about his early property dealings see Carnegie, op. cit., pp 51ff.

arrival of Polding in September 1835.\textsuperscript{100} He has left a description of the way in which the clergy worked:

Our usual mode of travelling was on horseback, a man accompanying on a second horse, carrying the vestments and the altar stone behind him. We always carried the Blessed Sacrament in a breast pocket, not knowing where we should come upon the sick and the dying... Generally... we used the police courts for our chapels, but in Bathurst I used a ballroom built over the inn stables. At Apin (sic) I said Mass in a room of the tavern and preached a sermon against drunkenness.\textsuperscript{101}

Catholic innkeepers cared for the priests and their horses.\textsuperscript{102} On arrival in an area the priest visited the surrounding homesteads, both Catholic and Protestant, inviting Catholics to come to Mass and the sacraments. Priests were also very careful to visit the sick.

These pastoral travels also gave the observant ex-sailor a chance to experience the Australian bush. He was sensitive to it. He often mentions the intense heat and vividly describes a bush fire as he came up Mount Keira on the journey from the Illawarra to Appin.\textsuperscript{103} A similar description of the Appin-Illawarra track is


\textsuperscript{101}. Autobiography, p 68. Ullathorne was in Bathurst in late 1833 and in the Hunter Valley in January 1834.

\textsuperscript{102}. Therry often stayed a Bowler's Inn in Liverpool where he said Mass and performed marriages and baptisms. In the Autobiography (pp 70-71) Ullathorne recalls the Carberry family who owned the inn at Appin.

\textsuperscript{103}. Autobiography, pp 69-70.
given by Roger Therry. Ullathorne was sensitive also to the flora and fauna. He describes the time that he first encountered the kookaburra "chaunting (sic) its strange discordant notes at sunrise".

Sydney still had to be dealt with, including its large convict establishment. McEncroe (helped by Ullathorne) did most of the work. Here the priests visited the convict barracks, the jail, Pinchgut and the Sydney, Parramatta and Liverpool convict hospitals. They also attended the Female Factory and the benevolent asylum, as well celebrating the sacraments, conducting funerals and dealing with general administration. Dowling ministered in the Windsor, Parramatta and Hawkesbury area. Another priest arrived unexpectedly in Sydney in late 1834. He was Father James Watkins, a Welshman. He had left the English mission in strange circumstances in 1833. According to Ullathorne he had been shipwrecked off the South American coast, was rescued, and came on to Sydney from Brazil. Watkins worked for many years in Australia but has always remained something of a mystery, disappearing from the ministry for years at a time.


106. Autobiography, p 75.

107. Keaney, John: "Melbourne's First Catholic Schools", Footprints, 1/12(1973), pp 22-23. I have also been able to establish that Watkins was born about 1794 in Abergavenny in Monmouthshire and after a period at the Sardinian Embassy chapel,
evidence of other priests planning to come to Australia, but they did not arrive. In the period after 1815 there were a considerable number of wandering clergy and a number of them were attracted to Australia. Margaret Press has described them:

There were many men who had been ordained in England or European countries, either in diocesan seminaries or religious orders, who followed an adventurous star to the new mission in Australia. Many were zealous; some were simply footloose; some were victims of religious persecution or their own temperaments; others were...thorns in the side of a superior or bishop.

Wandering clergy were a problem for all of the churches in the 19th century.

After the arrival of the Vicar General things must have gone well in New South Wales, for McEncroe was able to tell Morris in June 1834 that Ullathorne "has done much in bringing some order to this anomalous mission". The arrival of Polding and his party on 13 September 1835 brought further stability to the Church in New South Wales. Early in 1836 Ullathorne was sent as pastor to


108. See Father Kirby to Hamilton (Vicar General of Dublin), 29 August 1835. DAA 35/5(31).


110. McEncroe to Morris, 3 June 1834. DA, Morris Papers, I 238.
Parramatta and the foundation stone of the new church was laid there on 17 March. Ullathorne's sermon was subsequently published. But, because of the limited number of clergy, the Vicar General still had to visit "other and distant settlements". Polding also quickly developed into a great traveller; he had been an excellent horseman before he left England. Probably the first area he visited was the Illawarra. He was certainly there in late 1837 and again early in 1838. He recorded how deeply impressed he was with the beauty of the region. In August 1838 he was travelling again. He left Sydney for Newcastle and Maitland: "To save time I submitted to the horrors of steam navigation". This was a brief visit to the Hunter region. Later in 1840 he was to traverse the area extensively. In the latter part of August he travelled to Goulburn and then on to Yass. At

111. The Ceremony of Blessing and Laying the Foundation Stone of a New Church; with a Preliminary Instruction by the Rev. W. B. Ullathorne, V.G. Sydney. 1836.

112. Polding to Bourke, 6 May 1836. Quoted in Birt, I, p 296.

113. O'Donoghue, op. cit., p 34.


this stage Yass was on the limits of settlement. He used Yass as a base to explore the area. When he saw the Murrumbidgee River for the first time he described it as "a beautifully clear, English looking stream". He laid the foundation stone of Saint Augustine's church, Yass, on 28 August 1838. On his return to Sydney, Polding reported that he had travelled "upwards of 900 miles". His purpose was to survey the area in preparation for the establishment of permanent missions.

With the arrival of Ullathorne's priestly recruits (1837-1838), it was possible to station men in the country districts. However, the need for travel was not diminished. Charles Lovat, the first pastor of Yass, for instance, was a tremendous traveller. The other pioneer priests also travelled extensively. Polding's view that "we only want priests to make this country Catholic" was taken seriously by the pioneer clergy. Thus a priest-centered ministry developed in Australia in the 1830s. In this the colonial Church was in step with the rest of the 19th century Catholic world.

Central to the ministry of the Church were the rites of passage.


118. Polding to Heptonstall, 1 May 1836. Quoted in Birt, I, p 292.
The government also was concerned with these pivotal events in the lives of citizens, and the clergy were instructed to keep records of marriages, baptisms and funerals. It was Ullathorne himself who suggested that printed marriage forms be sent to the clergy.\textsuperscript{119} Through their participation in these central rites of transition the clergy became increasingly important in the lives of their people. Gradually the clergyman came to be seen as the professional who conducted the rites of transition.

Birth was intimately linked to baptism. The reception of this sacrament was almost universal in Ireland. The same was true for Australia. Baptismal records show that people generally waited for the coming of the priest for the sacrament to be administered. Clearly, the later canonical enactment that children be baptised "quamprimum" (as soon as possible) did not apply in the 1830s. For instance, as previously mentioned, Ullathorne baptised three of Edward Curr's children at Circular Head in 1833. He says that two of the children "were old enough to make their remarks and play with the end of my stole whilst I was administering the sacrament".\textsuperscript{120}

Among the priests there was doubt concerning the need to baptise Aborigines. The Vicar General asked Morris for direction and he

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{119} Colonial Secretary to Ullathorne 12 November (?) 1834. Ullathorne to Colonial Secretary 1 August 1834. Both in NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{120} Autobiography, p 56.
\end{itemize}
The government also was concerned with these pivotal events in the lives of citizens, and the clergy were instructed to keep records of marriages, baptisms and funerals. It was Ullathorne himself who suggested that printed marriage forms be sent to the clergy.119 Through their participation in these central rites of transition the clergy became increasingly important in the lives of their people. Gradually the clergyman came to be seen as the professional who conducted the rites of transition.

Birth was intimately linked to baptism. The reception of this sacrament was almost universal in Ireland. The same was true for Australia. Baptismal records show that people generally waited for the coming of the priest for the sacrament to be administered. Clearly, the later canonical enactment that children be baptised "quamprimum" (as soon as possible) did not apply in the 1830s. For instance, as previously mentioned, Ullathorne baptised three of Edward Curr's children at Circular Head in 1833. He says that two of the children "were old enough to make their remarks and play with the end of my stole whilst I was administering the sacrament".120

Among the priests there was doubt concerning the need to baptise Aborigines. The Vicar General asked Morris for direction and he

119. Colonial Secretary to Ullathorne 12 November (?) 1834. Ullathorne to Colonial Secretary 1 August 1834. Both in NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.
120. Autobiography, p 56.
were baptised and given communion, but when manhood came "they flung off their clothes, ran off to the Bush and followed their native impulse for savage freedom".  

124 McEncroe's attitude was little different and neither he nor Ullathorne attempted to convert them.  

125

There is evidence, however, that Therry (as well as a number of the other priests) continued to baptise Aborigines.  

Polding was also in favour of baptism of Aborigines and he instructed the Passionist missionaries at Moreton Bay to do so, but they hesitated to do so until the Aborigines removed "the prejudices rooted in their minds" and "their naturally strong passions and depraved inclinations".  

127 Protestant missionaries were also loathe to grant baptism to Aborigines.  

The second rite of transition was marriage. Here the clergy ran into many difficulties. New Holland had a bad reputation in the United Kingdom as a place of sexual promiscuity. This is understandable. Convicts and many free immigrants had experienced a severe disruption in their lives. Uprooted from traditional


patterns of living, they found themselves at the other end of the earth in an alien environment. Their behaviour was no worse nor no better than might have been expected from people in such circumstances. The clergy seemed tacitly to understand this. They often blamed the depravity of the convicts on the conditions in which they lived.

A major component of the problem was the imbalance of the population: there was a shortage of women. Drunkenness compounded the problem of promiscuity. Ullathorne paints a lurid picture of convictism especially in *The Catholic Mission in Australasia* and *the Horrors of Transportation*. But the polemical purposes of these books must always be kept in mind when assessing what colonial reality might have been like. While denouncing the sexual permissiveness of female convicts, he also speaks of the constant danger of masters seducing their convict servants, especially in isolated country areas. He tells the story of one woman who always kept a carving knife beside her to ward off her importunate master!\(^{129}\)

Church and State faced a common difficulty which flowed directly from the disrupted lives of so many of the population: this was the problem of bigamy. The proclamation of marriage banns was one way of trying to deal with this problem. Since the decree of the Council of Trent on marriage (*Tametsi*), the Catholic Church had

\(^{129}\). *Autobiography*, pp 111-112.
insisted on the proclamation of banns and it was always suspicious of "vagi" - people who wandered from place to place. Given the unsettled nature of New South Wales society, there were many "vagi" in the colony. The government also used banns as a way of checking on the background of people, and the governor's permission was required to dispense people from the publication of banns.\textsuperscript{130} Despite attempts to check on all prospective spouses' freedom to marry, Ullathorne complained to the Molesworth Select Committee about the impossibility of investigating the background of many of the people wanting to marry in New South Wales.\textsuperscript{131}

Considerable confusion reigned in the 1830s in New South Wales concerning the civil and ecclesiastical law of marriage. It was accepted that the marriage laws of England applied in New Holland. There was, however, doubt concerning one enactment: Lord Hardwicke's Act of 1753. This Act, which was aimed at clandestine marriages, stated that for validity a marriage must be celebrated before an Anglican priest in the Anglican Church. But the statute was explicitly confined to England and Wales. It therefore did not apply to Ireland. But did it apply in New South Wales? It was generally thought that it did. Macquarie and his successors, however, permitted the Catholic clergy to celebrate marriages

\textsuperscript{130}. Sir George Murray to Darling, 2 September 1829. HRA, Series I, Vol 15, p 153.

where both parties were Catholics. To try to bring some order to the situation, the colonial government passed a local enactment in 1834 (5 Will IV, No 2). It decreed that all marriages celebrated by Presbyterian and Catholic ministers prior to July 1834 were valid and that this validity extended to all subsequent marriages celebrated in these churches. This right was gradually extended to the other Churches.\textsuperscript{132}

The application of Hardwicke to New South Wales was tested in 1836.\textsuperscript{133} The case concerned John Maloney who had been married to Mary Haly (or Phely) in Father Power's private residence in 1829. Maloney had subsequently left her and married Mary Carmody in the Church of England at Liverpool in 1835. The Chief Justice, Sir Francis Forbes, ruled that Hardwicke did not apply in New South Wales. Consent, he held, constituted marriage. The presence or absence of a priest was entirely irrelevant to validity. This ruling was later overturned by a House of Lords decision, and it was not until the comprehensive marriage New South Wales marriage legislation of 1855 that the matter was settled.

However, in the 1820s and 1830s the fundamental problem for the clergy was not the validity of marriages but getting people married at all. Ullathorne claimed that


\textsuperscript{133} Legge, J. Gordon: A Selection of Supreme Court Cases in New South Wales. Sydney. 1898. pp 77-85.
Our greatest difficulty in the earlier days of the Mission was to get the people married, and their children baptised, especially in the interior. They had adopted the law of nature when there was scarcely a priest in the colony...and by habit they continued in it. Then there were so many who, having been transported, had left a wife, or a husband, at home of whom often we could gain no intelligence.134

Roger Therry put it more bluntly: "It was not until the convict element was expelled that marriage came universally to be regarded as an honourable estate".135

Some convict women used marriage as a way of escape from the Female Factory. Once men had been emancipated or had a ticket of leave, they came to the Factory to obtain a wife. Many of them were from the frontier, where men often outnumbered women by ten to one. As Ullathorne describes it, it seemed a loveless affair. A group of volunteer women came forth from the first or second class. "The man cast his eyes over them, invited one whom he selected to a conference and after a little conversation, they were married".136 He admits that the majority of these marriages worked out reasonably well.

Convict women were often referred to as little better than whores. As Annette Salt has shown this reflected the class


135. Therry, Reminiscences, op. cit., p 119-120.

136. Autobiography, p 112. In the Catholic Mission (pp 27-29) Ullathorne paints a dismal picture of the moral state of the women convicts - but the lurid picture results as much from the polemical nature of this book as from the reality of the women's lives.
prejudices of those who judged the women; the only way that they could become respectable was by marriage.\footnote{Salt, A.: \textit{These Outcast Women. The Parramatta Female Factory. 1821-1848}. Sydney. 1984. pp 37-38.} Michael Sturma has shown that the behaviour of convict women in Australia reflected their British background - de facto unions among the poor in England were the rule rather than the exception.\footnote{Sturma, M.: "The Sterotype of Convict Women, 1788-1832", \textit{Labour History}, No 34, May 1978, pp 3-10.} The Australian pattern followed the British; until the 1830s de facto unions were the norm among the poor and many of the better-off emancipists. There is also evidence that convict women were more independent that has been previously thought. Many of them preferred free settlers as husbands to convicts and they often tried to marry above their "station". The population imbalance favoured women; they could take their choice among the available men.\footnote{For a revisionist view on the position of women see Belcher, Michael J.: \textit{The Child in New South Wales Society 1820-1837}. In private Circulation.}

Both government and Church encouraged marriage. Marriage and morality were viewed as coterminous, for marriage forced people to settle down. Having a family brought a sense of responsibility. But many of the relationships between cohabiting couples were already permanent; it was simply that they had not been sanctioned by a marriage ceremony. Many of these unions could have been construed as clandestine. The Hardwicke legislation had
been largely ignored by the poor in England and it would have been of little interest to convicts in Australia. It was only in the 1830s and 1840s that the marital mores of the poor began to conform to middle class norms.\textsuperscript{140} Things were changing for the wealthy as well: by Ullathorne's time in New South Wales very few upper class men could afford to live publically with a mistress. Sir John Jamison was one of the few exceptions.\textsuperscript{141}

Ullathorne's evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee is interesting in this context. Answering Molesworth's question "Is there a great deal of concubinage?", he assured the Committee that when he first arrived there was and that the cause was the lack of clergy in the interior. In order to root out the problem he "found it necessary to employ persons in whom I had confidence to make enquiries, and to report to me the names of people under my care who were living in a state of concubinage and those who were married".\textsuperscript{142} Ullathorne's solution was characteristically direct. He visited those living in concubinage and "when I found no obstacle...(I married) the parties or...insisted on a separation". He claimed that the appointment of priests in the interior

\textsuperscript{140}. For a treatment of these issues from both an historial and statistical perspective see McDonald, Peter F.: \textit{Marriage in Australia. Age at First Marriage and Proportion Marrying 1860-1971}. Canberra. 1974. pp 27-57. For the whole question of marriage among the lower class see Bicentennial History, Australians 1838, pp 100-104.

\textsuperscript{141}. ADB, II, p 12.

had led to a diminution of concubinage.

Another marriage problem arose from church law. It concerned the application to Australia of the decree Tametsi of the Council of Trent. This decree was aimed (like Hardwicke's Act) against clandestine marriages. Trent ruled that in order to be valid, a Catholic marriage must be celebrated before a priest and two witnesses (a "Catholic marriage" was one that involved at least one Catholic partner). But Tametsi applied only where it had been promulgated, and this was usually only in Catholic countries. It had not been promulgated in England, nor in countries with a Protestant majority and it was only promulgated in some dioceses in Ireland.\(^{143}\)

Therefore, in places where the decree had been promulgated, marriages involving Catholics that were celebrated before the Protestant minister were considered invalid by the Catholic Church. Thus the partners were free to marry again. The problem in New South Wales was that Conolly had obtained an order from Slater to publish Tametsi. Ullathorne told Morris: "The Decree was published once from the Altar in all the principal Towns of the Colony".\(^{144}\) It was known to some people but not to all. Some Catholics had married in the Protestant Church and then abandoned

\(^{143}\) Keenan, op. cit., pp 46-47.

\(^{144}\) Ullathorne to Morris, 17 April 1833. DA, Morris Papers, I 39.
their partners; they then came back to the Catholic Church seeking to marry again.

Ullathorne told Morris that an added problem was that because of the shortage of priests, people in the interior "are compelled to marry before the Protestant clergyman". Thus the exact marital situation of many people was difficult to ascertain. The Vicar General told Morris that he did not want Catholics to assume that they were free to marry in the Protestant Church. But, with the shortage of Catholic clergy, what could they do? The arrival of Polding brought a solution to this problem. It was decided that Tametsi did not apply in Australia. Thus throughout the 19th century Catholic marriages in the Protestant Churches were considered illicit but valid.145

The arrival of Polding also meant that the more difficult canonical problems could be dealt with locally. As a Vicar Apostolic Polding had wide-ranging delegated jurisdiction from Propaganda. After his appointment as an Ordinary (that is as a bishop in his own right with his own diocese) in 1842 this jurisdiction became personally proper to him. He could give dispensations from the banns of marriage and he often delegated marital problems to the local clergy. For example he told Therry:

145. This was changed by the papal legislation of Pius X in 1907 in the Decree Ne Temere. This extended Tametsi universally and decreed that for validity a Catholic marriage must be celebrated before a (Catholic) priest and two witnesses. This legislation was not changed until 1972.
A poor man of the name of McCarthy called upon me to complain that his wife had left him and was following a wicked course of life in or near Liverpool. If you can discover her residence have the kindness to admonish her on the subject.  

He was also concerned about mixed marriages, especially when "respectable" people were involved. He informed Therry that a Protestant - named Smith - had applied to him for permission to marry a Miss Byrne from Therry's parish of Campbelltown. He informed Therry:

The Church solicitous for the present and future happiness of her children and foreseeing the many grievous consequences to Parents and progeny which may and often do follow from marriages contracted between Parties differing on a matter of such importance as Religion has ever discouraged marriages and evinced her aversion to them in the strongest and most direct manner - by prohibition.  

However, in view of the circumstances - "Mr. Smith tells me that the happiness of the young lady entirely depends on the union" - and the fact that all was prepared for the marriage and that "the Religious Education of the children...will never be a subject of dispute" - Polding unwillingly gave his permission for this marriage to take place. However, it is clear that there was considerable flexibility on this issue, for the Australian reported in the very same year (1836) that McEncroe and Lang had "concelebrated" a mixed marriage between a Presbyterian woman

146. Polding to Therry, 14 January 1837. ML MSS, Therry Papers 1810/61.

147. Polding to Therry, 16 February 1836. ML MSS, Therry Papers, 1810/61.
and a Catholic man.148

Other individual marriage problems were dealt with, many of them concerning spouses who had disappeared. For instance Father Thomas Brown of Downside told Polding that Propaganda had decided "that the female whose husband was transported to Norfolk Island, whence he made his escape in a boat which was afterward found wrecked, without anything being heard of him, is at liberty to marry".149 The question of bad example arose when Polding publicly accused a Campbelltown teacher and parishioner, Christopher O'Brien, of bigamy and excommunicated him. It turned out that Polding was wrong about O'Brien. The Bishop told Therry:

The testimony of a Miss Reardon - now Mrs. Fowler has in a considerable degree removed the suspicion I entertained respecting the marriage of O'Brien to a former wife - This person...had every opportunity of knowing the facts...She is certain that the marriage never took place.150

Polding then instructed Therry to take the opportunity of the O'Brien case "to explain to the people the nature and extent of the ancient Penitential Canons". No doubt this was scant comfort for O'Brien, but it did provide an opportunity for the clergy to assert their power of the business of marriage.

148. Australian, 7 July 1836. Also referred to in Birchley, op. cit., p 47.

149. Brown to Polding, 15 April 1839. SAA, Polding Papers.

The Catholic marriage rite itself was very informal. The ceremony was brief, generally without communion or Mass. This followed the Irish pattern. In Australia from the 1830s onwards couples tended to look for the priest to celebrate their marriage. Despite Polding's strictures, local conditions meant that there were many more mixed marriages in Australia than in Ireland, where they were frowned upon.151

There is evidence that the children of mixed marriages in New South Wales were generally brought up as Catholics. Some English squatters, convicts and emancipists married Irish domestic servants. Both oral and family history tend to indicate that the mother's religion was dominant.152 Conversion also played a part: for instance, Father Brian Maher has shown that in the Goulburn-Lake George area in the 1830s there was a spate of conversions of husbands of Irish Catholic women, all of them associated with Therry.153 Maher also thinks that it was common for the boys to follow the religion of the father and the girls the religion of the mother. Given the social conditions of the squatting era, it was natural for the mother to be the dominant influence in a


152. Father P.J. Moore in a handwritten history of Bombala parish (1911) argues from a survey of Catholic families in the area with English names that the religion of the Irish wife was dominant in the religious upbringing of the children. Mss in Canberra Archdiocesan Archives.

decision such as the religion of the children.

In contemporary Catholicism the sacrament of the sick has been restored to the function it had in the early Church: it is for the sick. In the 1830s the sacrament was for the dying. That was why it was called "last anointing" or "extreme unction". In early Australia priests would travel long distances to give this sacrament together with viaticum or communion for the dying. This reflected the practice of the Irish church: to die without extreme unction was regarded as a major tragedy. "The clergy were under the strictest obligation to attend the dying at whatever hour of the day or night they were called for".¹⁵⁴

Priests in Australia were always willing to go on a "sick Call". Ullathorne gives several examples in the Autobiography.¹⁵⁵ He tells of an incident on the day after his arrival in Sydney (19 February 1833). He was called to a woman who "had been living with a man who in the course of the previous night had treated her with savage barbarity". Ullathorne anointed her before she died. Another call was false: the real aim was to get him to reconcile a couple after a "desperate quarrel". Ullathorne wasted no time on "marriage counselling": he "gave both of them a good scolding. They cried, shook hands and I left them". Another false alarm took him as far as the Illawarra.¹⁵⁶ Therry also was often

summoned on sick calls. His diaries show that much of his constant travel was linked to care for the sick.

Ministry to the condemned and attendance at executions was one of the most onerous duties of the clergy. For much of the first decade Therry had to carry out this duty; his popularity and kindness to the convicts meant that sometimes Protestants asked for his ministry. A Sydney newspaper (probably the Gazette) reported the role of Therry in the execution of eight "unfortunate malefactors":

The pious and unwearied assiduities of Rev. Mr Therry were continued to the last moment; he rode in the cart...Only one (of the convicts), it is said, was of the Catholic persuasion originally, but all embraced it as the day of death drew near...their demeanour was very resigned, and they appeared to take a lively interest in the consolations afforded them by Mr Therry.  

Ullathorne claims that during his first visit to Norfolk Island four Protestant convicts condemned to death "wished me to take them also to my care" - which he willingly did. McEncroe also attended many executions and he and Ullathorne both maintained that many condemned convicts converted to Catholicism before execution. Ullathorne also asserted that "two thirds of the

157. See Diaries for 1832-1833 in SAA.
159. Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, p 42.
Protestant criminals sought the aid of the Catholic priest.\textsuperscript{160} Although J. D. Lang's paper \textit{The Colonist} admitted "that such (conversions) occur occasionally", it is hard to assess the accuracy of the Catholic claims.\textsuperscript{161} Archdeacon W.G. Broughton denied them in his pamphlet \textit{On the True Nature of the Holy Catholic Church}.\textsuperscript{162} The real attraction of Catholicism probably lay in its ritual and tangible sacramental system and the reassuring repetitiveness of its prayers and litanies.

Michael Sturma has described hanging as "the most dramatic and didactic" of public rituals.\textsuperscript{163} The role of the clergy in the execution was multiple: they focused attention on the spiritual aspect of the action. Their presence suggested that God concurred in the state's punishment of the malefactor - this was especially true if the condemned persons confessed their guilt. Sturma says that "Frequently the confession was read from the gallows by the chaplain, who no doubt sometimes included his own interpretation of the condemned person's downfall". A well-known example of this was the speech of Father Conolly at the execution of the convict, Alexander Pearce, who escaped from Macquarie Harbour twice, and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{160} See \textit{Autobiography}, p 76-78. See also \textit{Catholic Mission}, pp 12; 33.
  \item \textsuperscript{161} \textit{The Colonist}, 2 April 1835.
  \item \textsuperscript{162} Published in Sydney in 1833.
\end{itemize}
survived by eating his companions.

He (Conolly) commenced by stating, that Pearce, standing on the awful entrance into eternity on which he was placed (sic), was desirous to make the most public acknowledgement of his guilt, in order to humble himself, as much as possible, in the sight of God and Man.164

How much of this confession is Conolly and how much is Pearce is, of course, hard to tell. The clergy also helped keep the prisoner under emotional control and stopped untoward situations. Describing an execution in Newcastle, Ullathorne speaks of a prisoner who

wanted to harangue the (attending) convicts...I would not let him for I knew how much vanity was displayed in these dying speeches...He obeyed and attended to his prayers.165

Thus it was through their control of the rites of passage that the clergy asserted their influence over the lives of the people. Clerical professionalism developed in tandem with the growing respectability of the Catholic population. The clergy interacted closely with the government in the regulation of birth, marriage and death. Notices of the returns of banns of proposed marriages involving convicts had to be returned every month together with letters of permission from the masters of convicts in assigned service. Certificates of marriage, baptism and birth had to be sent at the end of each month to the registrar of the Supreme

164. Hobart Town Gazette, 6 August 1824.
Central to the worship of the Catholic Church is the celebration of the eucharist. For the first forty years of the colony people rarely had the chance to attend Mass. Except during the ministry of the convict priests and O'Flynn and the rare and brief visits of foreign chaplains, there were no priests to celebrate it. But from the 1830s onwards Mass became more important as priests moved around from station to station and, after 1840, became resident in the main centres of the colony. Mass was celebrated wherever it was convenient. In the early days in Sydney and Campbelltown it was usually the court house, in Bathurst it was a ballroom and in Appin the inn. At Parramatta Mass was said in a dark room built over the prison; the ritual was accompanied by the ribald conversation of a chain-gang confined in the room below.

A more ornate liturgy quickly developed once Saint Mary's church was completed (1835). The arrival of Polding meant that pontifical Mass could be celebrated. Polding loved to do this with as large a clerical entourage as could be mustered. He was welcomed to Sydney with a "well sung" Mozart Mass. From Therry's time onwards there was a tradition of singing. The garrulous Columbus

166. Ullathorne to McLeay, uncertain date but late 1834. NSWSA, Col. Sec., 4/2224.1.

Fitzpatrick reported that Catholic members of the military bands were often used in worship.\textsuperscript{168} Band instruments were also used to accompany liturgical singing in Ireland.\textsuperscript{169}

Saint Mary's had obviously become something of a centre for Sydney's musical life. The choir and a number of amateurs performed \textit{The Messiah} and supporting sacred songs on 26 January 1838.\textsuperscript{170} Polding himself preferred Gregorian chant, but it was Mozart and Haydn who dominated the Sunday services.\textsuperscript{171} First communion also was a major occasion. The \textit{Australasian Chronicle} reported that one celebrated in the cathedral in 1839 was "most edifying".\textsuperscript{172} "The children, most of whom were females, were dressed in white and arranged around the sanctuary, holding lighted tapers in their hands, and wearing crosses on their breasts". The Bishop addressed them

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{168} Fitzpatrick recalled the early days of Sydney Catholicism in a series of letters to the Goulburn \textit{Argus} between 1865 and 1884 reprinted in JACHS 2/1(1966), pp 13-45. For liturgy see pp 25-27.
  \item \textsuperscript{169} See Bartholomew P. Keegan to Michael Doyle, 14 January 1822 in Collectanea Hibernica, No 8, 1966. p 75.
  \item \textsuperscript{171} Australians 1838, p 233.
  \item \textsuperscript{172} See the \textit{Australasian Chronicle}, 27 August 1839. SAA has a complete set of the \textit{Chronicle}. This was the first Catholic newspaper in the Australian colonies. For the growth of religious and specifically Catholic newspapers see Walker, R.B.: The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920. Sydney. 1976. pp 148-150.
\end{itemize}
in his usual perspicuous and affecting style and then gave them communion. Rev. Mr Murphy, who had prepared the children, warned their parents against setting them a bad example. They then repaired in procession to the court house to an excellent breakfast.

Slowly churches were built in the major centres of population: Campbelltown (1834), Maitland (1836), Parramatta (1837), Yass (1838) and Windsor (1840). Resident priests meant that Catholics could now attend Mass with some regularity. Ullathorne reported that in his first year in Sydney there were "but a hundred Easter Communions...and but few elsewhere". But soon after he left in 1840 "there a thousand at the Cathedral alone".173

There is a real sense in which the clergy acted as "social workers" in early Australia. A whole range of memorials, petitions and requests from convicts and from the poor went through their hands. Through their clergy convicts obtained permission from the governor to marry. Ullathorne writes:

Another field of occupation was the examining and signing of papers of the large convict population. No one of that class could obtain their ticket of leave...or their free pardon or their leave to marry, or the privilege of having their wives and children sent out at Government cost, or petitions of any other description attended to unless the documents had been examined and signed by their clergy.174

These petitions included requests that convicts be assigned to their wives who had come free to the Colony, or that convict wives be assigned to their free husbands. Unfortunately the Vicar

General has only left a few examples of these petitions, but there is a fascinating collection of them in the Therry papers. 175

There were petitions from convicts who claimed to have been falsely accused, requests from destitute people unable to get into hospital, petitions from free men asking to for permission to marry women from the female factory and requests for tickets of leave. Letters include a request for help from the wife of a soldier with seven children sentenced to fourteen years at Moreton Bay for receiving stolen property, the petition of a crippled prisoner at Norfolk Island asking for mitigation of a life sentence and the request of a destitute woman with an insane (possibly epileptic) child for assistance. Not all requests came from convicts. There is a letter from a distressed woman with three children whose husband has gone to the Derwent to search for a “situation” and a petition from a man accused of “mental imbecility”. A sad case is that of George Hillier. He claimed that he arrived in September 1815 aged 44 on the ship Baring. He had a life sentence. He was now 64 “an inmate of Hyde Park Barracks, old and infirm and helpless”. He claims to have been a special constable who captured bushrangers in Van Diemen’s Land, but through bureaucratic bungling, he received neither reward nor pardon, but was sentenced to Moreton Bay. He simply asked for

175. ML MSS 1810/107-109 and 1810/60. See also memorial of Timothy Mahor (sic) in the Therry Papers in SAA.
permission to build his own hut "on Government property...at Wolloomooloo", drawing stores from Hyde Park Barracks.

The Catholic clergy received many letters from parish priests and respectable persons in Ireland giving character testimony to various convicts. There were also requests from families in Ireland that the clergy inform them of the welfare of convicts - especially female convicts. There were letters from Ireland protesting the innocence of convicted persons and even a request from the bigamist Maloney requesting Ullathorne to search the marriage registers to support his case. There is no record of the Vicar General's response!

In traditional societies, such as Ireland, there would have been less need for the clergy to fulfill a social welfare role. The normal structures of society were more intact, and the developing religious orders of women (such as the Sisters of Mercy and Sisters of Charity) would have dealt more with societal 'drop-outs'. In Australia, where many people experienced social dislocation, the Catholic clergy were called on to fulfil a mediating role between the individual, society and the government. They were to carry this on more or less successfully until the advent of the social work profession.

Fast and abstinence was another way in which the clergy regulated the lives of the Catholic people. From the early Church onwards a
"black fast" was imposed during lent, advent and other penitential days. Also Friday abstinence often flowed over into Saturday. Ullathorne told Morris that Catholics found it difficult to abstain from meat on Saturdays for "fish here is much more expensive than meat" and that convicts, those on assignment and soldiers were all dependent on their rations of meat.

With the arrival of Polding rules of fast and abstinence, especially in lent, were clarified. He issued detailed instructions in his Pastoral Letter of 1835. The Letter recommended fasting as a way of punishing the sinful body. Repentance and Confession were recommended during lent. Polding stressed that during this season meat was only permitted on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and then only once in the day. Eggs were allowed once a day except on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of lent. Only one main meal was allowed with "small collations" in the morning and evening. Dispensations from the local pastor were required for those who could not observe the fast.

Given the conditions of colonial Australia, where hard physical work was demanded of almost all, these were stringent regulat-

---

176. For details of the 'black fast' see Catholic Encyclopaedia, II, p 590. For abstinence see Catholic Encyclopaedia, I, pp 67-73.

177. See also Conolly to Power, 9 February 1827. SPCM, O'Brien Papers.

178. See the text of his Pastoral Letter issued on 13 February 1835. ML MSS 1810/61.
ions. There is no way of assessing how well they were carried out. Polding also stressed the need for "the greatest moderation in drinking" as a penance. In 1837 he decreed that milk, butter and cheese were not permitted at the small collations in the morning and evening. It was through increasing control over the details of the lives of their people - such as fasting - that the Catholic clergy of the 19th century consolidated their power in the Church.

Finally, I want to outline something of the quality of Australian Catholic religiosity in the 1830s. Preaching is a way of entering into this. As well as giving a sample of religious rhetoric, it highlights the focal religious, moral and spiritual themes of the period. Ullathorne has again provided us with a way of assimilating the rhetoric and religiosity of the 1830s. Soon after his return to England he published his *Sermons With Prefaces*, which provide us with a collection of sermons delivered while he was in Australia.

He began his book with a long introduction setting out his homiletic theory. He emphasised the need for preachers to abandon the

179. Polding to Therry, 15 February 1835. ML MSS 1810/61.

180. See Polding The Pastoral Instruction for Lent 1837. Polding Papers, SAA.

181. Published in London in 1842. The only other collection of sermons that I have been able to find are those of Therry (See ML MSS 1810/110) but these are virtually illegible. We also have the pastoral letters of Polding.
fastidious and artificial rhetorical styles of the 17th and 18th centuries. He wanted an "eloquence for the people", and he is conscious of the need to preach to a broad cross section "especially in our large towns". He says that the preacher must be direct, scriptural and non-apologetic in his approach. Preaching must be emotionally warm and enthusiastic. "The state church is cold, not the English heart". However, the influence of contemporary Protestant ideas (especially Methodist) are clear in his approach to preaching. His aim was to move people to repentance and amendment of life, "to enter...and take possession of the heart". He uses many examples - especially of a personal kind - and his later sermons show that Australia provided him with a rich store of these.

However, this does not mean that the Vicar General was anti-intellectual. Ullathorne worked from three major sources: the bible, the Fathers of the Church and his own prayer. Patrology was especially important for him and the long preface of the collected Sermons shows his wide reading in this area. He also emphasises the need for a contemplative spirit and he especially recommends the English mystical tradition.

182. Ullathorne, Sermons, p 12.

183. He refers to his fellow English Benedictine spiritual writer Father Augustine Baker (1575-1641) and to the medieval works The Scale of Perfection of Walter Hilton (+1396) and the anonymous Cloud of Unknowing.
While the note of evangelical moralising is there, he strongly emphasises the mercy of God. For instance, preaching on Mary Magdalen he stressed that prostitution was often the result of environment and circumstance and he pictured the thoughtless young orphan who "falls into sin". Significantly, it was the "heedless young men" whom he attacked: those who use prostitutes but who never consider the consequences for the women for "what you are pleased to call an hour of trifling". The sermon emphasised God's mercy for the women. When Magdalen returns to the feet of Jesus she is not only forgiven, but as a witness to the resurrection, she becomes "the first of evangelists... the apostle to the apostles". The sermon is unusual in that it does not reflect conventional class prejudice against "fallen women".

His best known sermon is entitled The Drunkard and it was first preached in three taverns in Appin, Bathurst and Patrick's Plains and was printed in Sydney and later re-printed in Ireland by the temperance preacher Father Theobald Mathew. Again it is practical and down to earth. He emphasised the consequences of drunkenness especially for the wife and family. He showed acute observation when he spoke of the compulsiveness of alcoholism and of the need of external support to break the habit. In his own experience he had seen McEncroe's success in defeating alcoholism. How is the habit broken?

Have a willing mind: shun the occasion: fly idleness. Fix

184. Sermons With Prefaces, pp 120-121.
yourself a measure in your friendly domestic meetings...and never see the inside of a tavern.

Another widespread vice that he attacked was cursing God and swearing in the sermon *The Evil Tongue*.

The rhetoric of Ullathorne was directed to ordinary people. But his themes reflected the moralism of the middle class and the spirituality symptomatic of that ethos. His views are Augustinian, so there is an emphasis on human sinfulness. But balancing this is a conviction of God's love and mercy. The sermon on *The Love of God* stressed that human affection counted for nothing; the only thing that matters is God's love for us. His theology is entirely conventional. It reflects the major themes of 19th century religiosity and especially the dichotomy (typical of the post-Reformation era) between nature and grace.

Thus we have seen the work of Ullathorne and the other priests as the church was established in New South Wales. In the next chapter I will turn to its interaction with the other mediating structures of the colony - especially government and the other churches - and to the general life of New South Wales society. I will also review the local church's relationship to the universal Catholic Church.
CHAPTER FOUR

SEE HOW THESE CHRISTIANS LOVE ONE ANOTHER
In the previous chapter I outlined the work of Ullathorne in establishing the internal structure of the Catholic Church in New South Wales and, in co-operation with the other clergy, in developing a ministry to the Catholic community. In this chapter I will examine the interaction of Catholicism with New South Wales colonial society. Specifically, I will outline the results of the developing Catholic sense of identity and the impact of this on religious and social life. Ullathorne was a key figure in this interaction. One of the most important consequences was the growth of sectarianism.

Historically, the greatest tragedy of religion in Australia has been "the madness and folly of sectarian strife".¹ It has been a characteristic of Australian life since the 1830s and it has only disappeared since the advent of a more ecumenical age.² For 130 years two contrasting and mutually exclusive views of Christianity confronted each other in Australia, both claiming possession of absolute truth. The conflict was between the competing demands of Evangelical Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. From the mid-19th century onwards this confrontation was compounded by the


advent of a militant secularism.

Why did sectarian strife begin specifically in the 1830s? Because it was during that period that Catholics, as a community, began to make their presence felt in New South Wales society. Certainly sectarianism was latent in the exclusive claims of the principal Christian churches, but it was not until the 1830s that the Catholics (numerically the second largest church) began to assert themselves. In the early decades of the colony, Catholics were a subservient group, still legally proscribed until Emancipation in 1829. Conolly and Therry were dependent on their meagre government stipends for survival. Therry did try to assert himself on behalf of the Catholic community, but with little success. But from about 1830 onwards the pattern changed. A sense of identity began developing among the Churches, especially the Catholics.

At the same time the Anglican, Presbyterian and Catholic communities were led by powerful personalities: Broughton, Lang and Ullathorne. These men were clerics in the new mould: conscious of their professionalism and anxious to assert their authority both within and without their respective communities. William Grant Broughton had come to New South Wales as Archdeacon in 1829 and he was appointed Bishop of Australia in 1836. John Dunmore Lang had been in Australia longer than both Ullathorne and Broughton; he had arrived in 1823 as a young Presbyterian minister. Within the Catholic context the Vicar General's arrival gave the church
a new sense of purpose, for Ullathorne was only too happy to assert a Catholic identity.

This led to inevitable tensions for, as Manning Clark has pointed out, one of the characteristics of Evangelical Protestantism was anti-Romanism. As early as 1807 Marsden, having described the Irish as "the most wild, ignorant and savage Race that were ever favoured with the light of Civilization", went on to warn that "if the Catholic religion is in the least tolerated, the influence of the Priests on the depraved turbulent dispositions of the Catholics who are in the Colony, together with their extreme Superstition will keep the Settlement in perpetual Alarm (sic)". This anti-Irish, anti-Catholic tradition was carried on by Lang. Broughton's anti-Romanism was less populist than Lang's, but equally strong. Broughton was one of the major protagonists of Ullathorne, for Lang was absent from Australia for most of the


Zeal amounting to enthusiasm is required. So long as Methodism does not come in, we have no rival to fear and I doubt much whether Methodist Ministers would persevere long. Money is to be made more rapidly by tending the quadrupedal than the biped flock. Hence, most of those who come out here to preach the gospel, sink into wool growers and herd feeders.

One of the earliest signs that sectarianism was present appeared at "a numerous meeting of Roman Catholics at the temporary Roman Catholic Chapel, Castlereagh-Street" on 29 July 1832. The meeting concerned two recurring problems of Sydney Catholicism: the completion of the Hyde Park Chapel and the restoration of Therry to the official chaplaincy. A large number of prominent Protestants...

7. Lang was absent from Australia between 1833 and 1834, 1836 and 1837 (Ullathorne himself left in mid-1836 and returned at the end of 1838) and 1840 to 1841.


10. Sydney Gazette, 4 and 7 August 1832.

11. Detailed information on this meeting and the consequent debate can be obtained from Roger Therry's pamphlet *An Appeal on Behalf of the Roman Catholics* (Sydney. 1833). A second pamphlet by Therry with the same title also appeared in 1833. Blout's response is outlined in Therry's *Reminiscences*, pp 148-150. Most
tants had been asked to support both these causes. A letter from Sir Edward Parry (a sincere and committed Anglican), a Commiss­ioner of the Australian Agricultural Company, was read to the meeting. Parry apologised for refusing to contribute to the appeal and went on to outline the fundamental problem confronting the Evangelical Protestant in supporting the Catholic Church. The Church of Rome, he claimed, was "a system of idolatry and superstition of human invention...directly opposed to the inspired Word of God". He argued that the Catholic appeal for contributions to the Hyde Park chapel (an appeal based on the liberality of the colonists and the principle of religious freedom) would lead to an increasing disregard "of all scriptural and vital religion whatever". This showed a change in Protestant attitudes for up until this time many prominent non-Catholics had contributed to Catholic causes, especially to the construction of Saint Mary's church.

In his letter Parry insisted on a central issue that was to recur in this debate. In the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, Catholics usually appealed to the prevailing liberalism to establish their claims. They had no hesitation in asking for Protestant help in supporting their claim for freedom of con-

of the pamphlets of this continuing controversy can be found in a bound copy in the Ferguson Room (F 1519) of the Australian National Library entitled Tracts on Popery, NSW.

science. Roger Therry, as chairman, addressed the meeting in response to Parry's letter. He asserted that the appeal for the chapel was never intended to imply a profession of faith in Catholicism. He argued that speculative theological differences were of no account and that all the colonists shared "one religion, the religion of Christians". It is ironically significant that Therry used the liberal argument to bolster Catholic claims in New South Wales in the very year that liberalism was condemned by Pope Gregory XVI in the encyclical letter Mirari vos. The Pope had argued that vital religion demanded that faith and morality be determined by eternal truth. All religions were not as good as each other. Pope Gregory and Sir Edward had much in common!

The Reverend Henry Fulton, an Irish Anglican who was a chaplain and magistrate in the Hawkesbury area, rushed to Parry's defence with arguments to prove that Catholicism was an idolatrous faith. His work is undisciplined and confusing. He maintained that "at all times in the Christian Churches a few have kept the true doctrine and worship though the great body have become gross idolaters". It did not seem to strike him that this could just as well apply to Protestantism as to Catholicism! The purpose of the Catholic system, he argued, was to "aggrandize the power of the pope and the priest". It followed that to help to pay for a

13. Reasons Why Protestants Think the Worship of the Church of Rome an Idolatrous Worship and Strictures upon a Letter lately Written by Roger Therry, Esq. Both were published in Sydney in 1833 and are found in Tracts on Popery, NSW, ANL. For Fulton see ADB, I, pp 421-422.
Broughton was quick to join in this debate. Like Parry, he was fearful of the effects of liberalism and deeply concerned with a "latitude of thinking with respect to the standards of Faith". He attacked the argument that equated Protestantism and Catholicism. He argued that the machinations of Catholics like Roger Therry lulled Protestants into indifference and inaction, dulled their jealousy for their own principles and induced them to grant aid to a religion that "they must think it worse than sacrilege in any degree to espouse". He was quick to give a theological basis for his objection: Catholicism "pleads the merits of created and sinful beings unitedly with the eternal Son of God". He wanted religious peace and harmony, but not at any price. He told Therry "I cannot be silent when I find you engaged in an attempt to shake the fidelity of Protestants to their own communion". He warned Protestants against "the insidious and paralyzing influence" which invited them to support the Catholic Church "as another equally acceptable way of worshipping the same God". They could not give contributions to the Catholic Chapel fund "without guilt".

14. Broughton's pamphlet is entitled A Letter in vindication of the Principles of the Reformation addressed to Roger Therry, Esq. in consequence of a Speech delivered by Him in the Roman Catholic Chapel At Sydney on Sunday July 29, 1832. Sydney. 1832. Included in Tracts on Popery, NSW. ANL.
It is a strongly argued case. While the theological issues are clearly important for Broughton what he feared most was an indifference and liberalism, which blurred all distinctions between religions and levelled truth to the lowest common denominator. He warned the Catholic leadership that it would appeal to liberalism at its own peril:

You will do no good, even according to your own understanding of the term, to those to whom you are united; and they will do you much harm. You will not bring them over to your Church: and what if they should carry into its bosom the spirit of their own indifference! In availing yourself of their assistance, you will recognise a principle which, if carried to its full extent, would authorise all men to encourage all sorts of opinions, without consideration of their truth or falsehood.\(^{15}\)

This was certainly an argument with which Pope Gregory XVI would agree!

Ullathorne had only been in the colony a few months when he joined in this debate. He turned his attention firstly to Fulton, possibly because Therry had already responded to the Archdeacon. Ullathorne's pamphlet *A Few Words to the Rev. Henry Fulton and his Readers with a Glance at the Archdeacon* is interesting on several counts.\(^{16}\) It is his first published work. It is a well written controversial work with theological perspicacity. The footnote references not only indicate his wide reading but also show that the books that he brought with him to New South Wales were quite specialised. However, while he argues with logical,

\(^{15}\) Broughton, op. cit., p 27.

\(^{16}\) Sydney. 1833. See *Tracts on Popery*, NSW. ANL.
often only perceives an issue at the superficial level. He lacks
the religious insight of the more experienced Archdeacon. He
emerges more as a controversialist than a serious theologian.

After dealing with Fulton's arguments - such as they were - the
Vicar General dismisses him as a serious interlocutor:

The contents of his two productions may be summed up as
comprising mis-statements (sic) of Catholic doctrine, mis­
statements of history, contradictory statements, a few quo­
tations from scripture, with his own peculiar comments, quot­
tations from history without any authority, quotations from
other writers, without reference to any book, and so garbled
as not to give the mind of the writer.17

He then turned his attention to the Archdeacon. Here the argument
centered on the complex theological relationship of scripture,
tradition and church. Broughton had argued that scripture and
tradition are identical. Ullathorne's views are based on the
Counter-Reformation theory of two separate sources for the
authority of faith: scripture and tradition. "The scriptures are
one source of evidence, and tradition is another".18 He argued
that the authority of the church was central in understanding
these two sources. Private interpretation was unjustified, and
he made the astute observation that the Archdeacon himself
exercised ecclesiastical authority and would not hesitate to use
it. "Were one of chaplains to teach Socinian or even Catholic
doctrines, the Archdeacon would consider himself bound to inter­
fer; not on the principle of 'scripture alone' and 'private in­

17. Ullathorne, A Few Words, p 36.
18. Ullathorne, A Few Words, p 45.
terpretation' but on the principle of the authority of his Church". In other words, Broughton would quickly recognise the church as a separate authority from scripture, if his own power were challenged. Ullathorne argued that this was precisely the type of power claimed by the Catholic Church.

In order to place the conflict between Ullathorne and Broughton in a broader context it is essential to understand both the position of the Church of England in the colony and the Anglican Archdeacon's conception of what that position should be.

**PART TWO - The Position of the Church of England**

The Church of England had been central to the ecclesiastical affairs of New South Wales since the foundation of the colony, but this was especially so after the establishment of the Church and School Lands Corporation in 1826. The Anglican leaders were quite specific about the status of their church. Both Scott and Broughton claimed that it was established in the same sense as in England itself. Both the church and its exclusive supporters constantly acted as if this were the case. But legally there was - and still is - doubt about the issue. In a major study of the question of Anglican establishment, Ross Border has argued that the Church of England was established because it acted as the official religion of the state, because it had privileges and

---

obligations not shared by other denominations, and because its
canon law and legal tribunals were part of the legal system of
the colony. He believes that this establishment lapsed as the
role of the Church of England changed in relationship to the
state and to the other churches in New South Wales.20

The question of establishment has also been the focus of a decis­
ion of the High Court of Australia - the so-called "Red Book"
case.21 In the judgement, Justice Owen Dixon set out the only
really convincing historical arguments for establishment. He
argued that the Anglican chaplains were part of the civil admin­
istration (although one could plausibly argue that the same app­
lied to the Catholic chaplains from 1820 onwards), that success­
ive governors were instructed to enforce public worship, that
from 1814 onwards New South Wales was part of the Diocese of
Calcutta which had been granted ecclesiastical jurisdiction by
the Crown, and that from 1824 the Archdeacon could exercise the
function of a Commissionary under the ecclesiastical laws. Dixon
was unable to trace the steps by which the Church became disest­
ablished.

Not all agree with this interpretation. Certainly many of
Broughton's non-Anglican contemporaries argued that the Church of

---


74-89.
England had never been established; it was only thought to be so by those who had most to gain from that assumption. Probably most Anglicans thought that their Church was established - de facto if not de jure - from the commencement of the colony, and certainly after the appointment of Scott as Archdeacon and the establishment of the Church and School Lands Corporation. It seems clear that after the Church Act of 1836, the major denominations of the colony shared in this de facto establishment. A residual de jure Church of England establishment probably survived through the possibility of the operation of the church courts. As we shall see later in this chapter, Ullathorne also tackled the question of the establishment of the Church of England in his Reply to Judge Burton.

It is worth pointing out that on the question of establishment, the position of Broughton was fundamentally ambivalent. While he claimed that the Church was established as in England, he was also a tractarian. Tractarian theology was opposed to state interference in ecclesiastical affairs. The church was a sacred reality, separate from the state. Thus while Broughton argued for the superiority of Anglicanism and its historical right to state support, he still fought for the freedom of the church and its right to distance itself from the state. Shaw points out that Broughton always remained a cautious tractarian.22

To place the sectarian issue within a broad social context it is necessary to outline the political shift which was occurring New South Wales at the time of Ullathorne's arrival. In the 1820s the politically and socially dominant group in the colony supported the pre-eminent position of the Church of England. However, following the departure of Darling and the arrival of Bourke (December 1831) the situation changed. Contemporary observers and later historians have highlighted the difference between the departing tory governor and the moderate liberal Bourke. The comparison has been carried over into the religious sphere: Darling has been viewed as pro-Anglican and anti-Catholic, while Bourke has been seen as a pro-Catholic Irishman who was religiously tolerant.23 For instance O'Brien contrasts the arrival of Darling when "the sun set upon Catholics hopes", with the arrival of Bourke when "the period of justice for which Catholics had so long waited" was ushered in.24

The view of Darling as conservative villain and Bourke as liberal hero has had long currency, but it is misleading. The arrival of Bourke brought no essential change in the British government's attitude to Catholicism, but only a shift of emphasis. Colonial Office bureaucrats were moving from cautious tolerance to moder-

23. King, op. cit., pp 139-152.
ate support for the Catholic Church. Bourke administered the more positive policy. Darling was no friend of Catholicism, but neither was he an ignorant bigot. He treated the Catholic Church justly and even-handedly. But he refused to tolerate public attacks on his administration by Therry. Darling showed firm support for Power and was, in fact, quite conciliatory toward Therry.\textsuperscript{25}
The difference was that Bourke's administration encouraged Catholics to make further demands on the government. Ullathorne was quick to take advantage of the new climate. But this did not mean that the Church of England had surrendered its claim to the special privileges due to the Established Church. But a decisive shift against an Anglican monopoly had occurred.

While the contrast between Darling and Bourke can be exaggerated, there is no doubt that Bourke initiated a more liberal policy with which he was in personal agreement. However, he made no concessions to "democracy" or "jacobinism". There was to be reform, but it was to be achieved in an essentially conservative way. As Clark says "In both religion and politics he (Bourke) never wavered from the upright man's faith in moderation in all things".\textsuperscript{26}

Underlying the Whig approach was a conviction that the State had a role to play in the support of religion in general. Bourke


\textsuperscript{26} Clark, History, II, p 184.
expressed this clearly in a note on one of Ullathorne's letters to him: "A Government is bound, in my opinion, to extend equal freedom of conscience, equal protection, and equal proportionate assistance to all classes of its subjects, provided they teach nothing inconsistent with plain morality". The government had abandoned the erastian view that it had the right to control the internal affairs of the non-established churches. It saw its role as subsidiary; it aided the churches because they supported and re-enforced the moral purpose of the state. Latent in this view is an un-articulated theological presupposition: there is no absolutely true church (just as the tory view implied that the State Church was the true church and that it alone was fully worthy of support).

From the standpoint of the secular power, the role of the churches was functional. Their social purpose was to maintain moral and spiritual values. However, this non-dogmatic moralism did not weaken the conviction of the governing elite that Anglicanism was the superior form of Christianity. This sense of the relativity of all the churches, nevertheless, underlay the formulation of the Church Act. George Arthur seems to have reflected this attitude when he wrote to Glenelg in 1836 that the

27. Minute of Bourke on Ullathorne to McLeay, 29 April 1833. NSWSA 4/2175.2. A copy of the letter without the minute is in DA, Bishop Morris Papers.

general aim of the state was to "establish the spiritual Church of Christ", while admitting that there was diversity of opinion as to how this was to be achieved. He told the Colonial Office, "I have no recollection of receiving any specific instructions on religious affairs", and felt that it was left up to him — and also to Bourke — to make suggestions about ecclesiastical policy and practice.29

Bourke's church policy was clarified in his well-known dispatch of September 1833.30 He outlined the resources available and the stipends granted to each of the major denominations in New South Wales to illustrate the imbalance in favour of Anglicanism. He stressed that the colonists resented "the magnitude of the sums annually granted for the support of the Church of England". He insisted that "a distribution of support from the Government of so unequal an amount...cannot be supposed to be generally acceptable to the Colonists, who provide the funds from which this distribution is made". His conclusion is unequivocal:

I would observe that, in a New Country to which persons of all religious persuasions are invited to resort, it will be impossible to establish a dominant and endowed Church without much hostility and a great improbability of its becoming permanent. The inclination of these Colonists...is decidedly adverse to such an Institution...the interests of religion would be prejudiced by its Establishment.


Bourke recommended that government support be given to each of the three major Churches and that the management of their internal affairs be left to themselves.

There was certainly a real imbalance in the distribution of resources. In 1833 the Church of England had sixteen paid clergy and four catechists. The Catholic Church had three paid priests (four when Therry's stipend was restored) and the Presbyterians four paid ministers. The Governor told the Colonial Office that Catholics constituted one fifth of the population in 1833. Bourke said that the Anglicans had seven brick or stone churches and two "other" churches. The Catholics had one "large and handsome" church (which was still incomplete - but that was not the fault of the government) and two incomplete chapels. The Presbyterians had one church of "respectable exterior" and two or three temporary buildings. In order to redress this imbalance Bourke suggested that the work of the Catholic and Presbyterian churches be supported more adequately.

In terms of financial grants to the churches between 1831 and 1840 (Bourke was Governor during most of this period), the following table shows that while the ratio of Anglicans to Catholics

31. This is a little low if we accept Waldersee's estimates of the religious profile of New South Wales from 1830 to 1840. He records the total number of Catholics at just over 16,000 in 1833 (28.4% of the population). The Catholic population of the County of Cumberland (the "greater Sydney" area) was 9,490 (26.4%). See Waldersee, op. cit., p 279.
in the population of the colony remained stable, the amount granted to the Church of England did not quite double whereas the amount given to the Catholics increased twentyfold. In terms of the proportion granted year by year, however, Anglicanism remained the favoured religion.

AMOUNTS (IN POUNDS) GRANTED TO FOUR MAJOR CHURCHES BETWEEN 1830 AND 1840

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Anglican</th>
<th>Presbyterian</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Methodist</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>14050</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>376</td>
<td></td>
<td>16260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>17054</td>
<td>2600</td>
<td>957</td>
<td></td>
<td>20611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>15401</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>1197</td>
<td></td>
<td>17148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>18229</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>1714</td>
<td></td>
<td>20507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>22159</td>
<td>1757</td>
<td>2646</td>
<td></td>
<td>26562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>26052</td>
<td>1148</td>
<td>5076</td>
<td></td>
<td>32249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>31228</td>
<td>1439</td>
<td>4709</td>
<td></td>
<td>37376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>25471</td>
<td>8320</td>
<td>7125</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>41101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>27418</td>
<td>4055</td>
<td>6490</td>
<td>1365</td>
<td>39247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>25589</td>
<td>5052</td>
<td>7451</td>
<td>2556</td>
<td>40648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>222624</td>
<td>27329</td>
<td>37739</td>
<td>4006</td>
<td>291698</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows increasing grants to the Catholic Church throughout the period of the Bourke and Gipps governorships. The Anglican proportion also increased but at a much slower rate than that granted to the other churches. The figures also show the total amount spent on each of the denominations in the period under consideration, and these totals establish that by 1840 some effort had been made to right the imbalance between the Anglican and the other churches.

32. The source of the statistics is NSWLC V+P (1832-1840) and for 1830 to 1831 Minutes of Proceedings New South Wales Legislative Council.

33. Included in the totals are the categories "Clergy and Schools", "Public Buildings", "School Establishments", "Miscellaneous" and charges on the Colonial Agent in London. Thus a fuller picture of the amount spent on the churches emerges.
I spoke earlier of the "tension" created by the insertion of an organised and increasingly articulate Catholic Church into colonial society in the 1830s. Despite the influence of liberal principles, many members of the Church of England and evangelical Protestants viewed the growth of popery with concern. In the early 1830s a subtle but real change occurred in the relationship between Catholics and the wider society of New South Wales. In the United Kingdom the Roman Catholic Relief Act (1829) made Catholics equal before the law in all but a few insignificant matters. They could no longer be patronised by granting concessions. Bourke's administration encouraged Catholics to make demands on government. Catholics and colonial liberals were, of course, firmly opposed to the attempt by Broughton and his allies to impose an Anglican establishment on the colony. The Church Act was specifically designed to achieve religious equality among the major denominations and to prevent an Anglican ascendancy. Broughton, naturally enough, was never reconciled to this. As we shall see, part of his strategy was to isolate Catholics by driving a wedge between them and their liberal allies.

The key document for understanding Bourke's religious policy is his dispatch of 30 September 1833. I have already outlined its key ideas. There are indications of Ullathorne's influence on Bourke in the dispatch, and the Governor explicitly mentions "the discretion, character and morals" of the Vicar General. He maintained a high opinion of Ullathorne until near the end of his
governorship. In 1836 he told Glenelg that he had "every reason to be satisfied with the zeal and intelligence of this pious and enlightened Ecclesiastic".34 It was only after his evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee that Bourke changed his opinion of Ullathorne.

The terms of the Church Act are quite straight-forward.35 Public money on a pound for pound basis (from a minimum of 300 pounds to a maximum of 1000 pounds) was to be made available for the erection of churches and places of worship. Ministers' stipends were to be paid from public funds according to a scale based on the size of the congregation. Trustees were to be appointed and a minimum number of "free seats" (pews not rented on a permanent basis) were to be made available "for the use of poor persons resorting thereto". The terms of the Act were pragmatic; it rested upon no principle other than that of the social utility of religion.

The Act is significant for what it leaves out. There is no mention of the churches to which the Act applied (although Bourke had spoken in his 1833 dispatch of "the three grand divisions of


Christians" - Anglicans, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics). The Act was purposely designed to be open to other churches sharing in its benefits. "If it should be thought proper at any future period to extend assistance to other Congregations...there will be nothing in the present arrangements to prevent it".

The Act in no way legally established these Churches; it simply presupposed that they were the religions of the majority. It was - and was meant to be - an unpretentious piece of legislation. However, it did create a de facto establishment in the sense that these were the churches patronised by the government. While it was no "magna carta" of liberty and equality, liberals certainly viewed it that way. But the Act was more modest in its intentions: it simply aimed to assist in the establishment of the churches in order to support their work of moral guidance. Radicals saw it - correctly as it turned out in the long run - to be an interim measure and the first step toward the abolition of all aid to official religion.

The Anglicans, however, were not totally doomed to equality with the other churches. Arthur and Glenelg felt obliged to protest to each other their personal commitment to the Established Church. Bourke was more circumspect and tolerant. Glenelg informed him


that he believed the Anglican Church "when duly administered, to be a powerful Instrument in the diffusion of sound Religious Instruction" and that "every encouragement should be given to its extension in New South Wales". But there was an apparent lack of evangelistic enthusiasm on the part of the Church of England clergy. Glenelg, like Bourke, was unable to find an Anglican clergyman willing to go to the penal settlements of Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay and the government was forced to obtain "the services of a clergyman of some other denomination".38

Glenelg accepted Bourke's nomination of Broughton as Bishop, thus placing him on an equal footing with Polding. Broughton did not oppose the Church Act publicly, although he had far-reaching reservations about it. Like his contemporary John Henry Newman at Oxford, he had grave misgivings about increasing government interference in the Church of England.39 His stance was typically High Church; he saw it as his task to defend the Church and wait for the prevailing liberalism to run its course.

PART FOUR - The Folly and Madness of Sectarianism - Again

There was a lull in sectarian disputation between late 1833 and 1835. Ullathorne was busy with administrative and pastoral duties, Broughton was out of the country from March 1834 to June


1836 and Lang had left in July 1833 and did not return until November 1834.\textsuperscript{40} It was the education debate that lit the sectarian fires again.

Despite the fact that the Church Act "stood for tolerance of another man's views, for justice towards all, for equality of persons no matter what their past misdeeds...for a ...future where all...would live harmoniously as one race", sectarianism flared up again over Bourke's proposals on the question of education.\textsuperscript{41} The Governor believed that it was the "sacred and necessary duty of the Government" to provide a general education for all citizens.\textsuperscript{42} In order to furnish instruction for the entire population Bourke proposed the establishment of a comprehensive system of schools. Church schools were limited in their effectiveness. He told the Legislative Council that "The Primary Schools as formerly established are not calculated to effect any extensive benefit".\textsuperscript{43} He proposed to the Colonial Office the establishment of institutions "...supported by the Government and regulated after the manner of the Irish schools".\textsuperscript{44} The Irish National System was based on the idea that children of all

\textsuperscript{40} Shaw, op. cit., pp 81, 101; Baker, op. cit., pp 97; 100.
\textsuperscript{41} Turner, op. cit., p 4.
\textsuperscript{42} Bourke to Stanley, 30 September 1833. HRA, Series I, Vol XVII, p 232.
\textsuperscript{43} NSWLC V+P, 27 June 1836.
\textsuperscript{44} Bourke to Stanley, 30 September 1833. HRA, Series I, Vol XVII, p 231.
denominations should be brought together for a general education which was Christian in spirit but undenominational. To satisfy the Catholics, the bible was excluded from the classroom, but a volume of Scripture Extracts could be read to the students. Time was to be provided during the school week for separate religious instruction from the pastors of each church. The Catholics were happy enough to support Bourke in this proposal.45

The Governor optimistically felt that the colonists would be well pleased to see their taxes supporting such schools. This was a major miscalculation. As soon as he proposed the Irish National System, he ran into a barrage of opposition. The education question had been debated for some time in the colony. In January 1835 the Australian School Society (which represented non-Conformist interests) proposed the setting up of a school system based on the plan of the British and Foreign School Society. In this system the Bible was used without note or comment as a basic school text. Denominational catechisms were not to be used. Many disagreed with this methodology. The dispute came to a head at the January 1835 meeting of the Australian School Society at the Pulteney Hotel in York Street.46 Ullathorne and Roger Therry were


46. For an account see the Colonist. 22 January and 12 March 1835 and the Autobiography, p 90. Ullathorne's recollections of the details of the education debate are confused.
there, apparently at the urging of Bourke. So too was Rev. Henry Carmichael. He had recently abandoned Lang's Australian College and was an early advocate of a purely secular education, free of all religious foundations.47

Ullathorne and Therry deliberately disrupted the meeting. From the start the Catholics opposed any form of generalised biblically based education. The attempt to disrupt the meeting did not escape the attention of The Colonist (22 January 1835) for it commented: "The main object of Mr. Therry and Rev. Mr. Ullathorne in attending the meeting...was evidently to embroil it, and thereby defeat its object, agreeably to the well-known system of Roman Catholic tactics prevalent in Great Britain and Ireland in the present day". The Colonist went on to accuse Ullathorne of uniting with the "Carmichaelites" to defeat the plan of the British and Foreign School Society.

The meeting led to two important publications on the school question: Ullathorne's pamphlet On the Use and Abuse of the Sacred Scriptures and a series of articles in The Colonist representing Lang's educational views.46 The approaches of the two men to the issues involved were different. Ullathorne attempted to write a

47. For Carmichael see article in ADB, I, pp 210-211. See also Baker, op. cit., pp 102-103.

learned pamphlet, Lang wrote a series of lead articles. The Vicar General tried to be the scholar and apologist, Lang the journalist and populist.

In his pamphlet Ullathorne set out to introduce the reader to the Catholic practice on the reading of scripture. He denied that the Catholic Church withheld the Word of God from its people, but he admitted that the Church did not "put into the hands of the laity promiscuously, translations...unaccompanied by note or comment". He argued that the bible was more than a school textbook "for the acquirement of the art of reading". The pamphlet contrasted Catholic and Protestant attitudes to scripture: for the Protestant it was the sole rule of faith to be freely interpreted by each individual Christian; for the Catholic the rule of faith was to be found partly in scripture and partly in tradition, and both could only be interpreted by the authority of the Church.

Much of Use and Abuse is taken up with an attack on the Protestant principle of private interpretation:

I turn then...and ask the public, Whether...I have not a right to denounce the injustice of periling the salvation of the multitude upon the capabilities of private judgement? Does not the reformation herself, with all her members come to instruct me in the obscurity of the Scriptures ? Am I not justified in proclaiming the inexpediency of leaving the law without an adequate guardian, judge and interpreter?48

Ullathorne stressed the need for interpretation and explanation,

47. Ullathorne, Use and Abuse, p 6.
48. Ullathorne, Use and Abuse, p 32.
especially in the case of children. Students cannot be plunged into the complexities of an ancient literature without preparation: "I know what strange notions children will imbibe from the scriptures in early life...The Jews did not permit children or women to read certain portions of the Old Testament; and only men after they had reached the age of thirty".49

Lang did not let the Ullathorne pamphlet go unnoticed. An extended review of it appeared in The Colonist as well as a long leading article.50 Lang's arguments are weak and do not match the scope of Ullathorne's. But his ability to write popularly with an amusing turn of phrase, made him much more interesting reading than the stodgy Vicar General. Lang argued that to understand scripture you did not need special training. The purpose of Rome's attempt to control interpretation is to twist biblical meanings to suit its own doctrinal purpose. Protestants use notes and commentary to aid understanding. Catholics use them to supersede the Word of God and replace it with the tyranny of the Church.

Mr. U. informs us that we are not to exercise our own judgement - that faculty which God has given us for the very purpose, and for the exercise of which we are responsible to him alone - but we are to submit implicitly to the judgement of a junta of Italian priests calling themselves the Church, and retailing in that assumed capacity, the opinions first entertained, perhaps, by a set of ignorant monks in the darkest age the Church has ever seen.

49. Ullathorne, Use and Abuse, p 67.

50. See The Colonist, 19 March, 2 April and 9 April 1835. The lead article is on 12 March 1835.
Anti-Irish sentiment is never far under the surface with Lang and he emphasises the stereotype of the Irish as ignorant and criminal, and the Scottish as educated and virtuous. His attack on Ullathorne was not strongly argued, but its brisk and popular style made it more effective as an apologia than the verbose pamphlet of the Vicar General.

If Bourke had been warned about the extent of opposition to his educational plans, he pressed on nevertheless. He ran into a much opposition from the Protestant Churches. At the centre of this was Broughton, newly appointed as Church of England Bishop of Australia (December 1835). Recently excluded from the Legislative Council, Broughton was forced to outline his views on the proposed educational reforms in a petition to Bourke and the Council. The core of his objection to the Irish national system was spiritual: he claimed that religion must suffuse the whole educational process and the ethos of the school. Religion could not be compartmentalised and relegated to one day of the week.

The Bishop organised wide-spread opposition to the proposals and persuaded the other churches and even Lang to join him by using the ever-reliable hobbyhorse of the danger of popery. The opposition thus mounted was too great and Bourke eventually backed

---


away from his proposals. In the aftermath, there was obvious hard
feeling between the Governor and Broughton.53

A.G. Austin and other educational historians have accused the
Bishop of bigotry and of being the spokesman of conservative pri-
vilege.54 This is true but Broughton was also motivated by strong
religious convictions and these are often neglected. Critics for-
get the fact that he correctly foresaw that government control of
education (even if indirectly through a Board) would eventually
lead to the abandonment of all theological underpinning for edu-
cation. He predicted that the Irish system would bring about a
situation in which "the leading truths of Christianity must
ordinarily be prohibited subjects, and its practical duties, for
which these truths alone afford sufficient support, must in
consequence be very improperly inculcated". In other words he
clearly perceived the foolishness of divorcing morality from its
theological foundations. These were precisely the arguments which
the Catholic bishops were to produce at the time of the later
secular education acts.

In this whole debate anti-Catholicism was never far below the
surface. Both Broughton and Lang were always ready to describe
the dangers of the consequence of giving way to the Church of
Rome. The petition to the Legislative Council from the Protest-


ants of New South Wales warned that the Irish system would "recognise the authority of the Romish Church...a system of religion to which your petitioners are conscientiously opposed".55

What was the attitude of the Catholics of New South Wales to the proposed system? The Church Act was largely drawn up by the Attorney General, the Catholic layman, John Hubert Plunkett.56 Judge Roger Therry was also a supporter of the Act. He makes it clear that Bourke did not want to separate religious instruction from moral and secular education.57 Polding expressed his views in a letter to the Australian in 1836.58 His approval of the Irish System was at best cautious. He recognised that an integrated system would bring harmony to colonial society (a major argument of later proponents of state education) and that the proposed system had been approved by "eminent divines and scholars" in Ireland - such as the Catholic Archbishop Murray and the Anglican Archbishop Whateley. No mention was made of the Irish Catholic and Anglican bishops who opposed it. Fundamentally, Polding supported the Irish system because he supported Bourke.

57. Therry, Reminiscences, pp 156-158.
58. Australian, 23 August 1836. He signed himself 'Catholic-us Ipse'.
The Governor was forced to shelve his educational proposals as a result of the opposition raised by Broughton. In 1839 Sir George Gipps, Bourke's successor, tried to re-introduce the British and Foreign School Society system. Again the leader of the opposition was Broughton. Gipps' proposal was based on four premises. He argued firstly that all classes in the community were entitled to an equal distribution from the public revenue for the establishment of schools. But in New South Wales Gipps had found that if each separate denomination continued with their own schools "even in our Capital a large portion of the Population shall remain un­educated; and out of Sydney, there shall, for the poorer classes of society, be scarcely any education at all". Secondly, a system was needed that was as comprehensive as possible owing to the dispersion of the population. Thirdly, a system should be established that would include all classes of Protestants. Finally "if Public Schools of the Colony be established upon principles essentially Protestant (the British and Foreign School Society), some corresponding advantages should be secured for the schools of the Roman Catholics". Gipps recognised the problem facing Catholics:

The Catholic community may be said, without offence, to stand more in need of assistance of Government than the members of any other persuasion; for though producers of wealth in an equal degree, they are not in any equal degree consumers of it; and if it be the duty of the State to provide for the Education of youth, that duty becomes

60. NSWLC V+P, 23 August 1839 and Gipps' accompanying minute on education.
stronger instead of weaker, in proportion as any class or
division of the People is unable to provide it for them­selves....Roman Catholics in consequence of the well-known
tenets of their faith cannot be expected to resort very
generally to Schools established upon the principles of the
British and Foreign Society...that Society...has never
sought to gain the attendance of Catholics, by yielding up
any portion of the Protestant principles upon which their
schools are established.

But Gipps, like Bourke, had underestimated the power of the Ang­
lican Bishop. Petitions with over 2600 signatures flooded the
Legislative Council and Broughton's speech, opposing the Gov­
ernor's proposals, was quickly published.61 Gipps recognised that
he was defeated and the education question was not brought to the
vote on the date set - 27 August 1839. The issue was not faced
again until 1844.

The sectarian issue was never far below the surface in the
education debate. It exploded again in another sphere in 1837
while Ullathorne was overseas.

This time it centered on remarks made by Judge John Walpole
Willis.62 Because this incident provides an overture to the more
important attack on the Catholic Church by Judge W.W. Burton, in
which Ullathorne was directly involved, I will outline the
details of the Willis affair.

61. Speech of the Lord Bishop of Australia in the Legis­
lative Council upon the Resolution for the Establishing of a
System of General Education. Sydney. 1837. By this stage Brought­
ton had regained his seat on the Legislative Council._

Willis' career had been a chequered one before he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1837. Because of disagreements with the Chief Justice, Sir James Dowling, Willis was appointed resident judge in Port Phillip in 1841. He was removed from office there in June 1843 and left Australia soon afterwards. John V. Barry says that he was

an able lawyer, honest and fearless...but he lacked the juridical temperament. Contentious and irascible, he could not work in harmony...and once involved in a controversy, his methods were often dubious".63

His gratuitous and insulting comments on Catholicism in a resolution at a meeting of the diocesan committee of the SPCK (the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts (19 July 1838)) could not be ignored by the Catholics.64 The offending passage formed part of a "profession of faith" in the Anglican Church:

But I feel convinced that the doctrines of our Church are the safest and best...I believe the faith we profess to be the pure and Apostolic Faith handed down to us as the tradition of the Fathers...I believe, that what I conceive to be the undue assumption of spiritual power, the adoption of unauthorised traditions and idolatrous worship the Church of Rome has greatly erred. I believe also in the rejection of all Tradition and in arrogating that wisdom on which the frailty of our nature forbids us to rely; the Dissenters from our Church do also err.65

63. See ADB, op. cit. Roger Therry (Reminiscences, pp 344-345 essentially agrees with Barry's assessment.


A response was soon forthcoming from the Catholic community. A public meeting of Catholics was held after Mass on the last Sunday in July 1838. Polding repudiated the assertion of idolatry. McEncroe moved a motion which touched explicitly on the sectarian issue: "This declaration on the part of Mr. Justice Willis, uncalled for by the circumstances...and calculated to enkindle the flames of religious discord in this colony, being direct evidence that in his estimation, we possess neither moral nor a Christian character".66 The resolutions of the meeting were presented to Bourke with the request that they be forwarded to Glenelg.

Writing to Father Thomas Heptonstall, his agent in London, Polding asked for help in putting pressure on the Colonial Office through Catholics in parliament to have Willis dismissed. He said bluntly that Willis was "a mere tool in the hands of the High Church party" and he added the shrewd observation that "his bother judge Burton is ten times worse as intolerant, but infinitely more cunning".67 Burton was later to become Ullathorne's antagonist. Polding was blunt as to what he wanted: "Spare no expense, no trouble; oust Willis and you will save us folios of controversy". The religious debate was taking on an explicitly


67. Polding to Heptonstall, 17 August 1838. DA, K 90. Ullathorne was connected with this dispute also for Polding said: "This Justice Willis is brother to the parson of Bath whom Dr. Ullathorne took in hand some time since".
political tinge. Polding returned to the issue in a letter to Father Thomas Brown of Downside:

No member of the Government will again insult us, especially as I sincerely trust, if our good friends to whom I have written succeed in obtaining the removal of this most obnoxious Judge. He is not fit for his place. He has not the respect of the Bar nor the confidence of the people. He is a mere tool and puppet in the hands of Judge Burton - another deeply imbued bigot - and of his party.68

Willis was, in fact, moved to Port Phillip in 1841 but, as we have seen, this was the result of his dispute with the Chief Justice.

Ullathorne returned to Sydney at the end of 1838, while this dispute was still simmering. The importance of the conflict with Willis was that it led straight to a bitter exchange between Burton and Ullathorne. Polding was correct when he guessed that it was Burton who was behind Willis. Willis had simply fired the first shots in a controversy that was to engage Ullathorne during his last two years in the colony. Before considering his Reply to Judge Burton, I want to examine the other bitter controversies in which Ullathorne was engaged during 1839 and 1840.

Polding commented that the Vicar General looked "pale and care-worn" when he returned to Sydney at the beginning of 1839.69 He had spent two hard years travelling in Europe recruiting for the Vicariate. During the next two years his state of nervous exhaus-

68. Polding to Brown, 27 September. DA, K 90.
69. Polding to Heptonstall, 12 January 1839. DA, K 158.
tion was to be intensified by attacks on him over his outspoken opposition to transportation (see the next chapter). But he also became the focus of sectarian bitterness and he was the lightening rod that drew most of the criticism of Catholicism.70 Speaking at a meeting in Saint Mary's cathedral on Sunday 14 July 1839, he told the assembled Catholics:

For the last six months, since my return to the Colony, I have been selected as the mark by which to attack the Catholic community...I have been accused of various uncharitable and bigoted acts, perpetrated in the course of my Christian ministry.71

Despite the fact that this very meeting had been called by the Bishop specifically to answer attacks on the Catholic Church and clergy, Ullathorne felt - probably accurately - that Polding and the other Catholic clergy left him to bear the brunt of the sectarian attack without any public support. Polding was afraid of hard decisions and unpopularity.72

Much of the sectarian debate in the late 1830s was carried on in the newspapers. There was something of a premonition of this in the cynical comment of the Sydney Gazette (3 January 1839) noting the return of Ullathorne and his party to Sydney:

The Catholic Priesthood - By the Francis Spaight, which arrived from London on Monday last, Dr. Ullathorne, of famous memory, has returned to the Colony, bringing with him the following priests, the Rev. Messrs. Glaghagan (sic), Marvin (sic), and Butler, together with four nuns of the

70. Autobiography, pp 142-144.
71. Australian, 6 August 1839.
72. Autobiography, p 156.
Catholics had felt the need for a paper of their own for some time. McEncroe had experience of editing a Catholic newspaper in the United States. He was certainly one of the prime movers in establishing the Australasian Chronicle. He emphasised "how much the Catholics of the colony stood in need of some friendly Press to refute the many attacks made upon them". Ullathorne also played a part: Wentworth's Australian had generally supported the Catholics, but it suddenly turned on the Church and "attacked more furiously than the rest even than the one edited by the notorious Dr. Laing (sic)...a violent politician". Both the Bishop and Ullathorne were "held up to ridicule".

As a result a decision was made to found a Catholic newspaper. A group of Catholic laymen purchased Bent's News and turned it into a Catholic publication. William Augustine Duncan, a Scottish schoolmaster and convert to Catholicism, was appointed first editor. He had been recruited by Ullathorne and had arrived

---

73. Glaghagan is obviously Father Patrick Bonaventure Geoghegan and Marvin, Father Richard Marum.
75. Quoted in Birchley, op. cit., p 79.
76. Autobiography, p 143.
77. ADB, Vol I, pp 335-337.
with him in 1839. The paper began publication on 2 August 1839. It stated its policy in its *Prospectus*. Despite the numerical strength of the Catholic community and their legal equality, we are treated by a certain party as if we were a degraded caste - a cipher in the population; and we almost seem as if we still groaned under the rigour of the penal laws. The Pulpit and the Press appear to vie with each other in promulgating the calumnies of the last three centuries, in misrepresenting our principles and abusing our laborious, respected, and highly exemplary clergy.

So the *Chronicle* set itself the task of upholding the civil liberties of Catholics and the religious principles of Catholicism, attempting to remove prejudice and demonstrate the truth of the Church. The paper was also unequivocally opposed to the exclusives, the "party, which, under the pretence of a proper descent, would create a perpetual distinction between two classes of settlers".

It was the newspapers which took sectarianism to the popular level. After 1839 Ullathorne had became the focus of sectarian attacks, but Catholicism had been often attacked previously in the popular press, especially in Lang's *Colonist*. The danger of popery gaining political and social power - especially as a result of the Church Act - was a regular theme in this newspaper.80

---

78. See Heptonstall (acting for Ullathorne) to CO 16 June 1838 and CO to Heptonstall 31 June 1838. PRO CO 201/280.


80. For instance see *The Colonist*, 14 July 1838 for a typical attack.
Bigotry also manifested itself at the practical level of employment. For instance the Australasian Chronicle reported the case of a "highly respectable" young woman who applied for a job as a nurse in the household of Justice Willis. When Mrs. Willis discovered that the young woman was a Catholic she "made...a very unlady-like exclamation, declared she would have no more to do with her, and that even if there were a Catholic servant in the house she would turn her out".\(^81\) Obviously bias against the employment of Catholics was a problem, for in its first issue the Chronicle asserted that one (unnamed) Sydney newspaper warned its readers "to beware of dealing with Catholic tradesmen or employing Catholic servants on the ground that according to the principles of the Roman Catholic religion these people many rob their neighbours with impunity".\(^82\)

English society had been had riddled with anti-Catholicism since the 16th century and, as I have already pointed out, it was a basic element in evangelical religion. It was to continue throughout the Victorian era.\(^83\) In New South Wales the problem was compounded by Anglo-Irish racial and political tension. Also

\(^{81}\) Australasian Chronicle, 10 December 1839.

\(^{82}\) Australasian Chronicle, 2 August 1839.

the competition for limited government aid between the churches and the sensitivities of the leading ecclesiastical protagonists created a lively sectarian climate. The Australian pompously warned of the consequences of sectarian bickering. Commenting on a speech of Broughton it condemned

the intermeddling of the priesthood with the business proper to legislatures and to laymen...Whether... (to) a Broughton, an Ullathorne, or a Lang, the censure be applied, the penalty of the trespass is the same. A worldly ambitious, intriguing priest... draws the same evils in his train. A deterioration of his own character and services... divisions and schisms... the destruction of social peace... hatred and contempt for the priestly office.  

However, this turned out to be an accurate description of the long-term effects of sectarianism.

Ullathorne felt that he acted as the whipping boy within the Catholic community; it was he who had to absorb the attacks on the church. He speaks in the Autobiography of his "popular unpopularity... I grew before the public eye into a species of monster to be pointed at as I passed and shunned".  

It is hard to assess the accuracy of such a statement. As I will establish in a later chapter, his last two years in Australia were embittered by public attacks on him and by what he felt was the disloyalty of Polding and the other clergy, particularly Father Francis Murphy. Nevertheless, Ullathorne's reaction does seem somewhat exaggerated and overwrought.

84. Australian, 24 August 1839.

85. Autobiography, p 144.
The Father John Brady libel case was an overture to Ullathorne's own experience of bigotry on his return from England at the beginning of 1839. Brady had been recruited for the mission by Ullathorne in Rome in 1837.\(^{86}\) Although born in Ireland, he had studied for the priesthood in Paris and had worked for eighteen years on the French island of Bourbon (now Reunion). Brady had expected to be sent to the chaplaincy at Norfolk Island, but when he arrived in February 1838, Polding appointed him to the Penrith-Windsor district. This annoyed Gipps considerably for Brady had been appointed by the Colonial Office, after negotiations with Ullathorne, specifically to Norfolk Island. Brady was a zealous, hard-working priest, but his English was poor for he had grown up speaking French. He seems to have established a good relationship with the Protestants of the area, but he was prepared to support the rights of convicts, especially their right to attend divine service. He was probably somewhat blunt and undiplomatic in his assertions of convict rights and this led to a public dispute with a settler named Thompson over the master's refusal to allow a convict to attend Mass.\(^{87}\)

This was followed by a series of attacks in the \textit{Gazette} on the Catholic Church generally and on Brady specifically.\(^{88}\) The paper

\begin{itemize}
  \item \(^{86}\) ADB, I, pp 146-147.
  \item \(^{88}\) Sydney \textit{Gazette}, 28 August 1838, 1 September 1838, 3 September 1838.
\end{itemize}
noted "the arrival of the first fruits of the Reverend Dr. Ullathorne's hallowed labours on behalf of the "Catholic Mission in Australasia", in the shape of some eight Irish Roman Catholic priests to aid and assist in promoting the spread of popish idolatry and delusion in the various districts of the interior". The specific attacks on Brady centred on his limited ability in speaking and writing English. The newspaper said that this was typical of the ignorance of the Catholic clergy. To demonstrate Brady's poor English, the Gazette quoted from a private letter of Brady to a settler named Cox who had refused to subscribe to a fund for the erection of a Catholic chapel in Penrith. The attack on Brady was unfair, unprovoked and vicious. The Colonist immediately joined in and accused Brady of demanding five pounds from a poor woman before he would give her absolution. Polding wrote that Brady had "become the object of the most scurrilous vulgarity imaginable". Actions for libel were taken against both The Colonist and the Gazette, which had reprinted the confessional story.

The actions were not heard until 11 July 1839 after Ullathorne had returned to Sydney. The Autobiography says Ullathorne "took up his (Brady's) defence". There is also a letter defending Brady

89. Gazette, 28 August 1838.
91. Australian, 11 July 1839 and 13 July 1839.
from someone calling himself "Erigena", a pen name sometimes used by the Vicar General. This was written in August 1838, and cannot be the real Ullathorne as he was then in London preparing for his return trip to Australia.\footnote{McGovern, art. cit., XII, pp 107-108 quotes the letter in full and mentions the possibility of Ullathorne's authorship.} My own guess is that it came from McEncroe who was still in Sydney at this time.\footnote{He did not depart for Norfolk Island until October 1838.} With Plunkett appearing for him, Brady won both cases and both The Colonist and Gazette had to pay damages and costs. Ullathorne gloated over the whole affair in a letter to Brown:

\begin{quote}
The press which treated the Church with such unheard of violence is ruined. The Sydney Standard - defunct. The Sydney Gazette, the oldest paper in the Colony, backed by members of the Council and commercial influence - its Editor off to Port Phillip, and its materials, this day, put up for auction, and the best of these will be bought in by our party.\footnote{Ullathorne to Brown, 4 December 1839. DA K 289.}
\end{quote}

Broughton also was worried about the growth of the power of the Catholic Church.\footnote{Shaw, op. cit., pp 134-135.} He was particularly annoyed by Polding's appearance in the "habiliments which are appropriate to a bishop of the Church of Rome" at a Government House Levee in May 1839. He complained to Gipps, who in turn, referred the matter to London.\footnote{Gipps to the Marquess of Normanby, 29 July 1839 and Broughton to Gipps, 25 May 1839 and Polding to Gipps 2 July 1839. HRA, Series I, Vol XX, pp 265-270 and p 435.} Broughton demanded a legal decision from the Colonial
Office as to "how far a public reception of a Roman Catholic Bishop...is reconcilable with the Statute Law of England and with the Oath of Supremacy"? This was the second time that Polding had appeared in purple soutane at a government reception. In May 1837 a similar incident had occurred and a three-cornered disputation had ensued between Broughton, Bourke and Polding.  

In response to Broughton's charges and complaints to the Colonial Office, Polding wrote a response - which was possibly written by Ullathorne. It is somewhat confused but it substantially says that Polding's costume was not distinctive of a Catholic bishop "in the sense used by Bishop Broughton". The Colonial Secretary, Lord John Russell, accepted the Catholic bishop's arguments and ordered Gipps "to take no further notice of so frivolous a complaint". Certainly it was frivolous, but it indicated the level of sensitivity generated in the colony by clerical pretensions.

At the same time Ullathorne was also directly in conflict with the Tract Society. "From this Tract Society anti-Catholic tracts began to be distributed at the doors of Catholic families" and it was quickly noticed that leading colonial officials openly supported the organisation. A meeting of the Catholic community

after Mass at Saint Mary's (this was the usual method of getting the leading members of the community together) responded by making an official complaint, which Ullathorne claimed, cleared "the Society's rooms...of all (colonial government) officials".

A "Maria Monk" type scandal exploded at the same time, centering around a woman named Agnes Byrne who had given up Catholicism and "was taken up by an anti-Catholic set of people who were not without social influence". Byrne moved to Parramatta, where Ullathorne was pastor, and she began to attack the Catholic Church publicly. He answered her in a series of letters to the newspapers and at a public lecture. His comments on the affair are bitter and direct:

Take any...poor, weak-minded emigrant who is in distress; clothe, feed and money the same...hint your horror of popery - collect the consequent outpourings of your protege...the more bitter and the more false, provided they be horrible, the better - refuse all intermixture of testimony from real Catholics, especially if they be respectable and well-informed, and duly practice their religion; and before it cools it is ready for use.

A group of anti-Catholic Protestants were behind Byrne and she was actually staying at the house of a Captain George Benson in Parramatta.

Three of the Sydney newspapers (the Gazette, the Monitor and The

\[100\] Autobiography, pp 157-158. See also Australasian Chronicle 6 August, 20 August, 12 November 1839.

\[101\] Ullathorne to the Monitor. Quoted in the Australasian Chronicle, 6 August 1839.
Colonist) caricatured Ullathorne as "the representative of all the old medieval bigotry and intolerance", and suggested that he had publicly excommunicated Byrne and claimed that he should be prosecuted for libel. He had in fact said that by her action she had excommunicated herself.

The Sydney Gazette is desirous that Miss Byrne should commence a criminal prosecution against Dr. Ullathorne for having excommunicated this lady...Unfortunately...Miss Byrne...was in too great a hurry to excommunicate herself to leave it in the power of Dr. Ullathorne to pronounce the awful sentence upon her.102

The whole affair was blown out of proportion when Byrne was attacked at night in a dark street in Parramatta by two Irish convicts (Trougher and Kelly). They had no idea who she was and their motivations were anything but religious! But it gave the press another stick with which to beat the Vicar General. The Australian described the incident with the lurid headline "Dr. Ullathorne and blood"! and blamed the whole thing on the Vicar General. The Chronicle responded by blaming the Monitor, which had originally published the excommunication story.103

Catholics themselves also acted in a provocative manner. The laying of the foundation stone of Saint Patrick's, Church Hill (August 1840) provides an example.104 During the preparations Irish nationalist feeling began to take over and it became

102. Australasian Chronicle, 13 August 1839.
103. Australasian Chronicle, 13 August 1839.
104. Autobiography, pp 159-161.
obvious that the event would be as much a "national exhibition" as a religious one. Ullathorne found himself caught between worried civil authorities (including Plunkett and Roger Therry), the nervous and dilatory Bishop and the Irish Catholic clergy "reluctant to do anything but let the matter go on". The Chief of Police asked: "Suppose some man in the crowd were to hoist an Orange flag, in what state should we have the peace of the city?" As Ullathorne tells the story he was able to persuade "the multitude to comply with my request and put away the (nationalist) insignia". A riot may have been avoided, but Catholics still managed to use the laying of the foundation stone as a show of religious strength. A procession "of many thousands of persons" moved from Saint Mary's to Saint Patrick's and back again. They were accompanied by bands and one thousand children. "The clergy...were in their chasubles, the Bishop followed in an open carriage with cope and mitre". The children sang Handel's "Sound the Loud Timbrel" with "an enthusiasm which deeply moved the people". It may not have been a nationalistic demonstration, but it certainly was a religious one and it reminded the colonists of the growing influence of popery. Catholics could no longer be ignored by the Protestant majority.

The final act in the sectarian drama, so far as Ullathorne was concerned, was his Reply to Judge Burton. As Polding had corr-

105. The full title was A Reply to Judge Burton of the Supreme Court of New South Wales on 'The State of Religion in the Colony'. Sydney. 1840.
ectly guessed, Judge William Westbrooke Burton was as anti-Catholic as Judge Willis. In 1840 Burton published *The State of Religion and Education in New South Wales* while on a visit to England.\(^{106}\) The book was not overtly anti-Catholic; it was simply strongly pro-Anglican. Its attack on the Catholic Church was more subtle - through innuendo, understatement and allusion. Burton had been a important supporter of the Church of England and the exclusives. He first became prominent in the ecclesiastical sphere by blaming the high level of violent crime in the colony on "an overwhelming defect of religious principle in (the) community". This was to be a continuing theme for him. As early as November 1835 he was concerned with "a deficiency of religious instruction". His observations of the convict system led him to conclusions very similar to those of Ullathorne and, like the Vicar General, he was an opponent of transportation.\(^{107}\)

Burton had left Sydney for England late in 1839. Polding commented "Judge Burton, our bitter enemy and ceaseless contriver of mischief proceeds home".\(^{108}\) While in England Burton wrote for the *Colonial Magazine* on the "State of Society and Crime in New South Wales During Six Year's Residence in That Colony". In this article he shifted his ground slightly to say that New South Wales


\(^{107}\) Allers, art. cit., p 271.

\(^{108}\) Polding to Heptonstall, 12 January 1839. DA, K 158.
was not as bad as the evidence to the Molesworth Committee had made out; it had only focused on the state of convictism and not on the colony generally. The article was followed by his State of Religion and Education in New South Wales. The book is large and contains considerable statistical information on the colony in the late 1830s. Burton's position is plainly and uncompromisingly Anglican. He outlines the history of the Churches in Australia up to 1833.109 Two chapters deal with the Church and School Lands Corporation. He then argues that the Anglican Church was, in fact, established in New South Wales:

It would follow, indeed, without the aid of a declaratory statute of the imperial parliament, but as a necessary consequence of any statute to the contrary, that on the settlement of a country under the circumstances under which New South Wales was settled, the fundamental laws of England would become the laws of the new colony; and by force of one of those fundamental laws, the established Church of England became, as such, the established church of the colony.110

He bases this view on the common law, the monarch's coronation oath and the bill of rights. The other Churches should receive, at best, "charitable toleration". He argued that during Bourke's governorship the Anglican Church lost ground:

In the Estimates for 1834 and 1835, the clergymen of the Church of England only exceeded the numbers of the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian clergy together, by four; in the estimates for 1836, their united numbers were actually equal to those of the Church of England; and they possessed an advantage over the latter in the fact, that the newly introduced clergymen of both Churches were younger men, and in the case of the Roman Catholics, under the jurisdiction of a Bishop.111

109. In an interesting footnote (p 16) he shows that he did not know of Father Philip Conolly in Van Dieman's Land.


He concludes that under Bourke the "Roman Catholic influence, was for the first time, strongly felt in the colony of New South Wales".

His book gives a detailed but selective account of religion in various parts of the colony. The final chapter outlines the colony's religious needs. It is here especially that he attacks Catholicism and quotes Broughton's sermon in Canterbury Cathedral on the supposed Jesuit plot to use Australia as a base "for enlarging the borders of the Church of Rome" in Asia, America and "the isles of the Sea". Broughton's vision was apparently far ahead of any envisaged by the Propaganda Congregation in Rome or by the Catholic clergy in New South Wales! The gist of Burton's argument was that the colony faced a terrible danger from the rapid growth of Catholicism. As Ullathorne said the book "would fain be taken for the documentary demonstration of a great and weighty grievance" - the loss of the dominant position of the Anglican Church.

One concludes the reading of Burton's book with a curious feeling. On the one hand it is a treasure of statistical and other information on the state of religion in New South Wales. It seems a work of calm objectivity. Yet it manifests a passionate anti-Catholic bias cast in curiously judicious terminology. Ullathorne sums it up accurately:

But the work is, from one end to the other, made the covert of an attack upon the Catholic portion of the community... The honourable judge strives to exhibit us as being contemptible in every respect, except the unaccountable advantage of receiving greater aid and support from the government than the Church of England.113

Ullathorne directly attacks Burton's doctoring of the facts. He begins by sketching the origins of Catholicism in Australia. His early chapters paint a picture of persecuted Catholics and persecuting parsons. He contrasts the treatment of the Catholic Dixon with the Anglican Fulton, both clergymen and both transported for sedition in 1800. Dixon carried on a legally circumscribed and scarcely tolerated ministry, while Fulton was quickly pardoned and became a prosperous parson, farmer and magistrate. The Vicar General repeats the myth of persecution originally outlined in The Catholic Mission in Australasia: "The flock left without a pastor, greater exertions appear to have been made to Protestantise the entire population".114 The O'Flynn incident is presented as if the priest were an innocent victim of the bigotry of the British government and Macquarie, whereas, as I have shown, he was an unreliable clerical adventurer. Ullathorne re-enforced the Therry myth: he pictures the priest bravely persevering in the face of persecution and the obstacles created by the colonial government. He had obviously conveniently forgotten his own experience of the stubborn truculence of the

113. Ullathorne, Reply, p viii.
priest. This account of the early history of Catholicism in the colony was to become the accepted myth of origin. There is a real sense in which Ullathorne is the creator of the written form of the myth.

Ullathorne's Reply describes the Church and School Corporation as a "vast scheme of church aggrandisement, unparalleled in the world's history...this monstrous monopoly of the soil". Anglicanism is described as an "ecclesiastical oligarchy" with its clergy cut off from the people. "We would have gradually created a sort of clerical cast, a body of Christian brahmins, minus their mortification and self-denial".115

The Reply accused Burton of exaggerating the number of Catholic clergy, in order to augment "still further the Catholicophobia (his emphasis) of his Protestant reader". He ridiculed Burton's comparison between the number of Catholic clergy and the "feeble band of fifteen Anglican clergymen sinking under the weight of mental and bodily toil". His detailed analysis of clergy numbers showed that the Catholic clergy were commensurate with the Catholic population. In passing he reminded his readers of "the well known fact" that no Anglican clergy would go to Norfolk Island!

He then proceeded to a detailed consideration of the Church Act. He outlined the provisions of the Act which aimed at establishing

equality of treatment among the main Christian Churches. This placed the Catholic Church on an equal footing with the Anglicans and the Vicar General ironically commented that the Catholic Church would now provide a stimulus for the Established clergy "against which to beat their heated heads", for anti-popery "can always apply...when (the parson) has nothing else prepared".116

Not daunted by the judge's legal training, Ullathorne proceeded to tackle Burton on the constitutional question of Anglican establishment.117 His fundamental argument is that statute law limited the establishment of the Anglican Church to the United Kingdom (excluding Scotland).

The English Church has never been in New South Wales established (sic). No act of legislation has ever interwoven its establishment with the colonial constitution...the (Church and Schools) corporation...(was a) creature of the King, not of the constitution.118

He then turned to the question of the care of orphans. His argument is that the Catholic Church saved the government money, and he expressed support for the attempts of Gipps "to establish some efficient system of education, which should embrace the wants of every denomination without wounding the conscience of any".119 In

118. Ullathorne, Reply, p 57.
119. Ullathorne, Reply, p 64. See also pp 59-65.
passing he quoted with approval Gipps' minute on education which directly supported universal state education. However, he seemed to have missed Gipps' comment that those not participating in the universal state system would not receive government aid. While Gipps' intentions were not secularist, Ullathorne and other Catholic commentators of the early 1840s do not seem to have perceived the possible consequences of government control of education.

The chapter dealing with 1839 gives a great deal of information about the state of Catholic ministry in that year. No doubt it emphasised the optimum level of work carried out by the Catholic clergy, but it is certainly an accurate statement of expectations. It corrected Burton's partial and unfair comparison between the ministry of the two Churches. Ullathorne strongly defended the practice introduced by Polding of taking Catholic convicts aside for two weeks of religious instruction before assignment. Burton had suggested that this cast aspersions on the neglect of the Protestant clergy, while turning the Catholic convicts into malingerers.

The last part of Ullathorne's pamphlet is taken up with a number of other contentious issues between Anglicans and Catholics, but it is the conclusion that it important. The judge had raised the spectre of intolerance and bigotry. He had "industriously picked up stories told against us, gleaned gross falsehoods from time serving newspapers...he has scattered the devices of our enemies
over the high places of influence and power...and with the seal of...(the) judicial character stamped the falsehoods".\textsuperscript{120} He referred to Burton's involvement with the anti-Catholic \textit{Sydney Standard} and condemned his attempts to present the Catholic clergy as insincere, aspiring and ambitious. He accused the judge of portraying the Catholic laity as poor and contemptible.

Ullathorne concludes that Burton was a biased judge who could not be relied on for an impartial judgement, especially where Catholics were concerned. The justice he embodied would be brought under ridicule by his attitudes and behaviour. Ullathorne explicitly referred to the Maloney bigamy case in which Burton had declared a Catholic marriage invalid only to have his decision overturned by Dowling and Forbes in the supreme court.\textsuperscript{121}

From all of this Ullathorne emerges as a controversialist of considerable ability. This was probably his real metier as a writer. He was not a theologian in the speculative sense of the word, but a churchman.

In a more ecumenical age bigotry is difficult to understand. Waldersee, O'Farrell and Hogan discuss the sectarianism of the late

\textsuperscript{120}. Ullathorne, \textit{Reply}, p 91.

\textsuperscript{121}. Ullathorne, \textit{Reply}, pp 91-93.
Waldesee considers that the roots of sectarianism were socio-economic rather than religious. The key factors forming the colonists' attitudes were the need for a better education system, the preservation of the national proportions of the United Kingdom by balanced immigration and the role of the Catholic Church (especially Ullathorne) in the abolition of transportation to New South Wales. Waldesee also attributes some of the blame to the aggressiveness of the leading Catholic spokesmen - Roger Therry, John O'Sullivan, William Augustine Duncan and Fathers Brady and Murphy.

O'Farrell integrates these ideas into a wider perspective. He considers that the growth of religious conflict was "a natural - if unpleasant - process necessitated by...the evolution of colonial society". Anti-Catholicism was built into the assumptions and structures of colonial society because it was inherent in the structures of British and Irish society. Catholics in the United Kingdom had a deep sense of resentment against their treatment and emancipation was only achieved by them acting in concert to bring popular pressure to bear to change the penal laws. Roger Therry was determined to use this same methodology in Australia to forward Catholic interests. This bellicose attitude led the


majority of the colonists to believe that Catholics would always act as a united group to attain their ends - and in the view of people like Lang, this was nothing short of the establishment of "popedom" in Australia.

Hogan see denominational rivalry as the key factor in the sectarianism of the 1830s and 1840s. This can be seen in the "scramble" of denominations to establish their ministerial infrastructure of churches and schools, in their attempts to bring more clergy to Australia and in the effort to spread their influence on the ever moving frontier. Hogan also emphasises the new element in the sectarian equation - the beginnings of the secular state.

Just as the churches were rushing to establish their institutional frameworks, Australian society as a whole... was subjecting all institutions of society to intense scrutiny. It very quickly became clear that the interests of the state-makers were often in direct opposition to those of the church-makers. This was especially the case in the matter of education, but it was also true in the whole relationship of church and state which the Church Act... seemed to have settled.124

But Hogan also indicates a underlying unity among the churches and the secular liberals. All were agreed that an "ideology of order" must underpin colonial society, that it was the task of both church and state to support the middle-class values of respect for authority, hierarchy of status, conformity to the ideals of civil order, honesty, industry and productivity, chastity and patriarchal family life. Part of the scramble between denominations was a rivalry to inculcate these very ideals.

I think that some further reasons can be adduced to explain the development of sectarianism in New South Wales. People in the early 19th century had experienced considerable dislocation in their lives. They had witnessed the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars and experienced the powerful but socially disturbing ideas of liberty and radical equality. The ordered rationalistic world of the Enlightenment gave way to romanticism. Traditional social patterns had broken down in the face of increasing population and industrialisation. New enthusiastic religious movements appeared within both Protestantism and Catholicism. In England Methodism and evangelical Anglicanism pulled the Established Church in the direction of fundamentalism, while Tractarianism tugged the Church toward ritualism and Romanism. Division and immoderation were rife.

Dislocation was re-enforced for those who emigrated to Australia. The abandonment of family and traditional social patterns, the long sea voyage and the strange, alien country at the other end of the world created a severe disjunction in the lives of many migrants. The strange thing is that despite the fact that they had not freely chosen to come to Australia, many emancipists seem to have adjusted better to the Antipodes than free immigrants.

Social dislocation led to a form of tribalism wherein people sought security by belonging to a clearly identifiable group. For
many, especially for the minority nationalities of the United Kingdom, religion became a focal point in this sense of nationality. People identified themselves as Scotch and Presbyterian, Irish and Catholic. Thus religion became a major point of national cohesion among the interlocking groups that comprised Australian society. The assertive pretensions of the ethnic minority groups led to a counter-assertion of the privileges of the Established Church, especially under Broughton.

Moreover, explanations of sectarianism in Australia cannot neglect the sheer obduracy and bloody-mindedness of the leaders of the respective Churches: Broughton, Lang, Ullathorne and to a lesser extent Polding were all stubborn and self-righteous. As they struggled to establish their respective communities, they competed for the same limited state aid and for a place for their churches in the newly emerging and rapidly expanding society. In view of the crass materialism of many of the settlers, Church leaders had to promote a strong sense of religious identity as they strove to establish and maintain their respective congregations. All of this tended to exaggerate their already well-established pugnacity. Also we should recall that a level of vituperation of opponents, which today would be considered either unfair or subject to libel action, was acceptable in 19th century newspapers, reviews and public discourse. Linked to this was a presupposition of personal rectitude, based largely on evangelical spirituality and developing class consciousness.
It was out of this complex of issues that sectarianism - a major factor in Australian history - developed. And it was within this context that the Catholic Church sorted out its relationship to an emerging Australian society.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE AGITATOR GENERAL
PART ONE - The Formation of an Abolitionist

Ullathorne is best known to contemporary historians as an opponent of convictism. His pamphlets, his evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee and his prominence in the New South Wales press during 1838-1840 as a critic of the convict system, placed him in the forefront of those who worked for the abolition of transportation. Yet there has been no specific study of Ullathorne's views on this issue. His position as an opponent of the system was unusual for he was technically a senior chaplain who was paid by the government as Vicar General. But it was precisely his close contact with the effects of transportation that led him to take a strong stand.

How did he come to his position? His two visits to Norfolk Island seem to have been turning points. It was after his second visit that he became most outspoken about the "horrors" of the system. The account in the Autobiography needs to be read carefully, for

1. His major writings on transportation are the Catholic Mission; The Horrors of Transportation briefly unfolded to the People. Dublin. 1836. The Management of Criminals. London. 1866. His most important contribution to the transportation debate was his evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee (1837-1838). For a full text see British Parliamentary Papers. Crime and Punishment. Transportation. Vols 2 and 3. Irish University Press edition. For Ullathorne's testimony see Vol 3, ques. 150 to 326.


3. For a description see Autobiography, pp 81-89.
it is a conflation of events from two visits to the Island. The first (from September to October 1834) followed a prison revolt, which had occurred on 12 January 1834. Ullathorne and an Anglican chaplain, Reverend Henry Stiles, went to minister to the thirteen men condemned to death as a result of the revolt. In a typically patronising fashion, Ullathorne described Stiles as "an amiable man with very low doctrines". Stiles was then an evangelical, who, under the influence of tractarianism, later became a leading high churchman in Sydney. Three of the condemned men were Catholics and four others became converts to Catholicism. Ullathorne has described his ministry to these men in vivid detail. He told Morris that he also "heard about 200 general confessions and received 20 converts and might have done more had time been given me (sic)". He described Norfolk Island as a "modern Gomorrha" (sic). He tried to leave behind a continuing ministry: "I arranged a form of prayer for their use on Sunday, and obtained the appointment of one as reader...to teach those who were unable to read".

---

4. For Stiles see ADB, II, pp 483-484. Ullathorne mistakenly calls him "Short" in both the Autobiography (p 82) and in evidence to the Molesworth Committee.


6. Ullathorne to Morris, 23 October 1834. DA, Ullathorne Papers, Box 756.

He made a second trip to the Island in December 1835.\(^8\) Again it was a round of confessions and conversions. "I saw these dreaded characters come to the arms of religion like children".\(^9\) This summed up his attitude to the treatment of prisoners: if they were handled with gentleness and respect, they responded. This was why he was full of praise for the views of the prison reformer, Captain Alexander Maconochie who, as superintendent of Norfolk Island, treated the prisoners with respect and gave them responsibility.\(^10\) Ullathorne claimed that despite ridicule from fellow prisoners, the Catholic convicts remained faithful to prayer and virtue. It was at the end of this second trip that he suffered a nervous collapse:

On Christmas night I awoke in bed very sick and with my spine like an icicle...when I got on board ship...I was reduced to a sort of coma...Gradually I recovered from this torpor, and by the time we reached Sydney I began to be as usual.\(^11\)

The collapse seems to have resulted from physical and emotional exhaustion; it was probably triggered by some type of fever. But it was a turning point because it was from this time onward that his attacks on transportation began. He had seen too much of the

---

\(^8\) See Australian, 4 December 1835. He departed on 1 December with Attorney General Plunkett and his wife and returned on 12 January 1836 (Australian 15 January 1836).

\(^9\) Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, p 43.


\(^11\) Autobiography, p 87.
debasing consequences of the convict system to accept it quietly any longer.

He developed his views further on the voyage back to Europe between June and December 1836. He wrote some "Essays on the Convict System" which he used as a basis for his later publications. He regretted that he had not gathered his "copious materials" for a complete book on convictism.\textsuperscript{12} This suggests that he had been gathering facts and ideas for some time.

Ullathorne, who was interested in penal reform throughout his life, was not particularly original in his ideas on the issue. As the business of punishment shifted toward the penitentiary style of imprisonment from the 1830s onwards, there were many theorists discussing how incarceration might be rendered more effective. As he makes clear in his later book \textit{On The Management of Criminals}, Ullathorne saw the Molesworth Committee as the transition from the old transportation system to the new penitentiary system. He was acquainted with the work of early penal reformers, such as John Howard and Elizabeth Fry and of theorists such as Anglican Archbishop Richard Whately of Dublin (whose writing Ullathorne described as "keen and sagacious") and Jeremy Bentham. When discussing new ideas on the reform of prisoners during incarceration, Ullathorne was particularly critical of the solitary system devised in the United States. He was in sympathy with the

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Autobiography}, p 96-97.
ideas of Maconochie, whom he ranked on the same level as Howard as a prison reformer. He says that he and Maconochie discussed the latter's ideas before he went to Norfolk Island as Superintendent in 1840.13

Two principles were basic to the Captain's proposals: firstly, that punishment should not be vindictive, but should aim directly at the reform of the prisoner; secondly, that the length of the sentence should be indeterminate, with the granting of freedom dependent on the merit and good behaviour of the prisoner. The Vicar General bluntly told Maconochie that this "mark system" would be hard to implement on Norfolk, for it required "astringent virtue" on the part of those administering it. Maconochie would have, moreover, "hard and unfit instruments" as waders and overseers, as well as "the worst and most inveterate criminals, the scum of the penal settlements to deal with". To make it even more difficult for Maconochie, Gipps "was not...very favourably inclined to his humanitarian views". In fact, Ullathorne's forebodings proved justified and Maconochie was dismissed from Norfolk by Gipps in 1844.14

Another reason for Ullathorne's opposition to transportation was


that the tide of informed opinion in the United Kingdom was turning against it.\textsuperscript{15} The new concept of the penitentiary style of imprisonment was a very important factor in the background of the decision to abolish transportation to New South Wales. Ullathorne would have been aware of this for, as I said, his writings reflect a wide knowledge of contemporary penological ideas.

But above all his attitude to transportation was formed by the fact that the clergy were in constant contact with the worst aspects of the convict system. It is true that none of the other priests were as outspoken as the Vicar General, but they were aware of the terrible effects of the system on prisoners. Polding, for instance, told Brown at Downside of men being forced to work in exhausting heat:

\begin{quote}
The thermometer rose as high as 143\textdegree C. One poor prisoner... fell down senseless at his work, pulling a cart of stone. He entreated his overseer in vain to change his work, for he was old and weak. He was carried to the Barracks, and died almost the instant he entered. Five others were nearly as bad.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Perhaps the worst thing the clergy had to confront was the trauma of regular executions. They also had to prepare men and women to face it. Throughout the 1830s Therry, McEncroe and Ullathorne

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{15} See O'Kane, F.: "The Molesworth Committee on Transportation", \textit{Agora}, 6/4(August, 1972); Ritchie, J.: "Towards Ending an Unclean Thing: The Molesworth Committee and the Abolition of Transportation to New South Wales, 1837-1840", HS 17(1976), pp 144-164 (see especially p 145).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{16} Polding to Brown, 15 January 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 402.
\end{quote}
attended executions in Sydney and elsewhere. McEncroe, who, from the time of his arrival in the colony, was the Sydney prison chaplain, attended seventy four executions over a period of four years.\textsuperscript{17} The Vicar General requested that Colonial Secretary McLeay officially appoint McEncroe to the chaplaincy and pay him 50 pounds per year for this "important, indispensable and laborious task". He got his 50 pounds.\textsuperscript{18}

The priests met prisoners in the convict hospitals who had been flogged. Ullathorne was totally opposed to this form of punishment for it dehumanised men and turned them into sociopaths:

> A flogged man is the enemy of the society which has degraded him beneath the level of man. The body may smart and recover but the man's soul is stung, and a mortal poison, noxious to the human spirit, is imbibed from the knotted cords, that rankles long in his mental constitution.\textsuperscript{19}

Exactly the same view was expressed to the Molesworth Committee by John Barnes, the Surgeon at Macquarie Harbour.\textsuperscript{20} Yet flogging was an integral part of the system and the most common form of

\textsuperscript{17} Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques. 268. See also Autobiography, pp 76-78. Birchley, op. cit., p 44. There is a confusion about numbers of executions attended by McEncroe: Birchley says "seventy five in his first three years (in the colony)". Ullathorne told Molesworth: "Mr McEncroe attended 74 executions in the course of four years". I have opted to follow Ullathorne.

\textsuperscript{18} Ullathorne to McLeay, 21 April 1834 and McEncroe to McLeay, 6 October 1834 and 20 October 1834. NSWSA Col. Sec. 4/2224.1.

\textsuperscript{19} Ullathorne, Management of Criminals, p 18. See also Ullathorne, Horrors of Transportation, pp 19-22.

\textsuperscript{20} Barnes to Molesworth Select Committee, 12 February 1838. Ques. 344.
punishment. David Neal has shown that in a typical year - 1835 - twenty six percent of the convicts in New South Wales were flogged and the average number of lashes per flogging was forty six. "Magistrates ordered 7103 floggings that year to a population of 27,340 male convicts (women convicts were not flogged), compared to an average of 234 floggings per year over the period 1811-1827 in England". Maconochie found that

Horrendous figures can be adduced for Norfolk Island throughout its history and for places like Moreton Bay, especially under the sadist Commandant, Captain Patrick Logan. Certainly people in the 19th century were far less squeamish than we are about such things, but nevertheless Ullathorne certainly considered this punishment excessive and debasing: all those involved - both perpetrators and victims - became dehumanised, insensitive and callous.

One example let me give of the unreflecting spirit which this familiarity leaves...Visiting the Bathurst convict hospital during a tour up the country, I saw the triangle erecting within the hospital square, surrounded of course by the sick men in their beds in the wards, whose windows looked upon that square. And on asking why it was put there, I was told that a lot of men were coming from the police


court to be flogged, and that it was the most convenient place for the surgeon.\textsuperscript{23}

Ullathorne (and the other clergy) were intimately aware of the terrible conditions under which road gangs and especially chain gangs worked.\textsuperscript{24} He describes a gang at Parramatta that he visited one Sunday afternoon. The convicts were "lodged in a number of wooden boxes, like bathing machines off their wheels, placed in the Bush near the road".\textsuperscript{25} The men were locked in these boxes in absolutely stifling conditions. He visited them on Sundays "as much to relieve them from confinement in that packed-up sweltering condition, as to say prayers for them".\textsuperscript{26} The clergy were especially concerned about the moral pollution which flowed from the convict system. Ullathorne assured Molesworth that homosexuality and sexual promiscuity were rampant. He was deeply concerned about the vulnerability of female convicts who were assigned as servants "in lone country places".\textsuperscript{27}

Ullathorne claimed that through his ministerial contact with the convicts, he knew many men, condemned as habitual criminals, who

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ullathorne, \textit{Management of Criminals}, p 19.
\item \textsuperscript{24} \textit{Autobiography}, pp 112-113. See also Ullathorne, \textit{Management of Criminals}, pp 14-15.
\item \textsuperscript{25} \textit{Autobiography}, pp 112-113.
\item \textsuperscript{26} For further contemporary details of conditions in the road gangs see Cook, Thomas: \textit{The Exile's Lamentations}. North Sydney. 1978 (reprint), pp 18-23.
\item \textsuperscript{27} \textit{Autobiography}, pp 108-113.
\end{itemize}
were "often endowed with better qualities...with more real humanity...with something of tenderness, when sincere kindness draws it forth". He was able to compare his "secret knowledge" of their hearts with the judgments passed on them in court. He perceived the tendency of lawyers, judges and those involved in the convict system to generalise and objectify the criminal:

I was often struck with the injustice which men habitually commit in generalising the habits of criminals and leaving them not one virtue or one human quality...men of the world seem to have a common habit, fostered especially in law courts, and amongst those who deal with criminals, of concluding once a criminal always a criminal; and that to have been a criminal in one point implies a natural malignancy that is ready on occasion to perpetuate every crime.

Clearly, at this stage, he did not believe in the idea of a permanent "criminal class" or of convicts being irredeemably vicious. However, in his later work On The Management of Criminals he had apparently changed his views, for he speaks of a "crime class" that "has grown to be a people within a people, a tribe apart, with its own language, habits, and traditions". Despite his personal experience of the possibility of redemption in New South Wales, after a period back in England he seems to have reverted to reflecting the conventional views of his time and class. These were balanced, however, by his theology which stressed the mercy of God and the constant possibility of for-
PART TWO - Anti-Transportation Tracts

His first work on the convict system was *The Catholic Mission in Australasia*. Its purpose is clear: the removal of the "plague" of transportation. The major part of the pamphlet is taken up with an extended commentary on the system and its effects. It is true that Ullathorne used the pamphlet as a way of trying to raise money for the church in Australia, but it is incorrect to suggest, as does Michael Sturma, that his views on transportation were influenced by denominational rivalry and by an attempt to solicit funds for the Catholic mission.31 He argued that transportation corrupted prisoners through forcing them to consort with experienced criminals. He claimed that there was no discrimination of punishment based upon the crime committed, except in length of sentence.32 The newly arrived convict's sensitivities were blunted by "the hardness of everything about him". Assignment was a "lottery". Some masters were "men of education and humanity", but "the greater number ...are not so".33 Their constant recourse was the chain-gang or the lash. Ullathorne argued that this hardened men and made them more determined to be recal-

citrant. "This is not reformation or the way to it; treat a man like a brute and he will become one".

He referred to the settlers with convicts on assignment as "slave masters". The use of the term "slavery" is very important in the agitation against transportation. Both public and official opinion in the United Kingdom were now opposed to slavery. If transportation could be equated with it, those opposed to the convict system would have a powerful weapon against it. It is significant that transportation to New South Wales was abolished only six years after the final abolition of slavery in the British Empire. It was, of course, legally incorrect to identify transportation and slavery. Convicts were under the direct control of the government and only assigned to settlers. Ullathorne's own rhetoric often carried him away - as it carried away the Molesworth Committee - but it was very effective as propaganda against transportation.

The Horrors of Transportation, a pamphlet written by Ullathorne at the suggestion of Thomas Drummond, the Under-Secretary for Ireland, was circulated at government expense. Many people in Ireland were trying to escape destitution by committing petty crimes which would lead to transportation, under the mistaken belief that it would lead to quick emancipation and a new life in

---

34. Autobiography, pp 106-107. See also Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques. 306-313. For Drummond see DNB, Vol VI, pp 41-45.
Australia. Clearly news of the success of some of those who had been transported had filtered back to the United Kingdom, and this encouraged others to try to improve their lot in the same fashion. Against this Ullathorne argued that the convict became a "slave" and was, in fact, the "property" of his master. This is not correct, and does not follow from the legal opinion that he quotes ("the Governor shall have a property in the services of the convict...with the power of transferring such property to the inhabitants"), but legal niceties were not important in a polemical tract. He was again able to draw on the anti-slavery views of the British and Irish public in the 1830s.\(^{35}\)

His description of how the system worked in *The Horrors of Transportation* is somewhat distorted and he dismissed letters from convicts describing favourable conditions as "falsehoods". He argued (incorrectly) that wives who hoped to join their convict husbands were "basely deceived". His description of the assignment "lottery" claimed that masters treated convicts worse than West Indian slave owners. This idea of a "lottery" was taken up by Molesworth in his final Report. Ullathorne gave an extended description of the use of the lash with grim examples. He also described the chain-gangs, Norfolk Island and Port Arthur.

One particular form of punishment not mentioned by Ullathorne - possibly because it only came into common use in the late 1830s -

was the treadmill. As Michael Cannon has pointed out this is "one of the cruellest yet most overlooked methods of convict punishment inflicted in recent centuries".36 This form of punishment was imposed on both men and women.

PART THREE - Before Molesworth's Select Committee

I will now consider Ullathorne's evidence to the Molesworth Committee.37 The Vicar General was in the United Kingdom while the Committee was hearing witnesses and he appeared before them on 8 and 12 February 1838. His name had been suggested to Molesworth by the English Catholic historian and scholar, John Lingard.38 Ullathorne was chosen as a witness by Molesworth because of his public opposition to transportation. The Vicar General had no doubt that it was a total failure as a system.39 One month before his appearance Ullathorne had an interview with Molesworth concerning the questions to be asked in his actual examination. The Chairman also spoke to Lang before his formal interview with


38. Ullathorne, Management of Criminals, p 12; LTBU, I, p 111. For Lingard see DNB, XI, pp 1199-1202.

the Committee.\textsuperscript{40} Molesworth pressed Ullathorne "to give information on certain delicate points alluded to in my pamphlet".\textsuperscript{41} This referred to the problems of homosexuality and bestiality among the convicts. Ullathorne was hesitant for much of his information had been obtained in the confessional. To assist him in getting advice as to how much he could say without breaking the seal of confession, Molesworth gave him "a series of questions in writing which would constitute my leading examination".

Ullathorne sought the help of his Downside colleagues, Barber and Brown. A letter to Brown survives. Ullathorne's specific problem was:

\begin{quote}
My knowledge on the subject consists of generalisations from my experience, and that experience is as much, if not more, derived through the confessional than any other source. It is true I know nothing of all this as connected with individuals. Particular facts and persons drop out of my memory forthwith; yet I shall of course be pushed up to the sources of my knowledge when examined.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

The Vicar General was anxious to give evidence because he felt that the first session of the Committee had got at the facts, but had not understood the effect of the system on the morality of the individual prisoner. He felt that another problem was that the committee had got nothing "satisfactory" on Norfolk Island. Both Brown and Barber assured him that where his knowledge was

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{40} Baker, op. cit., p 136.
\textsuperscript{41} Autobiography, p 125.
\textsuperscript{42} Ullathorne to Brown, 10 January 1838. Quoted in Birt, I, p 193.
\end{quote}
"general" and not associated with specific individuals and "personal communications in the confessional", he could speak freely. His evidence shows that he took their advice.

His testimony covers one hundred and seventy six questions. This makes his evidence the most extensive taken in the second session of the Committee. His examination took up the whole sitting day of 8 February. He had a further brief session on 12 February. James Macarthur, James Mudie, Lang and Ullathorne provided the bulk of the oral testimony. At the actual hearing the Vicar General admitted that he was nervous, and anxious to say as much as possible, and that he spoke so rapidly that he had to be stopped repeatedly so that "the reporter might be able to record the words".

His evidence is moderate and should be taken as his considered opinion on transportation, in preference to his more polemical publications The Catholic Mission and The Horrors of Transportation. Certainly his evidence showed him to be an opponent of convictism and he was only too willing to respond to Molesworth's leading questions and to paint a black picture of the effects of the system. However, he makes clear the distinction between transportation to New South Wales, and transportation to the places of secondary punishment, such as Van Diemen's Land and

43. Autobiography, p 125.
44. Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne, p 139.
Norfolk Island. It was the places of secondary punishment that horrified him most.

He told the Committee plainly that the system corrupted rather than reformed the convict. This began on the journey out, was re-enforced in the barracks in Sydney and was often continued while on assignment in the interior. The process of alienation was consummated through flogging, the chain-gang or transportation to a place of secondary punishment.

I believe that hitherto it (transportation) has utterly failed as a means of reformation...I believe that it might be materially improved, but still not so much as to make it a thoroughly efficient means of reformation.45

He considered that assignment was the great weakness of the system, for so much depended on the caprice of the master and the nature of the work that the convict had to do. Often men who had committed minor crimes were treated with great harshness, while major offenders got off lightly. This meant that there could be no "systematic gradation" of punishment.46

Ullathorne, as we have seen, was particularly opposed to flogging, for the scourge created in men a sense of degradation and alienation and often one flogging led to another.47 Another issue

45. Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques. 314.

46. For details of his view of assignment see ibid., ques 172-192, 199-200.

47. Ibid., ques. 200-202.
singled out by him was the way in which men were packed physically close together: in the hulks, in the ships to Australia, in the Sydney barracks and in the chain-gangs. Here men and boys, often transported for minor crimes, were corrupted through contact with real criminals.\textsuperscript{48} He singled out again the transportable boxes in which chain-gangs were held in close confinement and which led to "consequences...of a very immoral kind".

The most controversial questions put to him by the committee concerned homosexuality and bestiality.\textsuperscript{49} The Committee had already elicited lurid evidence on these issues from Ernest Augustus Slade, former police magistrate in Sydney and superintendent of the convict barracks. Slade had been dismissed from both posts by Bourke for immorality (he had been living with a female convict servant) and his evidence manifested considerable antagonism against the Governor.\textsuperscript{50} Slade bluntly told the Committee that among certain convicts "sodomy is as common as any other crime". The reason for this was that the men were not able to consort with women.\textsuperscript{51} He always ordered a summary flogging where men were caught "in an improper, indecent position, with their trousers (sic) down".\textsuperscript{52} Such comments created a sensation both in England

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid. ques. 154-156, 158, 161-168, 203-208.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid. ques. 163, 237-262.

\textsuperscript{50} See ADB, Vol 2, p. 450. For his testimony see Slade to Molesworth Select Committee, 25 April 1837. Ques. 1031-1093.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. ques 1040, 1057.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. ques. 1089.
and New South Wales. Respectable settlers felt that the colony had been traduced. Slade, a self-confessed "bloodhound and rascal", was not in any position to set himself up as a judge of the morals of New South Wales.53 Thus Ullathorne's testimony was all the more important, for, as a respectable and experienced chaplain, his testimony could not be so easily questioned.54 This is why Molesworth insisted in the preliminary interview that the Vicar General answer questions on these topics.

Ullathorne admitted to the Committee that he had suffered "a great deal of pain and torture of mind" over what he had seen in the colonies, but he declared that, for the public good, he was willing to answer the Committee's questions. He claimed that homosexuality was practised on the convict ships, especially those which carried prisoners from the English hulks. He stated unequivocally that it was not found on ships from Ireland. It was common in the convict barracks in Sydney, where certain boys and men were given female names. It was also prevalent on large farms, among stockmen and was especially common in the penal settlements such as Moreton Bay and Norfolk Island (where he estimated that at least two thirds of the convicts were implicated). He argued that the problem would not cease while men were crowded together and the disproportion between men and women in

53. Ibid. ques 888.

54. Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques 237-262. All the following material is taken from these questions.
the population of the colonies remained so unbalanced. Bestiality, he said, was common in remote districts. Ullathorne's views were supported by the evidence of the surgeon, John Barnes, who claimed that homosexuality had prevailed to a considerable extent at Macquarie Harbour and that bestiality was common in rural Van Diemen's Land.55

The issue of concubinage was not neglected. In response to the question (from Molesworth) "Is there a great deal of concubinage?" Ullathorne replied that there was and, not wanting to lose the opportunity of getting support for more priests being sent to Australia, said it was due to the lack of clergymen in the interior.56 He outlined his solution to the problem. It was typically direct: when he discovered a couple living together, he insisted on a marriage being celebrated immediately where there was no obstacle or impediment. This indicates that many of these de facto unions were truly permanent. However, the problem of the danger of bigamy remained for it was often impossible to check whether or not a person had been married in the United Kingdom, or whether a former spouse was dead or alive.

Ullathorne emphasised the great need for chaplains and religious instruction. A discussion of the need for resident Catholic (and

55. Barnes to Molesworth Select Committee, 12 February 1838. Ques 274 and 588-591.

56. Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 12 February 1838. Ques. 320.
Anglican) chaplains at Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay had been going on between Governors Darling and Bourke and the Colonial Office from November 1831 to May 1835. The Vicar General himself had volunteered to go to Norfolk, but had been sent by Polding to Europe to recruit clergy and teachers. As I have already mentioned, Ullathorne had recruited Brady as a chaplain for Norfolk Island, but Polding gave him an appointment to New South Wales. In late 1838 McEncroe and Henry Gregory went to the Island. McEncroe remained there for just on five years.

The Vicar General's evidence emphasised the positive step that the Church had taken - that of taking Catholic convicts aside for religious instruction before assignment. The idea originated with Polding, who was deeply devoted to the welfare of the convicts. With government permission Catholic prisoners remained in Sydney for ten days. During this period they were instructed by the bishop, clergy and catechists in Saint Mary's Church for


58. Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques. 287.


60. Ullathorne to Molesworth Select Committee, 12 February 1838. Ques. 324.

five hours in the morning and for three hours in the afternoon. They were classified according to their dispositions and religious knowledge, and

after they had gone through a series of religious exercises and through a series of individual converse with the clergy (this probably refers to confession), they then...go through another series of instruction with regard to their position as prisoners, as also in reference to their masters, and the law and the Government and the particular dangers that surround them.

Ullathorne claimed that these instructions were very successful. Bourke concurred with this. He told Glenelg in December 1837 that Polding had attended to convict instruction with great earnestness and regularity and "there is reason to believe that the result has been beneficial to those who receive his admonitions, and to the public in general".62

Two pamphlets were supplied to convicts and overseers which provided a re-enforcement of the teaching given. The pamphlets were entitled Instruction on the Duties of Prisoners and Instructions to the Overseers of Gangs, Wardmen and Others generally who are instructed (sic) with the Charge of Prisoners. Both are by a "Catholic Clergyman"; they were probably written by Polding.63 In these pamphlets convicts were assured that they were being justly punished for their crimes and sins; they therefore should be contrite. But they were also encouraged to keep the example of


63. Found in PRO CO 210/315. Copies in SAA.
the suffering Christ before themselves. Overseers were told that they must always lean "to the side of mercy, aware that 'judgement without mercy awaits him who does not show mercy'."

How are we to estimate Ullathorne's evidence to the Committee? To his contemporaries in New South Wales he was the "Agitator General" and The Australian contended that it was on the basis of his "unsupported testimony" that Molesworth put forth his report - "the grossest of all scandals that has been uttered against Transportation".64 To Molesworth, Ullathorne was a godsend and he was certainly used by the Chairman as a means of corroborating the evidence against transportation of a less reputable witness like Slade.

As a clergyman with experience of the convict system, Ullathorne was in a powerful position to speak critically about transportation for his status placed him in the ranks of the official establishment. He had no axe to grind other than that of moral reform, and what could be more respectable? But as well as belonging to the establishment, there is a sense in which, as a Catholic clergyman, he also stood outside it. Despite his pretensions to intimacy with Bourke, there is no evidence that he belonged to the inner elite of the colony. If he thought that Bourke approved of his outspoken criticism of the colony to the Committee, he was

---

64. The Australian, 15 January 1839. See also Autobiography, pp 142-143.
mistaken. Bourke told his friend Charles Buller (Buller was a member of the Molesworth Committee and was present on the first day of Ullathorne's evidence): "It is painful to see how grossly the Committee has been deceived - by the ignorance and nonchalance of some of the witnesses, the interested malevolence of others, and the monomania of an Ecclesiastic". The Governor was concerned that the description of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land as "cesspools" would reflect on his administration. It was only when he arrived back in London in 1838 that Bourke was re-assured that the home government did not believe that his policy "had anything to do with the alleged lamentable depravity of manners or the frightful prevalence of crime" in the colonies.

PART FOUR - The Agitator General Under Attack

It was not only the Governor who blamed Ullathorne for slandering the colony. The Sydney newspapers joined in a strong attack on him (I have already mentioned this in the context of sectarianism). The Australian summed up the attitude of the other papers:

With the Reverend Dr. Ullathorne we have much cause to take offence...He violated justice and truth, for whatever purpose, he offended principles that we desire to uphold - he offended us as the representatives of a large body of our fellow colonists - he must have offended his own conscience - and he has offended God.

65. Bourke to Charles Buller, 8 February 1839. Quoted in King, op. cit., p. 224.
The Australian went on to give an edited version of his evidence and could find "no excuse" for it.

It is hard to explain why Ullathorne became the focus of the attack on the Molesworth Committee. After all, several witnesses, including Lang and Mudie, and even Chief Justice Forbes and James Macarthur had admitted that there was a high crime rate in New South Wales and that transportation was not an effective punishment. Yet the colonists' anger seemed to be directed against Ullathorne. Sectarianism was clearly part of it. By attacking the Vicar General a side swipe could also be directed at Catholicism. Father Francis Murphy (one of Ullathorne's own recruits) certainly saw it that way, for he blamed Ullathorne for stirring up anti-Catholicism through the transportation debate.

One day when a new attack had come out on me from the Press, on the old score of my evidence (to Molesworth) I happened to meet him (Murphy) as I was walking across the park from the house; he pulled up his horse and said, alluding to this attack: "The fact is, that we shall have no peace, so long as you are in the colony".68

As we shall see in the next chapter, there was no love lost between Ullathorne and Murphy!

Through the publication of The Catholic Mission in Australasia Ullathorne was already in print attacking the moral condition of the colony. A second attack (in his evidence to the Select Committee) was probably perceived by many as a gratuitous insult. The

68. Autobiography, p 156.
Australian indicated this when it claimed that it had defended the pamphlet (despite its "florid and rhapsodical style") by stressing its "benevolent purpose". But Ullathorne had assailed the colony again in even blunter terms in his evidence - and this was unforgivable. Clearly economic and social motives also came into play. Many masters had much to lose when assignment ceased. And Ullathorne had not minced matters when it came to describing the morals of the inhabitants, whether convict or free. Fundamentally, it was Ullathorne's determination to expose the cruelty and depravity that he had witnessed that led him to attack transportation so publicly. The breadth of his experience of the system and the sincerity of his opposition to it cannot be questioned.

It is true that the decision to abolish transportation had been taken before the Molesworth Select Committee had been established and that Molesworth manipulated the witnesses to support his pre-conceived views.69 Further, the evidence presented is not truthfully reflected in the report of the Committee.70 But none of this necessarily discounts the evidence of Ullathorne - nor of the other witnesses. The Vicar General's experience was first-hand and despite the attempts of Sir George Grey and the Sydney newspapers to denigrate his major source - the convicts themselves - his views did reflect the reality of convict life,

69. See Ritchie, art. cit., pp 144-151, 158-159.
70. Townsend, art. cit., passim.
especially in the penal settlements. His only motive was the abolition of a system which not only failed to reform the convict but degraded the men and women who were either its victims or its administrators.

Nevertheless, the question remains as to the objective accuracy of his evidence. Did he present an accurate picture of New South Wales society? How total was the failure of the system to reform the convicts? Was assignment always fraught with disastrous consequences for the convicts? How widespread were the abuses he mentions? It is difficult to make generalisations about transportation. The type and condition of convicts differed markedly over the years during which the system operated. Ullathorne's experience was confined to the group transported to Australia in the late 1820s and 1830s. It is probably true to say that more "real" criminals were arriving in the 1830s than in the previous decades. As to the question of transportation as a means of reformation, Ullathorne was probably right: the system achieved very little. But it did provide many convicts with the possibility of a new start.

By the 1830s two general groupings of convicts could be discerned: the majority who adapted reasonably well to their lot and who were lucky in their assignment. These were the men with the ability to exploit the system and to use the opportunities provided to better themselves. Others were less able to adapt. They were
victims of the assignment lottery by being sent to cruel or exploitative masters, men who fell foul of the system or who were just plain stupid or slightly mad. It was they who were regularly flogged, who were sent to chain-gangs or who were eventually retransported to places of secondary punishment. Certainly they were a minority, but for them the system was cruel and destructive. It was these men whom Ullathorne and the other chaplains regularly met.

An example of this type of man was David Evans, identified by Barry Smith as Mayhew's convict. Evans was a typical convict of his period (he was transported in 1824): young (he was sixteen), and already a thief from the London slums. Smith reports the "savagely disproportionate" and unusual sentence - fourteen years for stealing a handkerchief worth 2/- . His convict record in Launceston was one of constant petty offences which led to floggings and periods in irons and the chain-gang. It is a sad history of brutalisation until 1843 when he eventually got his ticket-of-leave. Not all men who experienced brutalisation were even criminals. Some were just victims of the system - such as George Hillier whose career I have already mentioned.

Historians have given various interpretations of transportation. Early writers saw the convicts as "village Hampdens", innocent

victims of an unjust system, poor men and women driven to crime by grinding poverty.\textsuperscript{72} This view was modified by the studies of Clark, Shaw and Robson, who demonstrated that most convicts were, in fact, persistent petty criminals whose offences were the result of overpopulation and unemployment.\textsuperscript{73} Having established that, the historiographical focus shifted to questions about the conditions under which convicts passed their sentences in the colonies. The picture painted by critics, such as Molesworth and Ullathorne, was taken by historians as generally accurate.

Recently it has been questioned. John Hirst, for example, argues that convicts in New South Wales were far freer on assignment than has ever been recognised.\textsuperscript{74} Good treatment usually brought about a willingness to work for a master and a degree of freedom prevented the development of conditions that would lead to a convict revolt.\textsuperscript{75} Hirst's book is really a fascinating study of the interaction of masters and servants. Hirst admits that it was rough justice and that the system was brutal, but he argues that


rough justice and that the system was brutal, but he argues that it contained enough elements of self-interest for the convicts to make it work. He does not deny that places of secondary punishment, such as Norfolk Island, were horrible. He also makes the point that it was the "incorrigibles" who received most of the punishment. By implication he supports the distinction that I have made above that there was a sizeable minority who fell foul of the system and became its victims.

Thus Ullathorne's testimony has to be balanced to the extent that many convict men and women did make "a go of it". While not "reformed" in a theoretical sense, the circumstances of the colony gave them a chance to construct a new life. However, Hirst's views need to be seen within the context of the punishments meted out to large numbers of convicts that have already been described in this chapter.

The whole question of the interpretation of convictism in Australian history has been re-opened by Robert Hughes' recent book, The Fatal Shore. Hughes adds nothing to our knowledge of convictism. In some ways he even distorts what is well known and established about transportation. But what he does do is to highlight again the very reality upon which Ullathorne insists:

76. Hirst, op. cit., p. 72.

the terrible sufferings of the places of secondary punishment. Severe physical punishment was for some were an integral part of a system that may well have worked to give new opportunities to some others. Ullathorne was right when he insisted that the problem of the incorrigibles remained and he is also right when he insisted that many became the way they were because of the very system that had been set up to reform them.

Ullathorne also paints a lurid picture of New South Wales society steeped in crime and promiscuity. Is this true? A recent study by Michael Sturma has suggested otherwise. He demonstrates the way in which crime rates were manipulated by settlers using assigned labour (masters in the Hunter Valley, for instance) to attack Bourke, accusing him of laxity in the treatment of convicts. The same statistics were, ironically, later twisted to defend New South Wales against the "cruel calumnies" of the Molesworth Committee. The Committee itself used the crime statistics to prove that transportation to New south Wales was useless.

Sturma's aim is to criticise the stereotype of New South Wales as a vicious society, a stereotype that Ullathorne emphasises. However, Sturma's problem is that the police records are incomplete and problematic. What is useful in his account is the interaction of concepts such as "criminal class" and "respectability". He

argues that those who aspire to "respectability" usually need a
group of unsavoury, vicious people in society (the "criminal
class") with whom they can contrast themselves. The need for the
respectable to "reform" the criminal class provides a moralistic
justification for their own righteous pretensions. It also sets
up a foil against which the respectable can contemplate their own
virtue.

Sturma's criticism must be considered in assessing Ullathorne's
views. The influence of evangelical notions of respectability and
moral virtue certainly influenced the Vicar General, but as I
have emphasised, Catholics were still "outsiders" to the colonial
elites and thus tended to be more independent of prevailing
attitudes. It is significant that Ullathorne consistently blamed
the conditions in which convicts passed their sentences for their
brutalised lives, rather than some form of personal moral
turpitude. This is a departure from the then prevailing attitude
that convicts were an essentially evil under-class whose only
redemption lay in punishment. Ullathorne seemed to understand
instinctively that the social structures in which people lived
drove them to illegal and evil action more often than their own
"morally depraved" decisions. He firmly believed that kindness
and just treatment could bring them to redemption.

Allowing for the correctives outlined, Ullathorne's evidence
about the general conditions of transportation still stands up to
critical analysis. At the heart of Ullathorne's objections to the system was assignment, which was described in the Select Committee's Report as a "mere lottery" - words which Ullathorne had also used. In both The Catholic Mission in Australasia and in his evidence to the Select Committee, the Vicar General emphasised the arbitrary and unjust nature of assignment.\(^7^9\) He told the Committee:

One prisoner has come out on the same ship, probably, with another who, he knows, has been guilty of a much more heinous crime. He finds that the prisoner is in comfortable circumstances, whilst he himself may be in wretched circumstances.

Such situations not only caused resentment. They also demonstrated that the talented opportunist could do very well for himself. Many, especially tradesmen (who were in short supply) or those with a particular skill, worked on assignment according to their treatment: "They work little or much, well or bunglingly, as they are treated". And if they were treated badly, they contrived to get an new assignment. "At slack times they work a little privately for themselves, and have an occasional holiday".\(^8^0\)

Also Ullathorne complained that nothing was done by masters to reform the convicts morally, although it was claimed by the government that this was the major purpose of the system of assignment. The Vicar General expressed his complaint succinctly:

\(^7^9\). Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, pp 18-21; Molesworth Committee, Ques. 173 and 174.

\(^8^0\). Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, p 19.
They (the convicts) are assigned to their master for reformation but the master's object is profit. His contention (sic) is to produce as much labour out of his slave, in as short a time, as possible...The incentive to industry and good conduct is the lash.\textsuperscript{81}

A recent study of the assignment system by Stephen Foster confirms this.\textsuperscript{82} Foster admits that assignment was a lottery and he speaks of "the arbitrary allocation of convicts".\textsuperscript{83} The settlers to whom convicts were assigned were another great weakness in the system of reformation. As the Chief Justice, Sir Francis Forbes, told the Molesworth Committee: "The condition of the convict depends, not only for his present comfort, but for his ultimate fate, either of good or ill, on the character, conduct and treatment of the master".\textsuperscript{84} Masters were sometimes as bad - if not worse - than the convicts assigned to them.

The government occasionally tried to do something about this by removing convicts from the charge of unworthy masters. But obviously this did not work for, in 1838, Gipps was urging the colonists "to pay stricter attention to the reformation and moral improvement of their assigned servants".\textsuperscript{85} Foster supports the

\textsuperscript{81} Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, p 22.
\textsuperscript{83} Foster, art. cit., p 35.
\textsuperscript{84} Forbes to Select Committee, Ques 40.
\textsuperscript{85} Quoted in Foster, art. cit., p 63.
Vicar General's testimony to the Select Committee when he says:

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that government officials...were more concerned with the outward appearance of the assignment system than with the reformation of individual convicts, more with the moral authority of masters than the moral welfare of their charges. What seemed to matter most was upholding "the authority and dignity of a master".86

What Ullathorne and other reformers were really engaged in was the taming of a frontier society and imposing upon it the social mores of middle class evangelical Christianity. It is significant that Ullathorne constantly called for priests to be placed in the "interior", for it was at the frontier that the struggle was waged against the tendency to revert to semi-paganism. The rest of the religious history of Australia suggests that the battle was only partly won by the churches.

PART FIVE - Ullathorne and the Female Convicts

To this point I have omitted all consideration of the female convicts except for a brief comment on them in an earlier chapter. Ullathorne is often quoted by historians as saying that the female convicts were "acknowledged to be worse, and far more difficult of reformation, than the (men)".87 He accused the women of "immodesty, drunkenness and the most horrible language". Most

86. Foster, art. cit., p 74.
contemporary historians, however, fail to note that, as in the situation of male convicts, he placed the blame not on the women themselves, but on the transportation system. He argued that the women were under constant pressure. On the ship out to Australia young girls were confined with older criminal women and many were sexually exploited by members of the crew. Therry and Conolly had witnessed systematic prostitution on the Janus in 1820. Promiscuity continued to characterise the female convict ships throughout the decade. Despite attempted reforms of the system, the historian, John West, referred to the female ships as "floating brothels" and the surgeon, Peter Cunningham (who had worked on these ships) argued that promiscuity kept things "harmonious" on the long journey.88

Ullathorne called the Female Factory at Parramatta that "sink of abomination", and claimed that there the women received an education in vice and corruption. On assignment, especially in the bush, the Vicar General claimed that female convicts were constantly sexually harassed. The assigned woman

becomes the object of persecution, either of her master ...or to some favourite servant. Does she defend herself - her life is made a torment...Does she fall - she is returned to the factory, care is taken of her at the public expense - she remains nursing her child for two years, it is then separated from the mother...and is placed in an orphan school.89


His comments to the Select Committee were more restrained and he did not mention the danger of seduction by masters; he even said that there were "fewer temptations" in the bush! But by the time he came to write the Autobiography he had returned to the theme of the dangers faced by convict women on assignment: "The poor Irish girls, through being assigned to wicked masters, were not infrequently exposed to great perils, especially in the lone country places".  These women, he claimed, could rarely get justice, for the word of the master was usually believed.

While there is no doubt that some of the convict women made the most of their opportunities while on assignment, and that many de facto unions were permanent, there is also no doubt that many women faced a serious danger of seduction and rape while up country. Most contemporary observers agreed with Ullathorne that women convicts were often subjected to sexual harassment. As early as 1809 the Colonial Office complained that convict women were assigned for the "pleasure" of the settlers. Before leaving for Australia, Macquarie was warned by the English trader, Thomas Plummer (a friend of the exclusives who felt that convicts were treated too leniently), that the women were selected "not only as Servants but as avowed objects of intercourse...rendering the whole colony little better than an extensive brothel".  In 1829

90. Autobiography, p 111.

Darling told Murray that he could not introduce compulsory assignment of women because it would be "the cause of much additional trouble and occasion an encrease (sic) of Expense" because many of the females would be returned to the Factory in a state of destitution.92

The problem of female assignment had still not been solved in 1842. The Secretary of State, Stanley, told the Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land of "the almost insuperable difficulties" facing "these poor creatures...assigned to the less scrupulous and less moral portion of the community". They were "continually exposed the criminal solicitation, to grievous oppression and often to personal violence".93 A copy of this dispatch was also sent to Gipps indicating that the same problem existed in New South Wales.94 As Katrina Alford says the women embarked on a "circular journey": from the Factory to assignment, solicitation, violence and injury, only to be returned to confinement in the Factory, often pregnant, to begin the hapless cycle again.95 Ullathorne's comments on the Factory concur with this: "Returned hither (to the Factory) from service for correct-


94. It is this copy which is in Series I of the HRA.

ion, often receiving a new finish in vice, they are again sent forth into circulation, carrying with them infection into every extremity of the colony".\textsuperscript{96}

All contemporary (male) commentators are agreed in describing the convict women as "profligate" and as no better than prostitutes. Much of this was obviously male projection and the word "prostitute" was used loosely to refer to women who were not in some type of formal relationship (usually marital) to a male. Even women living in stable de facto unions were thus categorised. As Annette Salt has pointed out, women in domestic service in the United Kingdom were often forced into occasional or permanent prostitution or petty crime by the economics of survival.\textsuperscript{97} Many of the women transported to Australia came from this group.

Conditions at the Female Factory at Parramatta (and at the Cascades Factory in Hobart) simply reinforced the stereotype. Salt has described the corruption and maladministration at the Parramatta Factory during the late 1820s and the 1830s. Obviously things were in bad shape during the Vicar General's time for he told the Select Committee that in the course of one visit it took him twenty minutes to find anyone to quell the "yelling and obscene language and quarrelling in the...ward" next to where he

\textsuperscript{96} Ullathorne, \textit{Catholic Mission}, p 27.

was celebrating divine service. He also told the Committee that Marsden had told him that on one occasion the military had to be called in to quell a riot among the women.

In evidence to the Select Committee Ullathorne claimed that marriage reformed the female convicts. The responsibility of a family forced the wife to become industrious and responsible. One of the problems facing the clergy was the question of former marriages in the United Kingdom. Sometimes women pretended to be married to get better treatment on the journey out to Australia, and others considered their de facto unions true marriages. On some occasions the government considered people married when the church considered unmarried or vice versa. As already mentioned, the danger of bigamy was also a problem.

The ministry of the Catholic Church in the Factory was placed on a regular footing by the arrival of the Sisters of Charity. In January 1839 they came to Parramatta on the steamer with the Vicar General. "It was the first time he (Ullathorne) had ever been in it". The Sisters wore "bonnets and cloaks, as being more

98. Ullathorne to Select Committee, 8 February 1838. Ques 215.

99. Ibid. Ques. 216-217.

100. Ques 224 and 319-320.

101. Sister Mary Baptist de Lacy to Polding, 4 December 1843. SCA, H102/1-7.
sheltered and less remarkable".102 Sister Mary Baptist de Lacy said the situation in the Factory was "deplorable" when they arrived.

At the end of 1838 Gipps had dismissed the matron and administrators, Julia Leach and John and Agnes Clapham. They were replaced by George and Sarah Bell as Superintendent and Matron.103 Things improved under the new administration, for the Sydney Gazette was able to report in March 1839 that "the establishment is rapidly attaining a more enviable reputation".104 New cells had been constructed and the women were involved in the manufacture of shirts, hats and all kinds of needle work for commercial sale.105 However, the improvement was short-lived: the Bells were suspended in 1843 for expropriation and making false returns.106

It is interesting to note that, before their dismissal in 1838, Matron Leach and the Claphams had complained to the government that the Bells "were bigotted (sic) Roman Catholics" and that


104. Sydney Gazette, 2 March 1839.


five of the six hundred inmates were Catholics.\textsuperscript{107} There seems to be no doubt that in the late 1830s Catholics formed at least half and possibly two thirds of the women in the Factory. Polding told Archbishop Murray of Dublin in March 1839 that two thirds of the six hundred inmates were Catholic.\textsuperscript{108} Ullathorne agrees with this saying that "there were five or six hundred Catholic women in the Factory" (in mid-1839 the total number in the Factory was between eight hundred and one thousand).\textsuperscript{109} Thus the administration, Ullathorne and Polding all concur that there was a significant percentage of Catholic women in the Factory.

How can we explain the large number of Catholics? Ullathorne suggests that at the time of arrival, Irish female convicts (who would have made up the vast majority of Catholic female convicts) were more virtuous than the English women. This is probably because the Catholic women's background was likely to be the tightly-knit and increasingly puritanical religiosity of rural Ireland. There is no doubt that there was a looser sexual code among the English urban poor. But as a result of the brutalisation and sexual exploitation experienced by the Irish women on assignment, they seem to have reacted by going to the opposite extreme, repudiating their upbringing by a promiscuity that was

\textsuperscript{107} Salt, op. cit., p 60.

\textsuperscript{108} Polding to Murray, 5 March 1839. DAA, Australian Collection.

\textsuperscript{109} Autobiography, p 146.
fundamentally self-destructive. Sister De Lacy also suggests that drunkenness was a major problem. She says that intemperance was the "vice which had been to them the source of all their miseries". Once they had taken the pledge, women who had been "outcasts" were reformed and were ready for Holy Communion and even confirmation.\textsuperscript{110}

There is no doubt that the Sisters of Charity did have a real impact on the women. Polding told Archbishop Murray that:

\begin{quote}
A change which appears almost miraculous has taken place... Heretofor, all was noise and ribaldry and obscene conversation, you may well see the quiet of a well-ordered family. Not an oath nor curse nor brawling word is heard; and general desire to frequent the sacraments prevails.\textsuperscript{111}
\end{quote}

Ullathorne claimed that the "magistrates repeatedly bore testimony to their (the Sisters) services from the bench".\textsuperscript{112} From the beginning of 1839 onwards Ullathorne lived at Parramatta near the Sisters, and the Catholic women in the Factory had Mass once a week and could receive Communion once a month - which would have been the normal average for even the most respectable members of the church. However, the women's confessions weighed down on Ullathorne. He says (somewhat melodramatically) that he sometimes went home "quite sick even physically with what I had gone through (in the confessional), or rather what had to pass through

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{110} de Lacy to Polding, 4 December 1843. SCA, H102/1-7.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Polding to Murray, 5 March 1839. DAA, Australian Collection.
\item \textsuperscript{112} \textit{Autobiography}, p 146.
\end{itemize}
PART SIX - The Agitator General as Social Reformer

Ullathorne has been recognised as one of the founders of Australian Catholicism. But while he is sometimes referred to as an opponent of transportation, he is not generally recognised as a major social critic and penal reformer. Yet, in fact, this is precisely what he was.

I have already outlined the experiences which brought him to his stand against transportation: his visits to Norfolk Island, his personal experiences of the system and its physical, psychological, moral and spiritual consequences. He also perceived that the problem was not so much the evil dispositions of the convicts themselves, as the legal and social system in which they were trapped. Thus crime was more systemic than personal. Later in his life he seems to have abandoned this view, but he always retained a sympathy with the poor. If anything, his human tolerance and pastoral experience developed with age and experience. At the heart of his opposition to transportation was his very practical religiosity. The young Ullathorne was somewhat pompous and self-important - and thus fitted squarely into the ethos of his time and class! But his religious convictions were essentially practical: belief should always bear fruit in one's life. He was

also an effective preacher. The continuing popularity of the sermon The Drunkard witnesses to that. He also seems to have intuitively understood human nature. He had no illusions that people were perfect, or even perfectable, but he did believe in appealing to the good qualities that were to be found in all, even the most hardened. If men and women were to be changed, it would not be achieved by fear of the lash or punishment, but by the redemption of Christ, the sacraments of the church, moral formation and religious commitment.

Others who gave evidence to the Select Committee had written and spoken in opposition to transportation, but none as directly as Ullathorne had in The Catholic Mission and The Horrors of Transportation. He spoke and acted out of the conviction that the system as it stood could not be modified or improved. It was too depraved for that. He was not very clear on what he thought should replace it. Few of the critics of the system were. At the forefront of his mind was the conviction that "We have taken a vast portion of God's earth, and have made it a cess-pool".114 Criminals, he thought, should be retained in the United Kingdom, not dumped in the Antipodes. He considered that the mark system of Maconochie had merit, but he was realistic enough to know that it would require a whole new attitude on the part of penal administrators to make it work. By implication, he supported the penitentiary system. But, as I have emphasised, he was not a

theorist, but rather a practical man. He was essentially concerned about the people with whom he had to deal face to face in New South Wales and its dependencies. Transportation did nothing for them - in fact, it was destroying some of them. Therefore, it should be abolished. It was a simple but forceful argument.

The transportation issue proved a major turning point in his own life. The attack on him when he returned to the colony in 1839 was sustained and vicious. He was perceived as an important - if not the most important - abolitionist. As we shall see in the next chapter, he received no support from Polding or the other Catholic clergy. This led to a real crisis of confidence in himself, to depression and to something of a "breakdown". But he did not back away from his commitment to the abolition of transportation. He was too committed for that.
CHAPTER SIX

TO EUROPE AND BACK
"The ship in which I sailed was a heavy tub and the captain an uncultivated man, without any force of character".¹ No doubt the six and a half months voyage gave Ullathorne ample time to reach these conclusions! The "heavy tub" was the ship Eldon which sailed to England via Cape Horn. It departed from Hobart (Ullathorne had gone to Van Diemen's Land with Polding to try to solve the Conolly affair) on 8 June 1836.² The ship arrived in England in late December 1836. On all his trips by sea Ullathorne was always something of a 'back-seat driver' and this journey was no exception: "The Captain was so unskilful in navigation that we got a long way south of Cape Horn into above sixty degrees of south latitude, and we entangled amongst icebergs for nearly a fortnight" (sic).³ They then sailed north past Isla de los Estados (Staten Island) and up the South American coast heading for Rio de Janeiro and fresh provisions, "but our Captain again blundered" and landed the ship in the small port of Angra dos Rios, about one hundred kilometres south of Rio.

Their land-fall gave Ullathorne a chance to observe the Latin American Catholic Church. He was not impressed: "I found religion at a low ebb, and most of the clergy in as low a condition".⁴

¹. Autobiography, p 95.
². The Australian, 21 July 1836.
his final trip from Australia to England he was to visit Latin America again. Despite an attempt to cross the Continent from Valparaiso to Buenos Aires, as had Sir Richard Bourke on his return to England, Ullathorne and his party were again forced to go via Cape Horn.\(^5\) His view of the church in Latin America was not substantially changed by his second trip.

Ullathorne says that the two years in Europe were the "most eventful years of my life".\(^6\) They were also important years for the Australian Catholic Church, for during that time the decision was reached that would scotch the development of Australia as an English Benedictine mission, and begin the process that was to make it a clerical colony of the Irish church.

Certainly powerful elements in the Irish church were beginning to plan for it. For instance, Bishop Francis Nicholson, an Irish Carmelite and Bishop of Corfu, told Archbishop Murray's Vicar General, Dr. John Hamilton, that Propaganda was especially concerned to get Irish bishops interested in the colonial churches by providing clergy and sisters.\(^7\) Certainly Australia would have been a prime Irish missionary target. Certainly the almost complete failure of Ullathorne to recruit non-Irish clergy

\(^{5}\) Bourke to Roger Therry, 18 April 1838. DA. (How this letter got to the Downside Archives is hard to tell). See also Autobiography, pp 180-184.

\(^{6}\) Autobiography, p 99.

\(^{7}\) Nicholson to Hamilton, 10 July 1841. DAA, 36/4 (3).
made an Irish clerical hegemony an inevitable development, since almost all the laity were Irish.

But, as I emphasised in an earlier chapter, that was not the original policy of the British government, nor was it the intention of the English Catholic hierarchy. The Australian mission was meant to be Benedictine, staffed by English monks from the English Congregation. But Ullathorne was to realise during his trip to Europe that this was an impossible ideal, for the only clergy who were available, and generous enough to volunteer, were Irish.

The second purpose of Ullathorne's journey was to make Australian Catholicism known in Europe.

So little was then known respecting Australia in England, especially respecting its singular productions, the conditions of its convict population, and the state of religion, that my narratives were everywhere listened to with great attention, and as something new and surprising.\(^8\)

He made contacts all over Europe, but especially in the United Kingdom. In both England and Ireland he met all the major Catholic figures.\(^9\) He also made sure that the Australian mission was well-reported in the Catholic press. Since the appointment and departure of Polding from England there had always been a good coverage of Australian church affairs in the United Kingdom, especially in the Catholic Magazine and Review and The London and

\(^8\) Autobiography, p 99.

Dublin Orthodox Journal. During Ullathorne's visit to Europe, The Edinburgh Catholic Magazine and the Dublin Review joined the Orthodox Journal in publicising the Vicar General's activities and the work of the Australian mission. This publicity continued after Ullathorne's return to New South Wales.

Thirdly, Ullathorne wanted to inform Rome, especially the Propaganda Congregation, of what had been achieved and of the potential there was in Australia for the growth of Catholicism. Specifically, he wanted to seek permission to establish the Benedictine community in Sydney as an independent entity, separate from the English Congregation. This was a plan dear to Polding's heart. Finally, there was the ever present problem of financing the Australian mission.

No doubt all of these issues were discussed with Polding before the Vicar General left for Europe, and in some ways it would have been helpful to Polding to have the forceful Ullathorne absent for two years; it gave the bishop a chance to establish himself and his authority. But the trip was also to be a personal turning point for Ullathorne. He never really settled in after he returned to Australia in 1839.

10. There were four articles in the Catholic Magazine between 1834 and 1835 and four articles between 1836 and 1837 in the Orthodox Journal. I was able to survey complete sets of these magazines in the Oscott College Library and the Catholic Library in London.
In the Autobiography Ullathorne says that he was unable to recall his travels in Europe chronologically. However, I have succeeded to some extent in making a reconstruction. Both his itinerary and correspondence during this period reflect his intense commitment to promoting the mission of the Catholic Church in Australia and he gave himself totally to the recruitment of personnel and the drumming up of financial support for the Church's ministry.

A brief outline of Ullathorne's travels in Europe will give some idea of the extent of the contacts that he made. A short time after his arrival in England, he left for Rome via Paris and northern and central Italy. He stayed in Rome for seven weeks and returned to England via Perugia, Florence, Bologna, the north Italian lakes, Turin, Lyons and Paris. After two months in London (with periodic visits to Downside and Acton (residence of the procurator for the Australian mission, Father Paulinus Heptonstall) he spent several months on a preaching tour in the industrial cities of northern England, especially in Lancashire.

During this same period he also visited Ireland and recruited clergy and students for the Australian mission. He then had another period in London during which he gave evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee. This was followed by a short holiday

11. Dates and places of writing of letters are the main clues. There are also other odd bits of evidence.

12. Birt, I, p 288. He mentions the preaching tour in evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee, Ques 309.
in Scarborough, and then he returned to Ireland for at least two more months of intense recruitment. He attended the opening of the Oscott College chapel on 31 July 1838. Here he met all of the leading English Catholics, including Augustus Welby Pugin, the gothic revivalist architect, who had designed the chapel. He saw Pugin in raptures "his eyes flashing through his tears...declaring it the first great day for England since the Reformation".13 Ullathorne returned to London and departed with his priestly recruits and the Sisters of Charity on 23 August 1837 on the Francis Spaight for Sydney. It had been an extraordinarily busy and fruitful trip.

PART TWO - In Rome on Australia's Behalf

Ullathorne was certainly confused about the chronology of his European travels in the Autobiography. He places his visit to Rome after his evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee. This is incorrect. He actually visited Rome between 25 March and mid May 1837. He gave evidence to Molesworth on 8 and 12 February 1838.14 The principal purpose of the visit to Rome was to put Australia on the ecclesiastical map. The Vatican had been only indirectly involved in Australian affairs since the abortive appointment of O'Flynn as Prefect Apostolic of "Bottanibe" in...
1816. All subsequent appointments had been made through the London Vicars Apostolic Poynter and Bramston with Rome's approval. But the odd mission at the ends of the earth now had its own bishop and it needed to be brought to Rome's attention directly. So the Vicar General became the first person to represent the ecclesiastical interests of Australia at the Vatican. He had been invited to Rome by Father Bernard Collier, Procurator in Curia (Roman agent) of the English Benedictine Congregation and the English Cardinal Thomas Weld who was resident in Rome. Weld felt that it was important that Ullathorne give a report of the mission to the Holy See.

There was a secondary purpose for Ullathorne's Roman mission: to obtain canonical permission from Rome to erect a Benedictine monastic community in Sydney independent of the President of the English Benedictine Congregation. This community would be dependent on the authority of the Vicar Apostolic of New Holland and the idea was that the members of the community would work as missionary monks. This concept was very close to Polding's heart for the whole of his life as Archbishop of Sydney. It was also to be a divisive and destructive problem in Sydney church affairs

15. Thomas Weld (1773-1837) of Lulworth, Dorset was a rich Catholic who had supported many church ventures including the Trappist monastery in which O'Flynn began his priestly career. After the death of his wife, Weld was ordained (1821) and was made a Cardinal in 1829. See Ward, op. cit., Vol III, pp 183-186. He died while Ullathorne was in Rome. See Autobiography, p 128.

for much of the 19th century and was to influence subsequent historiography.\textsuperscript{17}

At first Ullathorne supported the idea of separation of the Australian church from the English Congregation for distance made it impossible for decisions concerning the Australian situation to be taken in England. As he told Brown, then Prior of Downside:

\begin{quote}
The space of twelve months must be allowed for any mutual communication...How difficult, again, for you in England, in Chapter or elsewhere, to reach the real merits of any of our circumstances (in Australia).\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

For Ullathorne, it was a practical pastoral problem. For Polding, an independent monastic community was a missionary ideal. Thus as soon as he saw it would not work, the Vicar General abandoned the idea (he was the first to grasp the fact that the majority of the clergy in Australia would not be English Benedictines, but Irish secular priests). However, this was not clear when Ullathorne applied to and obtained from Propaganda a rescript granting independence to the Australian Benedictine missionaries and placing them under the authority of the Vicar Apostolic so long as he was a Benedictine.\textsuperscript{19} But once it became clear that no English monks

\textsuperscript{17}. For an account of this see O'Donoghue, op. cit., passim but especially pp 78-102; O'Farrell, op. cit., pp 63-129; Shanahan, M., op. cit., passim.

\textsuperscript{18}. Ullathorne to Brown, 27 February 1837. Quoted in Birt, I, p 347.

\textsuperscript{19}. Ullathorne to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda (Franzoni), 2 June 1837, PA, SRC Oceania (1815-1841), I, 404; Secretary of Propaganda (Monsignor Mai) to Polding, 4 June 1837,
would be coming to Australia, Ullathorne, ever the realist, told Brown in July 1838:

It is a subject to me of very deep regret...With all this failure in England, the Colony will become, of course, an Irish mission, and perhaps ought to be so. I shall most likely leave the Mission myself in the course of three years for under these circumstances, I should probably be an obstacle to the Mission's advancement...To do anything Benedictine in the Colony is now out of the question, and I see not amongst stronger reasons of utility to the Church, why I should secularise myself (sic).20

This is an important statement for Ullathorne's future in New South Wales, and I shall return to it later in this chapter. What is clear is that he realised right from the start that Australia was to be an Irish mission, not an English Benedictine one. Polding had still not accepted this when he died in 1877.

But the main purpose of Ullathorne's trip to Rome was to put the achievements and needs of the Australian Church before the Propaganda Congregation. He went to Rome via Paris where he met Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society and "several leaders of Catholic affairs" - probably some of the liberal Catholics who were still grouped around Charles de Montelambert. This surmise is strengthened by the fact that Ullathorne travelled to Rome with Prosper Gueranger, a reformer of the French Benedictines and founder of the Abbey of Solesmes and, at that time, still a member of the network centering on Montelambert.

---

bert. Ullathorne visited Genoa, Pisa, Florence "and the cities between there and Rome" with Gueranger and another Benedictine, Charles Brandes.\(^{21}\) In Rome he stayed at the monastery of San Callisto and it was here that he first wore the Benedictine habit.\(^{22}\) The visit did not go unnoticed in the United Kingdom. The *Dublin Review* commented:

> An unusual number of British prelates have visited Rome this year, on business connected with their sees...To these must be added the Very Rev. W. Ullathorne from Australia, whose accounts of that rising country have deeply interested the ecclesiastical authorities.\(^{23}\)

His first weeks in Rome, however, were not successful. The Swiss Guard stopped him at the entrance of the Sistine Chapel and both Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) and Cardinal Franzoni exclaimed "Quel giovane" ("What a youth!") when they met "Il vicario generale di Nuovo Olandia"! It was an old Roman trick: give the newcomer the cold shoulder to see if he would persevere. They underestimated the stubborn Yorkshireman if they thought he would give up easily. Chastened, but not daunted, Ullathorne produced a written report on the church in Australia which was translated into Italian and presented to Propaganda.

Collier considered that this report was also important for the reputation of the English Benedictine Congregation, for the dismissal of successive Vicars Apostolic of Mauritius (Slater and

\(^{21}\) Autobiography, pp 125-127.

\(^{22}\) Autobiography, p 36; p 131.

\(^{23}\) Dublin Review, 3 July 1837, p 259.
Morris) had made a bad impression in Rome. (I have referred to
Slater's dismissal in 1832 in an earlier chapter. Bishop Morris
had been dismissed by Propaganda in 1838 after he had been false­
ly accused by a disgraced Italian priest who had been resident in
Mauritius. The Bishop's defense did not reach Rome). Collier
told Brown:

Since Mr. Ullathorne's arrival we have been very busy here
in writing and translating into Italian statements about the
mission of Australia. These statements consist of separate
and somewhat lengthened accounts of the religious state and
future prospects of moral progress in New South Wales, in
Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land, followed by an account
historical, and statistical of the aborigines of New South
Wales, Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand.

This report created a favourable impression in Rome, so that by
the time of his departure "the Pope...gave me some kind words of
encouragement, told me to learn to speak Italian for my next
visit to Rome, and gave me as a token of approval the degree of
Doctor in Divinity". It is unfortunate that doctorates today
have become so much more difficult to obtain!

Ullathorne used the rest of his time in Rome to buy books, church
plate, vestments and missals and to consult with experts on a
range of ecclesiastical questions and to gather a store of exper­

24. Bishop Morris was entirely innocent of the charges
brought against him. For details see Birt, I, pp 84-85.

25. Collier to Brown, 24 April 1837. DA J 394. A copy of the
actual report of Ullathorne to Propaganda is at DA, J 401.

ience that would be the foundation of his knowledge of the church system that would stand him in good stead in many later visits to Rome as Vicar Apostolic and Bishop. He also made a number of contacts with priests interested in coming to Australia. A friendly Cardinal (Cardinal Castracane) presented him with a painting of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin attributed to Guido Reni. He gave it to the Sisters of Charity, who still have it.\(^{27}\) One very practical consequence of his visit to Rome was that Propaganda informed him of the existence of the Vienna fund. I will return to the details of this financial windfall in the next part of the chapter.

On the return journey to London, he visited Turin to try to see Antonio Rosmini-Serbati, founder of the Institute of Charity (the Rosminians). Although Ullathorne had heard that "his writings were suspected of having a taint of novelty and unsoundness", the Vicar General hoped that he might recruit some priests from the order to work in Australia.\(^{28}\) Here he showed sound judgement for the Rosminians were later to be successful missionaries in England. It was unusual for Italian priests to work successfully in a Protestant milieu. Ullathorne, however, was not successful in

\(^{27}\) It is now in the Sister's of Charity museum at Saint Vincent's Convent, Potts Point, New South Wales.

Turin and the Rosminians never came to Australia. But in Lyons, his next stop, he was very successful.

PART THREE - Raising Money for the Mission: the Propagation of the Faith and the Vienna Fund

It is probably impossible now to re-construct the financial details of the beginnings of the Catholic Church in Australia, for Ullathorne claims that Polding destroyed all his carefully kept records of correspondence with government and clergy after the Vicar General left Sydney in 1840. However, sufficient evidence does exist to sort out some of the details.

Few sources of funds were available to the clergy until the mid-1830s. Their government stipends amounted to 100 pounds. They also received collections, stipends, stole fees and contributions; in a penal colony these could not have amounted to a great deal. Institutionally, the Catholic Church received grants from government for church buildings and schools; these grants were matched by direct appeals for contributions from Catholics and friendly Protestants. After the arrival of Ullathorne institutional finances became more complicated. The government continued to provide for most capital expenditure, paid a small sum for outfit and passage for clergy and teachers recruited in Europe, and continued to pay clerical salaries. The money thus collected,

however, was clearly insufficient to cover recurrent costs and other expenses. It was essential to find another source of income.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons was one possible source of funds. It was already financing French missions in the Pacific and had given a contribution to Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier, who had left Lyons in 1836 with a group of Marist missionaries for New Zealand. (They went to New Zealand via Latin America and Sydney, where Pompallier met Polding and the two became close friends). The appointment of Pompallier and the Marists indicates that the situation in the Western Pacific was known to Rome, for the Marist Fathers had undertaken the mission at the explicit request of Propaganda. Certainly Ullathorne and Polding had been urging Rome to send missionaries to New Zealand. Collier told Ullathorne in early 1838: "I have endeavoured to impress upon the mind of the Card Prefect (of


31. It should be noted that Pompallier himself was not a Marist and this was to lead to considerable difficulties in his relationship with the Society of Mary.

Propaganda) the urgent need of missionaries in N. Zealand and the
great calamities which may probably be prevented by sending out
instanter a couple of zealous priests" (sic).

So Ullathorne arrived at the Society of the Propagation of the
Faith at an opportune moment, for the needs of the missionaries
in the Pacific were now well known to both Rome and Lyons. The
Vicar General played his cards well. He stressed the danger posed
to Catholicism in Australia from the Society for the Propagation
of the Gospel in Foreign Parts which had just presented Bishop
Broughton with 5000 pounds "to assist him in his efforts". The
Vicar General told the Secretary of the Lyons Society:

This Society (for the Propagation of the Gospel) is publish­
ing an address in the English newspapers...Nearly 3000
pounds more have already been subscribed for the same object
(the propagation of the Protestant Church); all these sums
are to be doubled by equal contribution from the Government
and are to be added to the 22,000 pounds per annum voted in
New South Wales for Protestant clergy and schools, making
altogether 42,000 pounds or 1,968,000 francs.

It was a shrewd appeal that did not really tell the whole truth
about government grants. Ullathorne certainly did not mention the
amount granted by the government to the Catholic Church that same
year. However, the Society was particularly concerned about the
spread of Protestantism, so Ullathorne had picked the right app­
roach. His appeal netted a grant of 15,000 francs for Australia

33. Collier to Ullathorne, 13 January 1838. DA, Ullathorne
Papers.

34. Ullathorne to Dominique Meynis (Secretary of the Central
Council of Lyons), 29 July 1837. Quoted in Waldersee, op. cit., p
58.
(which according to the rate of exchange mentioned by Ullathorne in the above quotation was about 356 pounds). He also stressed the need for priests, sisters and school teachers to counter the efforts of the Protestants.

In 1838 and 1839 the Society granted 23,000 francs (about 512 pounds) to the Australian mission. This had risen to 49,000 francs (about 1090 pounds) in 1841. However, as James Waldersee points out, these were small amounts compared to the grants given to Pompallier and to the other Catholic missions in the Pacific. As far as New South Wales was concerned, the aid was not all one way: the Vicar General helped the Society establish appeals in the United Kingdom and an English edition of the Annales of the Society was published before he returned to Australia. Today the Society still operates in Australia; funds from the local church support Catholic missions overseas. Ullathorne, and later Polding, also provided articles for the Annales. For instance, the Vicar General drew heavily on his anti-transportation pamphlet to produce a long article in 1838. Apparently, Ullathorne was dilatory in sending this account for Collier insisted: "Allow me to press your immediate attention to this important matter. You can send this account in English and leave

to the editors the work of translation". The Vicar General was only too ready to describe his exploits:

At their request I drew up a full account of the Australian Mission and of the convict system, to which I added a description of the country and its most curious productions. It filled nearly a number of their "Annals", and being so completely new, was said to have advanced the interests of the Society (sic).

When he had been in Rome, Ullathorne received news of a possible windfall for the Australian mission - the Vienna Fund. The money was given as a foundation by a Canon Schmidt of Vienna who was so "moved with what he heard of Norfolk Island" that he gave the grant to establish a mission there. "He had seriously thought of sending two Capuchins, as probably only men of rigid self-denial would be able to endure such a position". But Ullathorne persuaded the Cardinal Prefect that this would not be diplomatic and that the priest appointed to Norfolk "must be not only a zealous man, but also a man well acquainted with English manners and character". Schmidt had heard of conditions in the penal settlement from Baron Von Hugel, an Anglo-German nobleman who had visited Australia in the early 1830s. A series of letters from

38. Collier to Ullathorne, 13 January 1838. DA, Ullathorne Papers.


40. Autobiography, p 128. For the name Schmidt see Collier to Ullathorne, 1 June 1838. DA, Ullathorne Papers.

41. See Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne, pp 124-125. The Von Hugel connection is confirmed in the correspondence between the papal Nuncio in Vienna and Propaganda where there is a reference to a Countess Von Hugel. See Prop. Fide, SCR Oceania I
the Papal Nuncio in Vienna to Propaganda show that as well as the Capuchins, the General of the Jesuits (Father Jean-Philippe Roothaan) had been approached to send men to Norfolk Island, but he replied that the English province of the Society of Jesus was unable to take on the mission (11 October 1836). Before Ullathorne arrived in Rome, Collier had been approached by Propaganda to send two English Benedictines to Norfolk. He told Birdsall:

I have answered that I did not think it possible to find two; the Jesuits cannot supply two; the Irish Franciscans tell me they cannot either.42

So when Ullathorne arrived in Rome the proposal was put to him. (Of course, Polding should have been the first person consulted; it came under his jurisdiction. But it does illustrate the difficulty Rome had in communicating with someone at the other end of the earth). Eventually Propaganda handed the money over to Polding asking him to provide a priest for Norfolk. Ullathorne actually recruited Father John Brady in Rome for this ministry, but Polding eventually decided that McEncroe and the student Henry Gregory should go to the penal settlement. The amount of money involved in the Vienna Fund was 7000 scudi (about 1250 pounds).43

(1815-1851). Letters from Vienna Nuncio.

42. Collier to Birdsall, 10 December 1836. Quoted in Birt, I, p 192.

43. Collier to Brown, 14 April 1838. DA, K41; Collier to Ullathorne, 1 June 1838. DA, Ullathorne Papers.
Ullathorne's greatest achievement for the Church in Australia was the recruitment of personnel - priests, sisters and lay teachers. This was the primary purpose of his visit to Europe and in this task he was eminently successful. As a result of the Church Act and the good-will of Bourke and Gipps, the finance was available to support an expansion of personnel; the key issue was to recruit the right people.

It was clear that the English Benedictines could no longer send men to Australia. So Ullathorne looked elsewhere and, at first, he cast his net widely. At the commencement of his task he had one clear principle of recruitment: "It is, I believe, my duty to look everywhere else for subjects first, before looking into Ireland; then I must, of necessity, fill up my numbers". The reason for resistance to recruiting Irish priests is not immediately clear. It was probably partly linked to the old Colonial Office policy of trying to recruit English priests for the colonial churches, and partly to the desire of the Benedictines to keep the Australian mission under their control, although this seems invalidated by the fact that they had no one to send. But this may not have been clear to Ullathorne when he first got back

44. O'Donoghue, op. cit., p 40.

to Europe. (However, it should be noted that the majority of the clergy in Australia were already Irish).

There is certainly evidence of Ullathorne’s efforts to recruit non-Irish priests before he went to Ireland. Prior to going to Rome he had been in contact with Father Charles Lovat, a former English Jesuit. Lovat had left the Society of Jesus before the Vicar General met him and he was recruited to teach in the proposed seminary in Sydney. A somewhat breathless Vicar General wrote to Heptonstall from Rome:

Now, my dear friend, the great point is to get Mr. Lovat off, and another with him, if possible... If Mr. Lovat goes, do not neglect to send them a stock of missals, vestments and Bibles, respectably bound for the people; Dr. P. wants them urgently.

Lovat, Ullathorne’s first recruit and sole English volunteer, sailed on the Hindoo from Liverpool on 18 July 1837. A fine scholar, he was to become one of the greatest of all the pioneer priests in New South Wales.

In Rome Ullathorne had also met the Irish Augustinian, James Alipius Goold and the Irish born French-speaking priest, John

---


47. Ullathorne to Heptonstall, 13 April 1837. Quoted in Birt, I, p 353.
Brady. Both agreed to volunteer and Brady was specifically approved by the Colonial Office for the ministry at Norfolk Island. Goold was to become the first Archbishop of Melbourne. Various other names were canvassed, but none of them eventually undertook the mission to Australia - the Italian Dr. Angelini (who was ready to come but was prevented by Propaganda), a Mr. Comberbatch (presumably English) and an Irish Dominican named Bourke. Ullathorne was also offered two English priests by the Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, the Benedictine Bishop Baines. The Vicar General had known one of these priests as a layman. Ullathorne was aware that "he was fond of ardent spirits" and "was surprised he was ever ordained". Baines admitted "that there had been some weakness in these men...(but) in a country where most of the Catholics were Irishmen, if anything happened the people covered it over and would not see it". Ullathorne refused Baines' offer and concluded with the sage comment: "Put not your trust either in Bishops or Archbishops". Thus by the time he returned to England in June 1837, it was clear to Ullathorne that Ireland was the only source of priestly


49. For Angelini see Collier to Ullathorne, 13 January 1838 and Collier to Ullathorne, 1 June 1838. DA, Ullathorne Papers; for Comberbatch see Ullathorne to Heptonstall, 13 April 1837 quoted in Birt, I, p 353; for Bourke see ibid, p 354.

volunteers. And so it was to Ireland that he now turned. Ever the realist, he commented:

The reluctance of Superiors and Bishops in England, together with the turn of circumstances, has Hibernicised our Mission. I have much confidence in the piety and present good dispositions of all our missioners, but doubt much whether the Mission would work well, all the Superiors being English, and all the subjects, nearly, Irish (sic).51

It is unfortunate that Polding was not as realistic. If he had been, many subsequent disputes in the Sydney church may have been avoided.

Ullathorne went to Ireland late in 1837. He was certainly at Maynooth in December to give the end of the year retreat.52 It was reported that his missionary enthusiasm "set the house on fire". Three newly ordained priests and four students volunteered to join the Australian mission. In choosing recruits the Vicar General obtained good advice:

Dr. Montague, the President of Maynooth, a man of very shrewd observation, was always ready to give me the minutest information about every priest or student who offered himself to me. And he had the most surprising information about every priest in the country and every student in the great college.53


52. Meehan, Denis: "Maynooth and the Missions" (Irish Ecclesiastical Record 66(1945), pp 225-226) refers to Ullathorne preaching the Summer Retreat and notes that in February, 1838 seven students had volunteered for New South Wales. See also Maynooth Ordination and Prize Lists Register, p 400. Maynooth Archives.

53. Autobiography, p 100.
Despite his earlier unwillingness to recruit Irishmen, Ullathorne was given a generous welcome by the Irish church. He met the Bishops (again at Maynooth) probably in February 1838 and "several of them declared that they would not only let me take any of their subjects about to be ordained who might be willing to volunteer, but that they would consider every year served in Australia as equivalent to two years at home...for the obtaining of parishes". It is a tribute to the men who volunteered that not one returned to take up an Irish parish. The bishops were also discussing the establishment of a missionary seminary to supply priests to the colonial churches and they consulted Ullathorne on this issue. This discussion eventually led to the establishment of All Hallows Missionary College in Dublin in 1842.

Thus Ullathorne's arrival was fortuitous; the missionary spirit was in the air. He also visited the seminaries at Carlow, Waterford and Kilkenny. In these seminaries he obtained seven more recruits for Australia. In addition, two other Irish priests had volunteered. Father Francis Murphy had worked among the Irish in Liverpool for ten years and, after meeting Ullathorne, agreed to come to Australia for five years. In fact, he died as first


55. Ullathorne is therefore incorrect when he says "The College, however, did not begin until many years afterwards" (Autobiography, p 100). See Condon, Kevin: The Missionary College of All Hallows, 1842-1891. Dublin. 1986.
Bishop of Adelaide in 1858. The second recruit was Father Patrick Bonaventure Geoghegan, a Franciscan, who met Ullathorne in Dublin and volunteered to come to New South Wales for seven years. He was the first priest in Melbourne and established the church there, was Bishop of Adelaide for a time and died just after his appointment as Bishop of Goulburn in 1864.

Here we must return to the question of Ullathorne's original hesitancy in recruiting Irish priests. The importance of the perceived attitude of the Colonial Office seems to have been the important issue. On 9 April 1838 (after he had already enlisted most of his Irish recruits) he wrote to the Colonial Secretary Glenelg:

Having been credibly informed that a complaint has been indirectly conveyed from some portion, or person, of Her Majesty's Government to the Ecclesiastical authorities at Rome; whither I have myself been, on the duties of my mission; on the subject of the number of Irish Catholic Clergymen sent out to the British colonies; whereas it is stated to me, the Government would prefer a greater number of such clergymen to be English (his emphasis).

In the letter he sets out a number of reasons why he was unable to recruit English priests. Basically, an expanding ministry in England (due largely to an influx of Irish immigrants) meant that more priests were needed in England than had been ordained. Also there had been a large number of deaths among the English Cath-

56. ADB, II, pp 269-270.
57. ADB, IV, pp 240-241.
58. Ullathorne to Glenelg, 9 April 1838. PRO CO 201/280.
olic clergy, many resulting from attending the sick during a typhus epidemic. Ullathorne assured the Colonial Secretary that while in Ireland ("where the want of clergymen is not so much felt"), he selected priests "with the greatest possible care" and that he considered "a disposition to mingle, at all, in civil politics, as a disqualification". The Undersecretary, James Stephen, tersely commented on Ullathorne's letter: "I have had no such complaints".

But obviously Ullathorne thought that there was a problem and he was anxious to maintain good relations with the Colonial Office. He was dependent upon them for civil approval for his recruits and also for a grant toward outfit and passage to Australia. This not only included priests, but also the school teachers that he employed. A series of letters from this period reveals that Ullathorne was negotiating constantly with the bureaucracy of the Colonial Office. For instance, the Vicar General discovered that the male Anglican teachers going to Australia were getting 60 pounds for outfit and passage, whereas the Catholics were only getting 40 pounds. He applied for equal treatment for Catholics - and got it. Sir George Grey, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, commented: "This is the not unnatural result of Mr. Ullathorne's having discovered that the larger allowance was granted to the Protestant teachers". He also tried to get equal treatment for

59. See letters for February to July between Ullathorne and the Colonial Office at PRO CO 201/280. See also letters for November 1837 to February 1838. HRA Series I, Vol 19, pp 212-213.
Catholic women teachers and asked for 60 pounds for their outfit and passage. He was not successful in this and the women still only got 40 pounds.60

Given the delicacy of his negotiations, Ullathorne would have been most anxious to explain all his choices to the Colonial Office. He was shrewd enough to observe that "the man who really pulled the wires in that office was Mr. Stephens (sic), well known in the colonies under the name of King Stephens". The Vicar General also used members of parliament to bring pressure to bear on the Colonial Office:

As I needed all the influence I could get with the Colonial Department, and knew the value of a word dropped in season by Members of Parliament who supported the Ministry, I made a point of being in London during the Parliamentary Session. I called upon this Member and that, breakfasted with one or another, got tickets for under the gallery of the old House of Commons, and became acquainted with O'Connell, Sheil and other Catholic celebrities.61

The recruitment of almost exclusively Irish clergy meant that the Australian mission could be no longer English, nor Benedictine. The Vicar General immediately perceived the long-term consequence that an Irish colonial church could not be ruled over by an English hierarchy. This helps to explain why he would never accept an Australian episcopal appointment (he was offered three - Hob- 

60. Ullathorne to Glenelg, 28 February 1838. PRO CO 201/280. The Catholic women teachers involved were Mrs Mary Elizabeth Davis and Miss Elizabeth Fisher.

art, Adelaide and Perth). No doubt, as we shall see, other more practical reasons helped to dissuade him. He could also see that it was useless to try to do anything Benedictine in Australia and he was unwilling to become a secular priest himself. The fact that the vast majority of the clergy and people were Irish was a major element in his decision to leave Australia at the end of 1840 and it was a direct result of the success of his own recruitment programme. He clearly saw that the mission was an Irish one and that he had no place there. His thoughts were already turning to working in England and he told his friend Brown just before he left London to return to Australia:

> I think it not unlikely under all circumstances, that, ere long, if my superiors will receive and employ me, I shall return. Not that I have lost one jot of zeal for the cause. I could now perhaps serve them better here than there, by watching their interests at home.

Ullathorne also made a major effort to recruit school teachers for Australia. Six male and four female teachers were approved by the Colonial Office. Ullathorne was able to find the four women teachers, but he was not so successful with the men. He reported to Glenelg: "I have not yet been successful in finding duly qualified persons who are at liberty to offer themselves" to teach in New South Wales Catholic schools. However, he was able to ob-

---


64. Ullathorne to Glenelg, 30 July 1838. PRO CO 210/280.
tain the services of the Scotch convert to Catholicism, William Augustine Duncan, who first came to Australia as a school teacher but stayed on to become first editor of the Australasian Chronicle. Among the other teachers recruited by Ullathorne was Edward John Hawksley, also a convert (from Unitarianism) and also later to become a newspaper editor.65

The Vicar General had made a major effort to attract the Irish Christian Brothers to Australia.

I have now returning hopes of the Christian Brothers, they hold a General Chapter, the middle of July and I propose being there to answer such objections that exist in the minds of various of the brethren. The leading members, with Mr. Rice (the founder of the Congregation), are advocates for the measure...I trust to be able to remove obstacles that stand in the way.66

However, his hopes were not realised and the Brothers did not come to Australia until 1843. But their stay was short. They left in response to the continual interference of Polding.

PART FIVE - The Sisters of Charity.

During the nineteenth century a large number of active religious orders of both men and women were founded. Most of these were established in Europe (especially France). In Ireland - and it is


worth noting that most of these orders were founded in the years leading up to the famine - the emphasis was on congregations of women whose work was directed primarily to the poor and the dispossessed. This thrust was very much part of the contemporary middle class concern with the downtrodden of society. The Sisters of Charity (founded by Mary Aikenhead, a convert to Catholicism) and the Sisters of Mercy (founded by Catherine McAuley) are the best known examples of such religious orders.

Polding made the first Australian contact with the Sisters of Charity. Before he left for New South Wales in March 1835 he visited Ireland and invited Aikenhead to send some sisters to Australia. Nothing definite was decided, although a postulant, Alicia De Lacy, who had read about the mission in New South Wales, entered the Congregation specifically to serve in Australia.67 Thus the ground was prepared when Ullathorne visited Aikenhead in either January or February 1838.

With Mrs. Aikenhead...I had several long interviews. Being a great sufferer she sat in bed...She was a shrewd and clever woman, and though bedridden knew everything that passed in the religious world of Dublin, as well as in her own houses.68

The result of the interviews was that volunteers were called for to go to Australia and five sisters were chosen. The Superior was Sister M. John Cahill and the others were Sisters Francis de


Sales O'Brien, Lawrence Cator (an Englishwoman), Baptist de Lacy and a novice, Xavier Williams. A misunderstanding quickly arose concerning the Sister's financial support and their relationship to the Congregation in Ireland. I will discuss these issues fully in the next chapter.

PART SIX - The Return Voyage to Australia.

The Francis Spaight (Captain N.R. Sayers) departed Gravesend on 23 August 1838 carrying general merchandise and passengers, including Ullathorne, the priests Geoghegan, Butler and Marum and the five Sisters of Charity, with nineteen other passengers. As usual Ullathorne was critical of the captain and crew and on this journey he attempted to "manage" the other passengers.

When we got afloat, I scanned our fellow passengers with some solicitude and took measure of the Captain. He was a big soft sort of man, without much inward strength of character. The first mate was a lump. He proved incompetent to manage the crew of the ship. Most of the passengers met with his approval. They were "quiet and harmless persons" but were "placed in a situation as first-class passengers to which they were not accustomed". However, a number of passengers caused trouble, including a surly American and two louts who threw some of the Sisters belongings overboard.

70. Autobiography, p 135.
Actually, Ullathorne gives an interesting insight into what must have been the usual petty jealousies, disagreements and inconveniences when thirty strangers were thrown together for eighteen weeks on a ship of three hundred and seventy tons. The presence of five nuns and four priests must have complicated the situation considerably. The Autobiography pictures Ullathorne taking charge of everything, especially the Sisters.  

He got most upset when the Captain began paying "special attentions to one of the younger nuns" (presumably De Lacy). Ullathorne describes her as "more clever and witty than she was altogether wise, though a woman of very good education". He soon sorted out that problem (to his own satisfaction) by warning off the Captain. However, by the time they reached Sydney (31 December 1838) Ullathorne was able to declare "We had our pleasant days and even weeks", but his pomposity never deserted him and he added that most of the passengers were "good, inoffensive people... simple...(and) little spirited".

The next two years, however, were to test the strength of his own personality, to break down some of his pompous self-importance, to teach him something of the pain and weakness of the human condition and to test his resolve to serve the Australian Catholic Church.


74. Autobiography, p 139.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RETURN TO ENGLAND
When Ullathorne arrived back in Sydney on the last day of 1838 he entered upon the most trying two years of his life. While the time in Europe had been one of hard work and constant travel, he had been successful. He had also been free of the sectarian strife and petty jealousies which characterised colonial life. But when he returned to Sydney "I found that I was, and for some time had been, the object of universal indignation in the Colony".¹ I have already noted the press attacks on him that resulted from his opposition to transportation and his evidence to the Molesworth Select Committee. Anti-Catholicism and sectarian attack and counter-attack compounded the situation.

But these external problems were sharpened by internal difficulties within the Catholic community. Ullathorne's perception was that Polding, the clergy and leading laity (such as Plunkett and Therry) had deserted him:

No one defended me, no one stood by me. The Bishop and the clergy were dismayed; all held their tongues.²

It was not just a question of silence. Ullathorne also felt that some of the clergy were disloyal to him and that, in fact, two of the priests whom he had recruited (Murphy and Lovat) were trying to undermine his authority as Vicar General. Under this pressure

¹. Autobiography, p 142.
². Autobiography, p 143.
his health seems to have given way and some historians argue that he experienced what today we would call a "nervous breakdown". He began to feel increasingly that his position in Australia had become impossible and the attraction of returning to England became much stronger. Throughout these two years, however, he worked with intense energy. For a time he acted as pastor of Parramatta, while travelling regularly to Sydney to carry on the church administration and government correspondence. He did not, however, leave South Wales, except to visit Adelaide between late May and early July 1840.

None the less his deepening depression about his future in Australia needs to be placed within the context of what he had achieved since his arrival. Between 1833 and 1840 the position of the Catholic Church had been consolidated and Catholics came to be recognised as an integral part of the life and social structure of the colony. As O'Farrell points out, this very success was a major causative element in the sectarian and political bitterness which characterised Ullathorne's last two years in New South Wales.³ The Vicar General had placed the Church on an organised and firm footing. He had recruited priests, sisters and lay people to serve in the ministry. There was considerable pastoral activity and an increase in the number of people practising their faith. The Church was being rapidly transformed from a predominately convict chaplaincy to an institution active in both urban

areas and the expanding frontier. There was a genuine feeling of hope and optimism in the Catholic community at the beginning of the decade of the 1840s.

Yet despite the fact that he was the major contributor to this development, Ullathorne became increasingly alienated from the Australian mission. There was a sense in which he had already made up his mind to settle permanently in England before he returned to New South Wales in 1839. He seems to have sensed that his time in the Antipodes was coming to an end and that he could serve the Australian Church more effectively in England. He was not really tempted by any of the three subsequent offers of Australian mitres.

The rest of his career shows that the decision to return to England in 1840 was correct. After a stint as pastor in Coventry, he was appointed successively Vicar Apostolic of the Western District and then of the Midlands. A key figure in the negotiations leading to the restoration of the English Catholic hierarchy, he was appointed Bishop of Birmingham in 1850. In his long career, he emerged as one of the most effective bishops of the Catholic Church in England in the nineteenth century and a major force in the formation of its ethos. Yet even in England he has never been given the full recognition that he deserves as a major
Throughout this period his interest and participation in Australian church affairs never waned and I will review them in the latter part of this chapter.

PART TWO: Activities 1838 to 1840.

Before trying to analyse why Ullathorne returned to England, it is important to relate that decision to his work between 1839 and 1840. Within a fortnight of his return to Sydney, Ullathorne accompanied the Sisters of Charity to Parramatta and blessed the red brick house provided for them by William Davis (18 January 1839). He also took over the mission in the town. The population was then about 8000 people. The 1830 was a decade of growth for Parramatta. Gipps and his wife were normally in residence at Government House there, and Lady Gipps seems to have formed a close relationship with the Sisters. The town also contained the Female Factory, the male convict barracks and a general hospit-

4. Dr. Judith Champ of King's College, London is in the process of preparing a new biography. This is badly needed so that Ullathorne can be seen in relationship to such major figures as Newman and Manning.

5. See ms. Short History of the Religious Sisters of Charity of Australia 1838-1930. No Date. SCA H 102/619-633. While there is no doubt that Davis paid for the house, Polding claimed that he "engaged" the house; this probably means that he rented it with Davis' money. See Polding to Murray, 5 March 1839. DAA, Australian Collection.

A foundation stone for the Catholic Church had been laid on 17 March 1836 (Ullathorne had written a Preliminary Instruction for the printed translation of the ceremony). Saint Patrick's Church had been built during his absence in Europe and was opened on 9 May 1837. Thus his comment in the Autobiography "I had already built a church in Parramatta" is not accurate. Two to three hundred people attended Saint Patrick's in 1836, and in 1839 it was claimed that the congregation numbered between four and five hundred persons. In the Autobiography Ullathorne described his own living conditions at Parramatta:

I had to rent a very inferior cottage, the only place I could get at all near (the church). I also took a young Irish priest with me chiefly to teach him his theology. Of course, I maintained him...He had a habit of studying with a musical box always going to soothe him, so I got the old tunes stealing through his door on my own ears for half the day.

As Ullathorne saw it, he had gone to Parramatta primarily "to take care" of the Sisters of Charity. He certainly considered

7. The male convict barracks in Macquarie St. is probably the building that Ullathorne is referring to when he mentions that Mass was celebrated in the loft "over the prison of a chain gang" (Autobiography, pp 76-77). See Pollon, op. cit., pp 62-64.


10. See Moran, op. cit., p 190 for 1836 figures and for the 1839 figures see ms Jubilee History of Parramatta. 1911. p 56. ML, cat Q 991.2 W for 1839 figures.

11. Autobiography, pp 145-146. The priest was Father Michael Brennan. However, Brennan did not come to Parramatta until midway through 1839.

himself their protector and, at times, even acted as though he
were their superior. For example, on the way out to Australia, he
replaced the Sister in charge appointed by Mother Mary Aikenhead
(Sister John Cahill), with his own nominee (Sister De Sales
O'Brien). Sister O'Brien remained superior and was obviously
close to Ullathorne during his last two years in Australia. As a
letter of O'Brien reveals they discussed personalities and events
in New South Wales Catholicism "a Cour ouvert in Parramatta".13

The Sisters worked primarily in the Female Factory and, as I have
already indicated, the contemporary evidence indicates that they
were very successful in bringing about a change of attitude among
the women prisoners. The Sisters introduced needlework and
laundry work and the women were withdrawn from hard manual
labour. Frances Pollon asserts that "Illness from contact with
the convict women plagued the Sisters, and the humid mosquito-in-
fest ed climate must have tried them sorely".14 Polding claimed
that the sisters' "zeal" was making the Factory "an altered
place". He told Heptonstall:

We are giving it (the Factory) a thorough cleansing. Each
week I, with one or more of the clergy, pass two days in it,
hearing the general confessions of those whom the Sisters
have prepared. This has been our Lenten duty. We have heard
about 400 general confessions since we began. After we have
thus placed them, as we trust, on a secure footing, we hand
them over to Dr Ullathorne, whose immediate duty it is to

13. O'Brien to Ullathorne, 7 January 1841. DA, Box 756.
attend to them.\footnote{Polding to Heptonstall, 14 March 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 406. The implication of Polding's statement is that he and other clergy from Sydney were at the Factory every week. I doubt if this was the case. The reference to Lent probably means that the Vicar Apostolic and other priests visited Parramatta to help with confessions at the Factory in preparation for Easter.}

There was a genuine sympathy among the sisters and priests for the condition of the women. Polding emphasised the "dangers to which the unfortunate female convict is exposed" on assignment; he preferred to see a woman in the Factory rather than up country "where master and man, bond and free, alike conspire to overthrow her good resolution". The fatal bait was often liquor. Ullathorne had emphasised the same issues before the Molesworth Committee.

Improvements at the Female Factory were not entirely the work of the Sisters. Gipps was determined to clean up the place and the re-appointment of George and Sarah Bell as Keeper and Matron led to an improvement in conditions. (The Bells were a Catholic couple who had been sacked in 1838 to make way for London-appointed administrators; these proved to be incompetent and by the end of the year the Bells were re-appointed).\footnote{Salt, op, cit., pp 59-61.}

Ullathorne was kept busy hearing the confessions of the Factory women and "protecting" the Sisters.\footnote{Autobiography, pp 146-147.} The Sisters also assisted in the other works of the mission: visiting the sick in their own
homes and in the General Hospital twice a week, conducting the choir at Mass on Sundays, teaching catechism to the children in the Catholic school (established in 1820) and running a special class for adults to prepare them for the sacraments. Mention of a special class for adults is significant. Ullathorne stressed this aspect of the ministry in Parramatta:

He (Ullathorne), with the Sisters of Charity, have roused the bile of all the bigots of the town of Parramatta where he resides, and scarcely a week passes in which we have not had some virulent article against him or them. He gives lectures on Sunday evenings, which are extremely well attended by Protestants.

One of the best known of these lectures was Ullathorne's attack on the apostate Agnes Byrne.

Ullathorne was directly responsible for one problem facing the sisters - the question of their upkeep. It is clear that no arrangement regarding the Sisters financial support was made before they left Dublin. Archbishop Murray presumed that they were to be paid by the government. Sister Mary John Cahill wrote: "When about to leave the congregation of the Sisters of Charity in Dublin I was told that Doctor Murray had not agreed to our quitt-


ing 'till he was assured that through the government we were to receive each the sum of 40 pounds annually for our support'.21 According to Cahill Ullathorne subsequently denied this. Government money was not forthcoming because the Vicar General would not allow the Sisters to "submit to an examination in public office" - whatever that might mean? The Sisters did not want to be a charge on the finances of the mission, but they needed some security in their hand to mouth existence.

So the idea developed in the community that since they were separated from the mother congregation in Dublin they could claim back any money they had handed in as dowries and annuities to the Irish Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. Cahill was confident of the justice of her claim and that Archbishop Murray would not "hesitate to agree to this arrangement". However, she seems to have had an intimation that there might be trouble for she told her sister: "It is not possible but Revd. Mother (Aikenhead) must have been under some mistake as to our future prospects, when the day I came away she got me to sign a paper by which she was empowered to receive my annuity, what seems strange to us is, that she never asked Dr. Ullathorne what means of support was provided for us". Sister Laurence Cator also petitioned that her dowry be returned and Murray and Aikenhead were threatened with

legal action by Sister M. De Sales O'Brien for the return of hers'. Murray claimed that

When I consented to give up the personal services of Individuals, who are so much wanted here, I was fully under the impression that adequate support would be provided for them in the Colony, to which they were invited. Should that unfortunately not be the case it would be charity to send them back to us.

As usual Polding tried to pour oil on troubled waters. He explained to Murray that the mission would support the Sisters at the rate of 200 pounds per annum, that he would pay the rent of their residence and that he would buy "a House and Land for the Novitiate". He told Murray:

I had felt and I do feel, that I owe a deep debt of gratitude to your Grace, and to Mrs Aikenhead for the great sacrifice of persons so valuable, in order to establish the Sisters of Charity in this Vicariate where their services are so much needed. In making my application and in the whole course of the transaction, neither I, nor the Vicar General Dr Ullathorne ever mentioned a thought of expecting the means of support to be provided the Sisters by their own Institute.

Polding assured Murray that the initiative in asking for their dowries had come from the Sisters themselves. They clearly felt that they had a right to this money in order to maintain their independence. It needs to be stressed that they were not asking for support from Ireland but the return of their dowries, which they considered to be rightfully theirs as members who had left

22. Joseph Coppinger to Murray, 18 July 1839. DAA, 31/7 (19) and Coppinger to Aikenhead, 15 December 1840. RSCG/1/B/208.


the mother congregation. As Sister De Sales told her friend Lyssy O'Reilly, the Sisters in Australia were entirely dependent on the charity of Ullathorne and Polding "so that if they were to die tomorrow, we should be totally unprovided". To the annoyance of Polding and Murray, O'Brien pursued the matter and her lawyer, Joseph William Coppinger, continued to threaten the Irish Sisters of Charity with legal action for the recovery of her dowry. He was not successful.

Later events were to justify the Sisters in their attempt to attain independence from Polding. The Bishop's view was that he was the ordinary superior of all congregations working in his diocese. Given Sister O'Brien's closeness to Ullathorne it may be that the Vicar General was behind the attempt to gain financial independence for the Sisters. Certainly one or other of them foresaw the dangers inherent in dependence on the administrative whim of the unstable Polding. His later involvements with the Sisters' affairs fully justified their attempt to gain some financial independence of him.

I have already referred to Ullathorne's tendency to interfere in

---

25. O'Brien to Lyssy O'Reilly, 7 March 1840. RSCG /1/B/205.
27. For a detailed account of the subsequent relationships of Polding and the Sisters of Charity see Shanahan, op. cit., pp 87-100; see also Sister Moira O'Sullivan: Sister M. Baptist de Lacy. An illustration of conflicts that arise in the Church: An appeal to Rome. Private Printing. 1983. I am grateful to Sister O'Sullivan for helping me understand something of the internal history of the early Sisters of Charity.
the internal running of the Sisters' affairs. He alludes to this in the Autobiography:

As I did not like the nuns always walking home at night (from the Factory) in the dusk over the same unprotected ground, without some security, especially as convict men or ticket-of-leave men used to hang about the walls outside... I generally walked on or accompanied them back, or continued to have my own work there, so as to walk in silence near them on their return. They began, however, to think that this looked awkward, gave me a hint of their feeling, and I desisted.  

However, one night the Sisters encountered a transvestite "who passed them in a way that startled them". So Ullathorne returned to his role as protector on the half mile walk from the convent to the Factory. The question of his chaperoning the Sisters seems to have been linked to internal interference in the Sisters affairs. They obviously told him to desist, for in a letter of Palm Sunday 1839 he apologised and said: "If ever, either from ignorance of the details of your constitutions, from zeal misdirected, or from my own folly, I am again found trespassing on your observances, ignorantly I did it, and I trust from the best of motives, I trust you will always have sufficient confidence in me to tell me of it".  

But it was almost impossible for him to change his dictatorial attitudes. While admitting that the Sisters were "a community of saints" he still had "to recast the greater part of them", and he commented that "there is something

---


29. Ullathorne to the Sisters, Palm Sunday, 1839. SCA H412/1. This same letter contains a reference to his accompanying them to the Factory.
radically wrong in Mrs. Aikenhead's management".30

Ullathorne preached at the final profession of Sister Elizabeth (Xavier) Williams, the first religious profession in Australia (9 April 1839).31 He emphasised the call of the Sisters of Charity to serve the poor:

She follows His call and finds Him to be mostly with the sick and the afflicted poor, with little children and unhappy prisoners...And as to the loving labours of her continued obedience, these, she vows and declares shall be Christ's alone, to whom she devotes them in the person of the poor.

Practicality in ministerial service increasingly became the hallmark of Ullathorne's spirituality.

The Vicar General's task during the first half of 1839 was divided between pastoral work in Parramatta and administrative work in Sydney. He often used the steam ferry on the Parramatta River to travel between the two towns. He also managed occasional trips to some of the remoter areas, especially to the Hunter River region which "had always been one of my favourite missions".32

At the request of Polding, he also visited Adelaide in July 1840,


31. For the text see Ullathorne, Sermons With Prefaces. Text also in SCA, H102/401-433 and H412/41 (1-15D).

the first Catholic priest to go to the new colony. "Mr. Lynch ...took my place at Parramatta for the time, and according to my custom, I took the first vessel that sailed". Ullathorne was supercilious about the other passengers: "When I got on board I saw only some uneducated women, their children and one or two men of the emancipist class for cabin passengers". However, there was a young man "of gentlemanly bearing", whom he had previously met in Bologna, with whom he was able to have "conversation" during the voyage.

In Adelaide he claimed that he was met with bigotry from the Protestant Dissenter establishment. The town had only been settled in 1836 and, as Ullathorne describes it, was still very under-developed. A Catholic community already existed in Adelaide, largely organised by the Englishman, William Phillips, who was Assistant to the Colonial Storekeeper. It was obvious that plans for Ullathorne to visit Adelaide had been in hand for some time, for Phillips mentioned it in an advertisement in The South

33. Autobiography, pp 149-151. He arrived in Adelaide on 12 June 1840 and departed on 9 July 1840. (I am grateful to Reverend Brother Rory for establishing Ullathorne's departure date (private letter, 4 August 1986)). He performed a number of baptisms in Adelaide. However, when he recorded them in Sydney, he must have been confused about dates. For instance one baptism is recorded as 6 June (while he was still at sea) and three others are dated after he had left Adelaide.

34. Autobiography, p 149.

35. Autobiography, p 149.

Australian Gazette in September 1839. On 20 May 1840 Polding informed Phillips that Ullathorne would visit the colony. Despite the attempts of Phillips to obtain a schoolroom for the use of Catholics for worship, they were reduced to using a shop for the celebration of Mass. The Phillips family provided Ullathorne with accommodation. The Vicar General celebrated Mass and a number of baptisms, preached, catechised and visited government officials. He also met the explorer, Captain Charles Sturt, who lived next door to the Phillips family. After leaving Adelaide Ullathorne wrote to Phillips to say that Father Cotham from Launceston would visit Adelaide at Christmas.

Ullathorne came away with a rather jaundiced view of South Australia. Writing to Brown at Downside in 1842, after he had been offered the Bishopric of Adelaide, he described his impressions of the colony:

It is...one of the most anomalous churches in the world. A colony of dissenters, bitter enemies of Catholicity. And an interior population of naked wandering savages, in constant contact with the brutal cattle drivers, who have recently shot a considerable number in an affray. Not a farthing from

40. Ullathorne to Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, 14 November 1840. SAA, File Ullathorne. Also see copy in SCA H104/34. One of the Phillips daughters was to join the Sisters of Charity and take the religious name of Sister De Sales.
Government. Eight hundred Irish labourers the sole flock. The principal founders of the Colony mercantile men who preach on Sundays. Not support enough for even one priest and no means to raise a church.41

Given this view of South Australia, it is no wonder that he refused the bishopric of Adelaide! His jaundiced view of the colony also meant that he failed to give credit to the work of pioneer Catholic laity like the Phillips family.

PART THREE - Why Ullathorne Left Australia

Several historians attribute Ullathorne's departure from Australia to ambition, jealousy and pique. For instance Mary Shanahan says "'Monsignor Ego Solus', as Ullathorne was called in England, felt that...(Murphy and Lovat)...were ousting him from his position of key man in the colonial Church".42 In the case of Murphy, this is probably true! T.L. Suttor sees the issue in terms of a struggle for power between Murphy and Ullathorne.43 Since the Vicar General refused three colonial mitres before 1846, ambition for ecclesiastical preferment in Australia can hardly have been his motive. O'Farrell, in a more balanced assessment, blames Ullathorne's departure on Polding's unstable leadership and his unwillingness to defend his Vicar General.44 Certainly this was

41. Ullathorne to Brown, Easter Sunday 1842. Cardiff Archdiocesan Archives.
44. O'Farrell, op cit., 60.
an issue in Ullathorne's final decision to leave Australia, but it does not explain his action fully.

Much of the anti-Ullathorne attitude among some historians can be traced to the views of Monsignor J.J. McGovern. McGovern is one of a number of pro-Polding historians who interpret the whole period in terms favourable to the bishop.\textsuperscript{45} As a result both Ullathorne and McEncroe have suffered neglect from Australian Catholic historians. McGovern is determinedly anti-Ullathorne, possibly because the Vicar General was one of the first to criticise the bishop's obvious weaknesses. Quoting a letter in which Ullathorne was critical of Polding, McGovern comments: "Love of power, high opinion of self, mistrust of the ability of others, show from his own words in strong contrast with the humility of the Bishop". McGovern attributes Ullathorne's "prideful attitude" to a "nervous disorder".\textsuperscript{46} Kevin Livingston turns the "nervous disorder" into "very neurotic tendencies" and adds the suggestion of ambition for an English mitre as another motive to return to England.\textsuperscript{47}


\textsuperscript{46} McGovern, J.J. in No. 16 in his series "John Bede Polding" in ACR 15/2(1938), p 128.

\textsuperscript{47} Livingston, K., op. cit., p 12.
In the Autobiography Ullathorne explains that his return to England resulted from an "internal anxiety" that developed from all the pressures with which he had to deal. He claimed that he had never experienced anything like this before.48

None of the explanations given is totally satisfactory. All the issues mentioned are elements in the Vicar General's ultimate decision to return to England, but none fully explain the action. In the Autobiography Ullathorne gives a detailed account of his feelings over these years.49 He recalls the attacks upon him in the newspapers over his evidence to Molesworth and his criticisms of the colony in the Catholic Mission in Australasia. A note of caution needs to be introduced here. A survey of the newspapers of the period shows that he was certainly attacked regularly, but not as often as he suggests. His assertion of "seven columns per diem" is a considerable exaggeration.50 He also involved himself in vicious sectarian conflict (such as the Agnes Byrne affair in Parramatta and the Reply to Judge Burton). Among the squatters he was not popular. He was publically subjected to a number of personal attacks by settlers who considered that he had traduced the colony in his evidence to Molesworth. An incident on the Parramatt steamer, described in the Autobiography, is an example of


this type of attack.\textsuperscript{51}

Ullathorne admits that all of these issues put pressure on him. But it was the failure of Polding specifically, and Catholics generally, to support him that led to bitter disappointment. For instance, he discovered that the Bishop, to avoid conflict, went to the extent of hiding copies that he had had printed of the Catholic Mission in Australasia.\textsuperscript{52} Polding expected his Vicar General to take the brunt of the sectarian attack while he sheltered behind his episcopal dignity. Ullathorne praised the Bishop for his great pastoral work and he says that this encouraged the other clergy in their ministry.\textsuperscript{53} But Polding was no administrator and was constitutionally unable to take tough decisions. He was "extremely sensitive about his popularity" and was often "in low spirits and depressed". The unreliability and unconscious shiftiness of Polding was to grow worse over the years.\textsuperscript{54}

The nastiest part of the internal conflict was between Ullathorne and Murphy and, to a lesser extent, between Ullathorne and Lovat. It was in this conflict that the Vicar General manifested the prickly self-importance that was assuredly part of his personality, especially as a younger man. The trouble began soon after

\textsuperscript{51} Autobiography, p 144.

\textsuperscript{52} Autobiography, p 143.

\textsuperscript{53} Autobiography, p 155.

\textsuperscript{54} Autobiography, pp 155-156.
Ullathorne's arrival back in Sydney:

But I had scarcely been half a dozen days on shore, when I found that two priests whom I had sent out, both of mature age, and residing with the Bishop, exercised great influence over him. One of them had charge of the cathedral mission, the other managed a school in the Bishop's residence. I found that although Vicar General, and although the weight of all grave business in the diocesan administration was still vested on me, I was not to have the position which the responsibility laid on me required.55

(One of the annoying aspects of the Autobiography is Ullathorne's failure to name the people to whom he is referring; however, the "two priests...of mature age" can be no one other than Murphy and Lovat). The first thing that rankled with Ullathorne was the request from Polding (but prompted, he was sure, by Murphy and Lovat) that he give an account "of all I had received and expended during my absence". He rightly pointed to his extraordinary achievement in terms of recruitment, emphasised that he had lived entirely on his government salary and that all monies could be accounted for by the Bishop's own London agent, Heptonstall. Although he does not say so, my own view is that Ullathorne felt that the second slur was being sent as Pastor to Parramatta, well away from the centre of things in Sydney.

As early as March 1839, Polding was saying that Ullathorne's health was "very delicate".56 Public attacks on the Vicar General continued, but it was the internal problems that rankled most. He

56. Polding to Murray, 5 March 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 404.
had to deal with Polding's weakness as an administrator. "The episcopal work dropped behind so much to give place to the missionary, so that I was obliged to be constantly urging its claims, and to think a great deal about it, and to look a great deal into it, whilst, as, my own mission was distant fifteen miles, I found my difficulties by no means trifling".57 The Vicar General was frustrated by Polding's unsystematic approach to administration. In a comment to Cardinal Moran forty six years later, Ullathorne praises the bishop's missionary zeal and compares him to Saint Vincent de Paul but stressed that he was no administrator: "Archbishop Polding had not the tact for that kind of work".58

He also had to deal with Polding's depression and failure to face issues. "Then I would go over, rouse him up and get him to look the matter in the face". Polding's reluctance to act, coupled with the fact that the Vicar General had "to receive the brunt of attacks, to do the odious things, and to keep the episcopal office in the odour of sanctity" placed Ullathorne in a painful situation.59 No wonder he became acutely suspicious of Murphy and Lovat who were living with Polding.

As Peggy Jones has pointed out, it is hard to understand what

Ullathorne had against Lovat. The English priest had arrived in December 1837 and had begun a seminary-boarding school in the Bishop's residence, Woolloomooloo House, in 1838. When Murphy arrived, he too moved in with Polding and Lovat. The Bishop described them as living "in harmony and peace". Perhaps the Vicar General resented Lovat's intellectual ability and his obvious success as a teacher. Lovat certainly had a better formal training than Ullathorne and was obviously a man of greater breadth of interest. Given the strain the Vicar General was under in 1839, it was inevitable that the more aggressive and unpleasant elements of his personality would appear. Certainly the exiling of Lovat to Yass, where he was away from all chance to use his intellectual ability, was particularly vicious. It is a tribute to the bigness of Lovat's character that he became one of the great pastoral priests of the 19th century Catholic Church in New South Wales.

Another possible interpretation of Ullathorne's pressure to get rid of Lovat would be that he wanted to keep the seminary Benedictine. After all, it was Polding's dream to make the whole mission Benedictine. The order's influence in the seminary would be critical in achieving this. Ullathorne was the only Benedictine.
tine capable of taking it over. However, it must be recalled that
he was already profoundly sceptical about the Benedictine Order
forming the Australian Church. The majority of the clergy were
Irish and he had foreseen that this would increasingly be the
case. But perhaps he was prepared to give the idea of a Benedic­
tine seminary one last chance.

The Vicar General's attitude to Murphy had, perhaps, more justif­
ication. Francis Murphy (1795-1858) was an experienced priest
when he came to Australia. He had been ordained from Maynooth in
1825, had volunteered to work in England and had served in
Bradford and was at Saint Patrick's Church in Liverpool when he
was persuaded by Ullathorne to volunteer for work in New South
Wales for five years. He was eleven years older than the Vicar
General and had been ordained six years longer. It is significant
that when he first recruited Murphy, Ullathorne described him as
"a priest of six priest power" and says that he insisted on "good
sense and humility" in his selection. There is, however, good
evidence that Murphy was ambitious, and after his return to
Australia, Ullathorne certainly thought so. He told Brown: "One
of these (priests) wants my place, but could never have it, for

---

63. Murphy was "the first rector of St. Patrick's, Liver­
pool" (Burke, Thomas: Catholic History of Liverpool. Liverpool.
1910. p 81). Baptismal entries for Murphy in Saint Patrick's
register begin in late 1827 and conclude on 5 November 1837. See
Liverpool City Archives, 282 PAT, 1/1, 1/2. See also ADB, II, pp
269-270.

64. Ullathorne to Brown, 10 January 1838. Quoted in Birt, I,
p 360.
want of breadth of mind and freedom of temper, though otherwise a
very good man and most valuable missioner".\(^6\)\(^5\) Ironically Murphy
succeeded Ullathorne as Vicar General and then remained in
Australia to become eventually Bishop of Adelaide, the diocese
first offered to Ullathorne.

Murphy attacked Ullathorne through personal jibes in front of the
other clergy and bluntly told the Vicar General: "The fact is we
shall never have peace so long as you are in the colony".\(^6\)\(^6\) Ulla­
thorne felt distanced from the Bishop by Murphy and Lovat and
felt that he went "about the house like a poor relation".\(^6\)\(^7\) He
interpreted all these incidents as an attack on his own position:
"These things would be trifles were it not for the continued in­
fluence which this priest and his colleague, who was over the
school, exercised, in secret, in a way that embarrassed my posi­
tion".\(^6\)\(^8\)

Ullathorne confronted Polding about this whole situation, propos­
ed resignation and suggested the possibility of returning to Eng­
land. To demonstrate the seriousness of his intention he sent his
resignation from his official position to the Governor. The Auto­

\(^{65}\) Ullathorne to Brown, 18 October 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 439.

\(^{66}\) Autobiography, p 156.

\(^{67}\) Autobiography, ibid.

\(^{68}\) Autobiography, ibid.
biography suggests that Polding responded immediately "and sent off the two clergymen...one into the interior (Lovat to Yass), the other into the city".69

The letters of late 1839 make it clear that it was not so simple. Ullathorne told Brown in October: "I have twice entreated to give up my Vicar Generalship and twice resolved to return to my order".70 There must have been a confrontation prior to October when Polding handed over the full administration of the Vicariate to Ullathorne. There is evidence that the Bishop was in the Monaro and Queanbeyan in August 1839.71 Probably arrangements regarding Ullathorne's return to residence in Sydney were made prior to Polding's departure for the southern district. Certainly he returned to Sydney from Parramatta, become president of the seminary and was soon transacting "the business of the diocese as Vicar General".72 But he was still threatening to leave New South Wales. In fact in October he told Brown that he had actually publicly announced his departure and booked a passage back to England.73 This led to a second crisis. Polding told Heptonstall:

70. Ullathorne to Brown, 18 October 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 438.
72. Polding to Heptonstall, 1 October 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 436.
73. Ullathorne to Brown, 18 October, 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 438.
My Vicar General has, I fear, made up his mind to leave this country. On my return to Sydney I found a letter from him... I had, I thought, arranged everything to his satisfaction... so that I could visit my people without uneasiness... Ullathorne's health is indeed sadly shattered, and his spirits have become affected... he imagines, I am sure groundlessly, that there is existing against him a general prejudice... Almighty God has sent me many trials; this is, of all, the most severe... Ullathorne away, I am alone; not one of my own near me.  

Ullathorne, at the same time, was complaining to Brown about what he had suffered "from the Bishop's weaknesses". He was again dissuaded from leaving by Polding who, Ullathorne claimed, admitted that "he has not treated me well and that I am justified in my intention of leaving him; confesses that he has not firmness enough to govern the Church; that if I go things must be confused; that there is none to succeed me whom the clergy will look up to". Ullathorne said that as a result of the Bishop's weakness "the government correspondence is in a scandalous state; the duties toward the clergy or general business done or put off or abandoned according to impulse, the Bishop himself a continued prey to his own acute or morbid feelings". He blamed the whole situation on the domination of Murphy and Lovat "the only two priests who do not cordialise with the rest".

Ullathorne had another showdown with Polding bringing in Brady

---

74. Polding to Heptonstall, ibid.


76. Ullathorne to Brown, ibid.
"A man I revere as a saint" - he was also the Bishop's confessor) as an intermediary. As a result:

I have insisted as a basis of all arrangements, a statement of accounts: and that he (Polding) live by himself, that all may have equal access to him: that he conceal nothing from me in which the Church is interested. That when a thing is once deliberated on and decided, it shall be committed to execution, and not changed by the first fleeting whim or nearest influence...I take in hand the young seminary, and the general business of the Church, not one iota of which in its mechanical workings, shall be transacted out of my official room.

The Vicar General was now satisfied. "Our new arrangements have worked admirably" he told Brown in December. But he was still determined to leave Australia and he made this clear to Polding. He had spelled out his reasons to Geoghegan (with whom he seems to have been very friendly) in November:

That I have long wished for a life of greater retirement you are already, my dear friend, aware. The principal motive, however, which has induced me to leave so soon was of a very private nature, which, as it could not be stated without including the secrets of a third party I am sure you will not be displeased with me for not mentioning.

It is very difficult to know what Ullathorne is referring to here. Obviously the secrets of the "third party" somehow impinged on him or he would have no reason "to leave so soon". Even the term "third party" is confusing. Is he referring simply to

77. Ibid.
78. Ullathorne to Brown, 4 December 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, p 440.
another person or does it mean a person other than the principals involved in this "very private" matter? Certainly it could not have been to do with Polding, Murphy or Lovat, for that was a public disagreement, mentioned openly in Ullathorne's letters. No extant source that I have seen indicates what the private matter might have been.

The only possible interpretation that I can find in the extant sources is that it might have had something to do with the Sisters of Charity and specifically with his relationship with Sister De Sales O'Brien. Certainly there is evidence that O'Brien had strong affection for Ullathorne as this letter of January, 1841 shows:

You say "When shall we forget all but God" - I must tell you that I think the feelings I have in your regard come from God. I really cannot now love anyone but in as much as I think they are loved by God. I am glad you went away for a time, for it afforded us all an opportunity of making a sacrifice. But were we never again to meet I believe I should always preserve the feelings God has given me in your regard. I have for the last two years felt a great desire for your sanctification, and when you have spoken to me, a coeur ouvert at Parramatta of your failings I have spent the night crying "lest the gold was becoming dim" (her emphasis). 80

Between the spiritual lines one can see evidence of a strong human affection. On the return journey to Australia in 1838 he had become her confessor and spiritual director. It would be interesting to know what "failings" Ullathorne discussed with O'Brien "a coeur ouvert at Parramatta". Perhaps Ullathorne felt

80. O'Brien to Ullathorne, 7 January 1841. DA, Box 756.
that O'Brien's affection for him or his for her was all too human
and the only way that he could deal with it was to leave. How­
ever, lacking concrete evidence, this can be no more than
speculation. Also the "very private" problem cannot have been too
pressing, for he did not leave Australia for a year after
mentioning it to Geoghegan.

All of the issues I have discussed above have some bearing on an
understanding of why Ullathorne finally left Australia at the end
of 1840. But none fully explain his departure. My own view is
that the real reason is that he had decided to return to England
before he sailed back to Australia in 1838. He is quite clear on
this in a letter to Brown in July of that year:

I shall most likely leave the Mission myself in the course
of three years for under these circumstances I should prob­
ably be an obstacle to the Mission's advancement and shall
content myself with forwarding it in England. I speak this
after serious deliberation, and have advised with more than
one wise head on the subject (sic).81

The "circumstances" to which he refers is the fact that the
Australian mission must eventually become Irish, for no English
Benedictines were available. Thus, after his return to New South
Wales, he saw his commitment to the mission as temporary. He also

81. Ullathorne to Brown, 11 July 1838. Quoted in Birt, I, p
371.
came to see the futility (and the injustice) of trying to make the Irish secular clergy Benedictine. This, I think, is the central issue as to why he left Australia: he saw clearly that there was no future here for the Benedictines as a community of missionary monks.

Another element in his decision was the fact that he was obviously emotionally overwrought. In his mental exhaustion he saw no future for himself in Australia.

My health was a good deal changed through my continued anxieties. I was quite sallow, indeed as dark as a mulatto then, and years afterwards, until I began to recover tone. I remember my dear mother writing that a lady had called on her at Scarborough who had seen me on a Parramatta steamer six months before and was astonished to see how careworn I had become.82

He may also have had the unconscious feeling that there was a better future for him back in England. A letter from Brown in July 1840 informed him that his name had already been mentioned for an English Vicariate or, failing that, the Priorship of Downside.83 No doubt the realisation that he would probably gain an English mitre was an element in his refusal of three Australian dioceses. Convinced as he was of his own ability, I have no doubt that he was quietly ambitious for an English bishopric,

82. Autobiography, p 165.
83. Brown to Ullathorne, 7 July 1840. DA, Ullathorne Papers, 756.
despite his own protestations to the contrary. His later career as Vicar Apostolic and Bishop of Birmingham was to demonstrate that his judgement was correct in returning to England. He also says clearly that he was not prepared to work as a suffragan bishop to Polding.

The Downside Review at the time of his death sums up his ministry in Australia: "It will always be remembered that the founder of the Australian Church was a simple monk who returned to England without distinction or decoration". Back in England, this was soon to change.

PART FOUR - The Return to England

On 16 November 1840 at the age of thirty four after serving the Australian mission for seven years and ten months, Ullathorne finally left New South Wales. The immediate cause for his departure was Polding's need to go to Rome to negotiate for the establishment of two new dioceses in Australia - Hobart and Adelaide. The original plan was that the Vicar General was "to manage the diocese until his return". But then things started to get com-

84. For instance, in the Autobiography (pp 201-202) he says that Father Nicholson had advised Cardinal Franzoni of Propaganda "to keep me in view for an English Vicariate".


plicated. Murphy wanted some "check" upon Ullathorne, so Polding proposed "that that clergyman (Murphy) and Father Brady...should form a council with me for the administration of the diocese".88 The Vicar General thought that this idea was fraught with danger when "unity of government was essential". As a result Polding agreed that Ullathorne would return with him to Europe and Murphy took over as Vicar General. The Bishop, Ullathorne and Gregory departed on the 16 November 1840 on the Chilean brig Orion.89 The captain was a convert to Catholicism and he helped to make their journey a pleasant one. The Catholic community had presented the former Vicar General with "an address and a silver snuff-box filled with fifty sovereigns". A very large crowd farewelled the party from Sydney.

The plan was to sail to New Zealand, where they hoped to see Pompallier at Korarika in the Bay of Islands and then to proceed to Chile, cross Latin America and then take a ship from Buenos Aires to England. It was a common way of returning to Europe from New South Wales, for it avoided the always rough and often dangerous passage around Cape Horn.

Ullathorne describes the visit to New Zealand in detail in the Autobiography.90 They missed Pompallier but stayed at the Marist

89. Autobiography, p 166. See also Sydney Herald, 17 November 1840.
mission for a fortnight. Having crossed the Pacific, they landed on the Chilean coast at Talcahuano. There they found that they had to alter their travel plans. Ullathorne says that "there was a furious civil war raging in Colombia, and it would not be safe for us to take our proposed route across the Pampas". The reference to "Colombia" does not make sense although, at that time, the boundaries of the Latin American states were not as definite as they are now. He was probably referring to either Argentina or Brazil where civil wars were raging in the early 1840s. In addition, the travellers learned that the transcontinental trip began through the port of Valparaiso, "five hundred miles through Chile from where we were". As a result the party was forced to take ship for Europe on a French whaler, presumably via Cape Horn. They arrived in England probably in early May 1841 for Ullathorne was at Downside on 10 May.

PART FIVE - The Establishment of the Australian Hierarchy

By 1840 it was becoming obvious that the Church in Australia was


93. In Argentina there was intermittent civil strife during the bloody and oppressive regime of Juan Manuel de Rosas. There was a civil war in Brazil between 1835 and 1845.

94. See Downside Guestbook. 1821-1865. The Autobiography (p 191) says that they arrived in England "towards the close of May or the beginning of June". The Guestbook shows that this is incorrect. Birt (II, p 1) follows Ullathorne in this mistake.
already too large to be administered by one bishop. The rapid expansion of the frontier, the foundation of the cities of Perth, Melbourne and Adelaide and the development of Van Diemen's Land, meant that it was increasingly difficult to administer the Church as a single entity. The distance between the newly growing centres and the slowness of travel necessitated the establishment of two and possibly three new ecclesiastical jurisdictions. Hobart was a natural choice; Perth possibly another. Ullathorne felt that the Port Philip district should be included in the proposed Adelaide diocese, but Polding insisted that it remain with Sydney.95

On the trip back to Europe Ullathorne had given much thought to the issue of an Australian hierarchy. He had actually been thinking about it for some time. Clearly, he was already being considered for an Australian mitre. Talking about the proposed Hobart diocese he had told Brown in December 1839:

I write this in case he (Polding) should possibly seek for anyone for that Mission. Myself am out of the question. I am running away from a contemplated coadjutorship held out here and I know of nothing that would induce me to go there.96

During the trip these proposals for new dioceses gradually took shape and by the time the group arrived in Europe they had a plan for a hierarchy. Ullathorne explained the reasoning behind their proposals in the Autobiography:

95. LTBU, I, p 120.

96. Ullathorne to Brown, 4 December 1839. Quoted in Birt, I, pp 440-442 and LTBU, I, pp 74-75.
During the...voyage I had thought much of the religious wants of Australia. There were then five Colonies remote from each other...one Bishop...could know little of what passed in the other Colonies...It was also a great temptation to send difficult priests to those remote Colonies, as Father Therry had been sent to Hobart Town, there to make things more impractical for the future than if there had been no priest sent there...I felt...there ought to be a point of unity...It appeared to me then that what was really wanted was a Hierarchy.97

He drew up a document which he gave to the Bishop. This became the basis of the proposition that was put to Propaganda.

The proposal for a hierarchy was both original and radical. At that time there was no Catholic hierarchy in England itself; it was not to be re-established until 1850, largely due to the negotiations of Ullathorne. It was suggested that the Australian ecclesiastical circumscriptions be dioceses and not vicariates apostolic, as was usual for mission countries. Polding was to be Metropolitan with the new dioceses as suffragans.

But the Bishop and Ullathorne had returned to Europe for two reasons: to petition Rome for the establishment of a hierarchy and to recruit more priests. Their first task was recruitment. The Vicar General went to Maynooth and again gave the ordination retreat. During this he gave "a discourse on the Australian mission".98 He claims that there were a number of volunteers and he criticised Polding for being slow in getting to Ireland. They crossed each other as Ullathorne returned to England to search

for him after the retreat. However, they eventually met and visited Carlow College, the Cistercian Monastery of Mount Mell-eray, Lismore, Clonmel and Cork together. In Cork they met the famous temperance preacher, Father Mathew:

In Cork, Father Mathew not only gave us his heartiest wel­come but became our guide. Delighted would he have been to have assembled one of his great meetings and to have brought our Australian experience to bear upon his favourite topic of temperance; but as elections were agitating the city, with his wonted prudence, ever keeping clear of the suspicion of a political object, he was obliged to refrain.

In terms of recruitment, this Irish trip was successful. Murphy was able to report to Geoghegan in November 1841 that Polding had sent four priests and that he had "procured seven subjects in Maynooth and four in Kilkenny". This letter also refers to Ullathorne's lack of success in recruitment due to "the shortness of his stay" in Ireland. This was the last time that the Bishop and Ullathorne were together for an extended period; after their departure from Ireland they separated "each to visit his personal friends". However, for Ullathorne it was the end; he turned his attention to England.

---


100. Autobiography, pp 192-196. The monastery was Trappist and had been established in 1832.


102. Murphy to Geoghegan, 29 November 1841. Quoted in Condon, op. cit., Vol I.
Between July and September of 1841 Polding had become increasingly frustrated.¹⁰³ Ullathorne also makes this clear. He says he received a letter from the Bishop "which somewhat surprised me, as he told me that our relations were at an end".¹⁰⁴ As well as being a surprise, this was a great relief. He immediately resigned from his official position, "settled my account for salary with the Colonial Agent" and returned to Downside. From there he was sent to take care of the mission of Coventry. With the resignation of Ullathorne, Murphy was granted the salary allowed to the Vicar General.¹⁰⁵ He had been trying to get a salary for months from the Governor who had refused to pay until Ullathorne resigned.¹⁰⁶ While neither gives any further reason for the separation, it was probably clear to both of them that negotiations were at an end. Ullathorne was determined not to return to Australia. This is borne out in his refusal of the offer of three Australian bishoprics.

PART SIX - The Refusal of an Australian Mitre

After their recruiting drive in Ireland, Polding worked on the report for Propaganda. It is a detailed account of the state of

¹⁰⁵. Colonial Office (Hope) to Ullathorne, 8 November 1842. DA L 190.
¹⁰⁶. Murphy to Heptonstall, 30 July 1842. DA L 172.
Polding's attitude to the proposed dioceses was made clear in a letter of November 1841. He felt that bishoprics should be co-terminous with the colonies:

On this principle, Van Diemen's Land and South Australia might be erected into an Episcopal jurisdiction; and all those parts of the Continent not so distinguished might be deemed as belonging to the jurisdiction of N.S. Wales. On this principle Port Phillip would still belong to N.S. Wales ... When other Colonies are formed and receive their respective boundaries, let them in like manner be provided; in the meanwhile, the portions of the Continent not so divided off, are deemed to belong to the Vicariate Apostolic of New Holland.

Polding went on to insist that the bishops be both what he calls "Bishops in Ordinary" (by this he means bishops with their own dioceses and ordinary canonical jurisdiction) as well as "Vicars Apostolic". Presumably he is referring here to the extra faculties granted to such Vicars because of the missionary nature of their territory. He says that they need a "much greater extent of power...than is usually exercised by Bishops in ordinary". He was also concerned about forestalling the establishment of Anglican dioceses by having Catholic bishops appointed and he wanted to prevent Protestants arguing that Vicars Apostolic were mere representatives of the Pope. Polding's own inclination was to take


the Van Diemen's Land diocese himself, so that he could minister to the convicts there. He arrived in Rome on Christmas Eve and was assisted in his negotiations by Cardinal Charles Acton.109

Ullathorne felt slighted by Polding's Report to Propaganda. The Autobiography comments on the way in which Polding ignored his role in the establishment of the Australian Church:

I did not even find my name mentioned, a fact which did not surprise me, or give me the least idea that it meant anything personal. It was simply a result of mental habit.110

His criticism was accurate. Although there are four references to him in the seventeen page Report, three were purely factual and one referred to "una assai eccellente" in refutation of Judge Burton.111 There are far more references to the role of Sir Richard Bourke than to that of the Vicar General. Ullathorne could well have felt slighted.

After presenting the Report, Polding went on to discuss with Propaganda the plans for Australian dioceses. On 10 April 1842 the Curia acceded to the suggestion that a hierarchy be established.112 There were to be three dioceses: Sydney, Hobart and Adel-

109. Polding to Heptonstall, 17 February 1842. Quoted in Birt, II, p 12. Acton had been in the Curia for many years and had been created a Cardinal after the death of Cardinal Weld.


111. Report, p 10. SAA.

112. See Birt, II, p 32.
Polding was to be Archbishop of Sydney. Before he left for Rome Polding again tried to persuade Ullathorne to accept Hobart, but he was adamant:

I cannot recall how it came about that a correspondence arose between the Bishop and myself on the old theme of the Van Diemen's Land Bishopric, from all apprehension of which I wished to be free, more especially as I saw all the difficulties of having a second time to encounter Father Therry after his having complicated the affairs of the Church in Hobart Town as Vicar General.\footnote{Autobiography, pp 195-196.}

The wisdom of Ullathorne's judgement was to be borne out by the sad experience of Bishop Robert Willson.

Given the centrality of Ullathorne in the evolution of the plan for the hierarchy, the Bishop still felt that he had to offer Ullathorne a mitre.\footnote{Polding to Heptonstall, 7 March 1842. Quoted in Birt, II, pp 13-14.} He confided to Heptonstall who the nominees were: Willson for Hobart and Ullathorne for Adelaide. His comments on Ullathorne reveal Polding's true opinion of his Vicar General:

Whether Dr. Ullathorne will accept or not, I considered it due to his character, to his services, to his talents and piety to strongly recommend him. At the same time...I know no individual in our Body (the English Benedictines) so fit as Dr Ullathorne, and in the peculiar circumstances of England I think he would be more efficient there than even in South Australia.\footnote{Polding to Heptonstall, see supra.}

Polding repeated his view to Heptonstall the following month: "I
still think that Dr Ullathorne (entre nous) would do better for the proposed Benedictine Vicariate than anyone else I am acquainted with".  

As soon as it was clear that Rome would approve the plan for a hierarchy, Polding informed Ullathorne that he had nominated him for Adelaide. By this stage (the early months of 1842) Ullathorne was settled at Coventry. He was slow in answering the proposal. After a number of unanswered letters Polding became understandably impatient: "There is no letter from Ullathorne as yet; what can he be about? Yes or no might easily be said". Both letters of the time and the Autobiography explain Ullathorne's dilatoriness.

On Easter Sunday 1842 he wrote to Brown:

I certainly did not expect to find my own name opposite that of Adelaide in the matter. I have written to the provincial to ask to go for a week and make a retreat before sending my answer to Propaganda...It is pretty certain that my health would pretty soon break down altogether with the intense heat of Adelaide combined with the anxieties of one of the most anomalous Churches in the world.  

To prepare himself for a decision he made a retreat at Lough-

---

119. Ullathorne to Brown, Easter Sunday 1842. Cardiff Archdiocesan Archives. No cat. number. I have already quoted Ullathorne's views on South Australia earlier in the chapter. The quotation actually comes from this same letter.
borough under the direction of the Rosminian Father Giovanni Battista Pagani.\textsuperscript{120} "The conclusion to which I came at the end of it was to decline Episcopacy in every shape".\textsuperscript{121} However, the letters of the period make it clear that his decision was less definite and that Polding remained unsure about his future plans.

In early May he told Brown that there was confusion over letters to and from Polding and said "My mind is brooding despite of me, and my detestable pride makes me miserable enough, my stomach is effected and thus reacts upon my mind, what can I or ought I to do?"\textsuperscript{122} Two days later he had made up his mind and had decided to go to Rome to refuse the mitre. He told Brown that he did not trust Polding:

> My knowledge of this plan is exceedingly limited and indefinite and \textit{entre nous}, I have no confidence in Dr P's acting an open, candid or manly part. I have had so many specimens of his shiftings. Not that he means it, but we both know his nature.\textsuperscript{123}

From this it is clear that he considered the Bishop so untrustworthy that he was determined to deal with Rome himself.

Part of the problem was that Ullathorne considered Adelaide too


\textsuperscript{121}.\textit{Autobiography}, p 199.

\textsuperscript{122}. Ullathorne to Brown, 6 May 1842. Cardiff Archdiocesan Archives. No cat. number.

\textsuperscript{123}. Ullathorne to Brown, 8 May 1842. Cardiff Archdiocesan Archives. No cat. number.
small and too poor to form a diocese on its own, and felt that it should be made one only if Port Phillip were linked to it.124 However, Polding planned to keep Port Philip under his jurisdiction. Ullathorne cynically commented that Adelaide was "like a saucer on a tea table".125 In Rome he was granted an audience with Cardinal Franzoni of Propaganda (4 June 1842).126 He had submitted a Memorial in advance.127 An anonymous Propaganda consultor prepared a report answering Ullathorne's objections about the proposed Adelaide diocese. The distance from Sydney and Hobart was emphasised as well as the proposal to establish an Anglican diocese there. Also "it is an object of extreme anxiety for the Holy See that a mission to Aborigines be commenced without delay; and as the white population will make few demands on the attention of the Bishop, there will remain more time for him to spend on and for the Aborigines".128 While his views on the formation of the diocese were ignored, Ullathorne did succeed in his principal object: he was not obliged to accept appointment to Adelaide. Polding's second choice, Murphy, was offered the diocese and accepted it. Despite the intention of Propaganda, very little was done for the Aborigines before the 1860s.129

125. Quoted in LTBU, I, p 120.
126. Propaganda to Ullathorne, 4 June 1842. BAA, B 631.
128. From an incomplete copy of SCR Oceania, Vol ?, ff 149-152 held in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Adelaide. Quoted and translated in Condon, Vol I.
Ullathorne had written a testimony for Propaganda on Murphy's fitness to be Bishop:

This respectable ecclesiastic has worked for many years in the missions of England...I can testify with pleasure to his zeal, piety and prudence. There seems to be in his character a little timidity, but I am confident that this will not impede him from accomplishing his duties.\textsuperscript{130}

Murphy was appointed Bishop on 22 April 1842.

Prior to the appointment, Murphy and Geoghegan had engaged in a little clerical gossip about the proposed new bishops. In September and October 1841 Murphy had told Geoghegan that Ullathorne was being proposed as Bishop of Van Diemen's Land.\textsuperscript{131} By January 1842 he was able to write: "There is a report of Dr. Ullathorne being made Bishop of South Australia".\textsuperscript{132} It would be interesting to know if he knew that his own name was second on the list.

Ullathorne may have been feeling guilty about what he had said about Therry when refusing the Hobart mitre, for he wrote to that priest from Coventry in August 1842 that he had refused the Van Diemen's Land bishopric "out of delicacy towards yourself".\textsuperscript{133}

Given his comments over the years on Therry, there is a certain

\textsuperscript{130} Ullathorne to Propaganda, early (?) 1842. Quoted in Condon, Vol I.

\textsuperscript{131} Murphy to Geoghegan, 30 September and 18 October, 1841. Quoted in Condon, Vol I.

\textsuperscript{132} Murphy to Geoghegan, 25 January 1842. Quoted in Condon, Vol I.

\textsuperscript{133} Ullathorne to Therry, Octave of the Assumption (23 August 1842). SAA, file Ullathorne.
irony in this, but the clerical diplomat was developing.

It is clear that he was severing his Australian ties. He sold the books to the Benedictine community that he had taken so much trouble to bring to Australia. Polding told Heptonstall: "Gregory has purchased Ullathorne's books. Mr Duncan valued them at 140 pounds".134

However, Ullathorne had certainly not lost interest in Australian affairs. In the Autobiography he says that after his refusal, the Hobart mitre was offered to the Prior of Downside, Father Joseph Wilson.135 As Birt points out, this is incorrect.136 Ullathorne himself had recommended Father Robert Willson, a secular priest from Nottingham, who at first adamantly refused the mitre.137 It was only at that point that Prior Wilson's name was mentioned. He consulted Brown who strongly recommended refusal. Brown's words to him echo the views of Ullathorne:

The clergy and people of Australia are almost all Irish, having a strong national feeling. Dr. Ullathorne, and I think Dr. Polding, told me that the Australian Irish clergy, and their countrymen, including the Bishops in Ireland, were sore at being under an English Bishop and a Regular. Now, if this be the case, though Dr. Polding preceeded them almost

---


all in the Colony, what will it be when new Bishops, foreigners as they may be termed, shall be appointed, and the resident clergy and even their nation of which the Irish are the most jealous shall be overlooked. Let Dr. Polding recommend Irishmen for Bishops.\textsuperscript{138}

It also needs to be taken into account here that Brown was opposed to the Benedictines working in the missions; he felt that they should care for England first. Certainly the wisdom of Brown's words was borne out by later experience.

After Prior Wilson's refusal, Propaganda put more pressure on Father Willson of Nottingham. He finally acceded, but not before Ullathorne helped to negotiate an agreement between him and Polding. It is important to note this agreement, for Polding was to break it almost immediately.

After a certain amount of discussion, it was settled that Father Therry was to be at once recalled to Sydney, to leave the ground clear for the first Bishop of Hobart Town, and that a certain portion of money recently received from the Propagation of the Faith for the whole of the Australian Colonies was to be left in bank (sic) in Bishop Willson's account.\textsuperscript{139}

Neither of these conditions was ever fulfilled.\textsuperscript{140} Polding's behaviour in this situation was both cowardly and dishonest. The view of Ullathorne that the Archbishop was "shifty" was amply borne out. On arrival in Hobart, Willson found himself saddled

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{138} Brown to Wilson, 11 June 1842. Quoted in Birt, II, p 41.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Autobiography, pp 210-211.
\item \textsuperscript{140} For a study of the relationship between Willson and Polding see Southerwood, W.T.: "A Contemporary Episcopal View of Archbishop Polding: The Willson Correspondence". JRH 9(1977), pp 364-386.
\end{itemize}
with a debt of 3000 pounds and Therry still in occupation. He was to spend fourteen years trying to solve the Therry problem.\(^{141}\)

Willson's suffering in the Therry affair is shown in a long and sad letter to Ullathorne in November 1849 - by which time Ullathorne was Vicar Apostolic of the Midlands.\(^{142}\)

What a mystery has all the backwards and forwards business been (He is referring to Polding's response to the Therry dispute). Bishop Davis told me over and over again that the strong Irish party in N.S. Wales is dreaded, and that Mr Therry has such a hold of the minds of these people it is dangerous to reprove him. Alas, my dear friend, how grievous is the evil this man has done these past five years. I am sometimes (tempted) to reproach you for having thrown me in contact (with) such a man; knowing as you did, the manner (in which he) acts.

Willson says that he had sent Ullathorne a copy of the letters he had sent to Rome concerning the Therry affair. Some years later Ullathorne told Willson that the affair was "as melancholy a history as I have ever perused" and commented that Therry was "violently ambitious".\(^{143}\)

Adelaide was not the last Australian mitre offered to Ullathorne. He was also offered that of Perth. After Polding's return from Europe in November 1842 he had responded to a request for clergy

\(^{141}\) Southerwood, art. cit., p 365.

\(^{142}\) Willson to Ullathorne, 8 November 1849. BAA, B 1736. Unfortunately the letter is water damaged and is indecipherable in places.

\(^{143}\) Ullathorne to Willson, 19 August 1853. Quoted in Southerwood, art. cit., p 379. See also Willson to Ullathorne, 17 August 1853. DA, Box 756.
from Catholics in Perth by sending Father John Brady as Vicar General accompanied by the Dutch priest, Father Jan Joostens and the seminarian, Patrick O'Reilly.144 Less than three months after his arrival in Perth, Brady had left for Europe to recruit new missionaries for the colony. Ullathorne says that he left "without previous communication with his ecclesiastical Superior".145 This is probably not correct. Brady wanted recruits, for his primary concern was with the conversion of the Aborigines.

Rome had asked that something had to be done about the Aborigines at the time of the establishment of the hierarchy. Brady presented a report on the Western Australian mission to the Curia,

and petitioned the Holy See for its transformation into a bishopric. He concluded his petition with a recommendation that in the appointment of a Bishop Dr. Ullathorne should not be overlooked.146

Franzoni offered Ullathorne the diocese (22 March 1845).147 He declined, but he did give his views on the possible appointment of Father Francis Appleton or Brady himself to the Diocese.148 Appleton was an English Benedictine with pastoral experience in

144. The letter requesting a priest was from an Irishman, Robert D'Arcy, and was actually sent to Ullathorne.


146. Autobiography, p 144.

147. Propaganda (Franzoni) to Ullathorne, 22 March 1845. BAA, B 859. In Latin.

Liverpool. Ullathorne praised Brady's obvious virtue and zeal, but expressed reservations about his ability to speak the English language "eleganter". "Somewhat to my surprise Father Brady was appointed". Polding was informed about the Perth appointment only after it had been made.

It was also a surprise to Murphy, who told Geoghegan:

I have just heard by the Dorset which arrived from Sydney a few hours ago that the Rev. Mr Brady has been consecrated Bishop for Swan River. This event was quite unexpected. It will come like a thunder clap upon the ears of the Archbishop. He thought that Rome would consult him when the consecration of a suffragan was in contemplation. The Archbishop had not the most distant thought that Mr. Brady's mission would end in this manner. This, of course, is a confidential remark of mine.

Ullathorne seems to have felt guilty about the appointment (especially in the light of Brady's performance as bishop) and he tried to justify himself in the Autobiography: "I never dreamed of my words being construed into a recommendation to Episcopacy, and I apprehended that the veritable cause of his appointment was the influence of his presence at Rome, and of his report".

PART SEVEN - Ullathorne and Later Australian Affairs


150. Propaganda to Polding, 1 June 1845. Copy in SAA, Box Polding.

151. Murphy to Geoghegan, 3 December 1845. Condon, op. cit., Vol I.

152. Autobiography, p 215. This page contains one of a small number of mistakes in the Shane Leslie edition. Bishop Serra is referred to as Bishop Terra.
However, a pattern was set when Rome sought Ullathorne's advice about the Perth appointment. This was to be the beginning of a series of requests from Propaganda seeking his opinion on Australian affairs, especially those concerning Sydney. No doubt this was partly influenced by the long delay in letters going to and from Australia. But the main reason seems to have been that Rome felt it could trust Ullathorne's judgement on the disputes that plagued both Sydney and Hobart. Rome was obviously uncertain of Polding's judgement.

Propaganda had extensive dealings with Ullathorne in the late 1840s during the negotiations for the restoration of the English hierarchy. He was the key figure in that process. Significantly, the Secretary of the Congregation during those years was Alessandro Barnabo, as Pro-Secretary from 1847 to 1848, and Secretary from 1848 to 1856. He became Cardinal Prefect in that year and remained in charge of Propaganda until 1874.\textsuperscript{153} As will become clear, Barnabo trusted Ullathorne's judgement and consulted him on Australian affairs.

But it was not only Rome which consulted him. Three crises came to a head during the 1850s. In Hobart there was the Therry-Willison dispute, in Perth the struggle for control of the diocese

between Brady and Serra, and in Sydney the crisis centering on Polding's Vicar General, Gregory. Most of the major protagonists in these disputes consulted Ullathorne.

I have already outlined the essence of the Hobart problem. Both Willson and Polding consulted Ullathorne about the issues in dispute.

The Perth situation was extraordinary. We have already seen Ullathorne's unwitting part in the appointment of Brady as Bishop. He had grandiose ideas about the conversion of the Aborigines and he recruited a large contingent of missionaries in Europe to evangelise the estimated "two million" natives in his diocese. It was the two Spanish Benedictines, Jose Serra and Rosendo Salvado (and, when they could, the Sisters of Mercy) who really attempted to work for the Aborigines. The Benedictines established their mission at New Norcia in 1847.

Meanwhile, Brady's administration of the diocese became increasingly chaotic. By 1849 he faced bankruptcy; the diocesan debt was 10,000 pounds. In June 1850 Heptonstall (who was acting as London agent for the Perth diocese) told Ullathorne that Brady continued to draw on a bank account that was empty. He emphasised that "Dr.

---

Brady's character as to the management of temporal concerns" was known to Propaganda.¹⁵⁵ To assist him in his parlous state, Brady asked Rome for a co-adjutor.

Between 1848 and 1849 Serra was in Europe. While he was in Rome Propaganda, still concerned about the conversion of the Aborigines, appointed him Bishop of Port Victoria, now Darwin.¹⁵⁶ In response to Brady's request for a co-adjutor, Rome then transferred him to Perth. On Serra's return, Brady began civil litigation to get control of the money Serra had collected in Europe. Having appointed Serra's enemy, the Irish priest Dominic Urquhart, as Vicar General, Brady departed for Rome in February 1850. He instructed Urquhart to expel the monks from New Norcia and to seize the mission and all of its goods. When Rome heard of this, Propaganda appointed Serra Co-Adjutor Bishop with full control of the diocese. Urquhart was excommunicated, but he organised some of the Irish laity to support him.

Meanwhile Rome deprived Brady of all faculties, but he still returned to the colony in December, 1851. He was met by an Irish mob which stormed churches in Fremantle and Perth. Rome expelled Brady from office, but he counter-attacked with a civil action against Serra. Rome asked Polding to intervene and he arrived in Perth in April 1842.

¹⁵⁵. Heptonstall to Ullathorne, 7 June 1850. BAA, B 1922.
¹⁵⁶. The details are based on Russo, op. cit., pp 65-73.
Both Brady and Polding wrote accounts of events in Perth to Ullathorne. Brady asked Ullathorne to "assist me in making known to the Holy See the state and awful responsibility in which we find ourselves placed".\(^{157}\) Polding wrote to Ullathorne on 19 August 1852. He said he had demanded Brady's submission.\(^{158}\) He described Brady as

\begin{quote}
A man devoid of religious and honourable principle...He (was) turned out of court, stripped of everything, including character, social and ecclesiastical.\(^{159}\)
\end{quote}

He seems to have forgotten that Brady was once his confessor. The problem was only solved with the final departure of Brady for Ireland. He died in France in 1871. While the unbending, aristocratic Serra certainly had the support of Polding and Rome, Brady was not without his defenders.\(^{160}\)

---

\(^{157}\) Brady to Ullathorne, 22 February 1852. Saint Edmund's College, Ware Archives. 20/2/5. These archives are now in WAA. How copies of these letters came to be at Ware is unknown.

\(^{158}\) For a text of that submission see Birt, II, pp 189-190.

\(^{159}\) Polding to Ullathorne, 19 August 1852. Saint Edmund's College, Ware Archives. 20/2/5.

\(^{160}\) All of these were, of course, Irish. See John Coyle (an Irish priest in Perth) to Thomas Geoghegan (London), 9 January 1852. DAA, file 452 (Quoted in Condon, op. cit., Vol I). He describes Serra as a "scoundrel" who is "detested by the people". See also the very long letter from Frederick Byrne (later Vicar General of Adelaide) and Christopher Reynold's (later Archbishop of Adelaide) to a priest in Ireland, 27 May 1856. DAA file 452. (Quoted in Condon, op. cit., Vol I). At this stage Byrne and Reynolds were ecclesiastical students and the letter (which was passed on to Cardinal Paul Cullen) describes Serra's high-handed treatment of the diocese and especially the Sisters of Mercy.
Clearly Ullathorne could do little about the Perth situation in practical terms, as he could do little for Willson in Hobart. But what was starting to emerge in the early 1850s was that Ullathorne was viewed in both Australia and Rome as a man who understood the Australian situation, who knew all the major protagonists, and who could offer advice about events in the Antipodes. Birmingham was visited by an increasing number of Australian clerics on their way through Europe, to seek the advice of the mature and experienced bishop. Ullathorne’s correspondence shows that he maintained his Australian connections and kept up with events in his old mission field.

But it was in the events surrounding the dismissal of Polding’s Vicar General, Henry Gregory, that Ullathorne became an important operative again in Australian affairs. His role in the Gregory dismissal has been suspected for a long time, but it is only now that it can be documented.

John Hosie has correctly referred to 1859 as the “year of crisis in the Australian Catholic Church”.¹⁶¹ A number of historians (including Suttor, Shanahan, O’Farrell, O’Donoghue and Hosie himself) have written extensively about the conflict between Polding and Gregory on the one hand, and a group of laity and priests on

the other. The roles of all the major protagonists have been delineated except that of Ullathorne. Yet the fact is that he probably had more influence on the outcome than anyone. Part of the reason for the neglect of his role has been the unavailability of documents. Also no historian has emphasised his influence at Propaganda, especially on Barnabo. It is only when his pivotal role in English Catholicism is understood that it becomes obvious that he would be the natural person for Rome to turn to for advice about a church that was so far away. He was the only person in Europe with practical experience of administering the Australian church.

I will not outline the details of the dispute here. That has already been done several times. What I will do is concentrate on Ullathorne's previous experience and presuppositions; it was on the basis of these that he made his detailed assessment of the crisis for Propaganda. These presuppositions are important, for he was really the judge in this case and Rome acted upon his recommendations.

It needs to be remembered that the Sydney crisis came to a head eighteen years after Ullathorne's departure from Australia. In the intervening years he had had considerable experience as both a vicar apostolic and bishop in England. Many of the Oxford converts, including Newman, lived in his diocese of Birmingham, as well as the small but articulate group of liberal laity whose
periodical the *Rambler* was often criticised by Ullathorne.\(^{162}\) Thus he came to the Sydney crisis with formed views about the role of a bishop and the position of the laity.

He certainly had a high idea of the episcopal office. He saw the bishop as leader of both clergy and laity. It was his duty to command and to make sure that he was obeyed. Co-relative to this he felt that the bishop had an obligation to provide good administration and just government. It was Ullathorne, as Judith Champ has pointed out, who recreated diocesan government in England.\(^{163}\) Thus he was suspicious of and hostile toward laity (such as Sir John Acton and John Moore Capes and the *Rambler* group) who openly criticised the English bishops.

On the issue of the role of the Benedictines as missionary monks he came increasingly to the conviction that a strong conventual monastic life was incompatible with continuing pastoral care in a parish or mission. Champ has pointed out that in his mature years "he became more absorbed by the study and practice of the Benedictine rule". Significantly in 1862, just after the Sydney debacle, he tried to resign his diocese to return to Downside as


\(^{163}\) See her unpublished paper "A Different Kind of Monk: William Ullathorne".
an ordinary monk, but his resignation was not accepted by Pope Pius IX. Thus he would have had little patience with Polding's romantic ideas about a "monastery-diocese".

All of these presuppositions are obvious in Ullathorne's response to the request of Propaganda for advice about the Sydney affair. It is clear that Rome had proposed that he go to Australia as a delegate of the Holy See. However, as we shall see, this proposal first came from the lay and clerical group opposing Polding. Ullathorne talked this over with James Goold of Melbourne who visited Birmingham in early October 1859. Goold was against the appointment of Ullathorne as a papal delegate for he argued that this would stir up everything again. Certainly this is one of the reasons given by Ullathorne in his 16 October 1859 reply to Rome. Ullathorne also cited the business of his own diocese. Going to Sydney would have involved him in an absence of eighteen months or more from England. However, he did think the issue important enough for him to go to Rome and, after reviewing the documents concerning the Sydney crisis held by Propaganda, he

164. Ullathorne to his brother (which one?), 11 May 1862. BAA, B 4115. In this letter he mentions that he is going to Rome for the nineth time.

165. This is made clear in Ullathorne to Propaganda, 16 October 1859. Quoted in O'Donoghue, op. cit., pp 117-118.

166. There is a discrepancy of dates here. Birt (II, p 249) has Goold in Birmingham on 23 May; O'Donoghue, quoting Goold's Diary (in the Melbourne Historical Commission Archives), gives the dates 3 to 4 October. I have followed O'Donoghue. However, Goold may have visited Birmingham twice.
wrote a long letter on the whole affair. This document holds the key to the eventual resolution of the issue. It was on the basis of this letter that the decision was made to sack Gregory.

A careful reading of this long document shows that Gregory was certainly the scapegoat. It is a damning inditement of Polding's whole administration. Yet it is his Vicar General who was sacrificed in order to preserve episcopal dignity. Certainly Gregory was not without blame. Ullathorne points out correctly that he was given no theological formation (although this was hardly his fault). Even Polding had doubts about allowing Gregory to hear confessions.

According to Ullathorne Gregory's "ill-directed (and) inopportune activity...is the beginning and origin of all difficulties". He was "haughty when any opposition is made to him". This was precisely the argument of the Freeman's Journal when commenting on Gregory:

Our sole quarrel with him is that he is so deficient in the wisdom necessary to his high position, and so arbitrary in carrying out his own mere will in matters affecting the highest interests of the Australian church, as effectually to strangle all attempts at bettering the condition of Catholicity in this country.168

Ullathorne certainly does not indicate agreement with the views


of the *Freeman's Journal* (if anything he was opposed to its lay proprietors), but he nevertheless concluded that "the Vicar General is the principal cause of the difficulties that exist there".

However, the evidence in Ullathorne's letter to Propaganda does not point to that conclusion. Rather it shows that it was Polding who was largely to blame for the problems in Sydney. Ullathorne's case against the Archbishop is damming. He says that Polding did not tell the whole truth. His correspondence with Rome contains "unintentional inexactitude and silence about facts". Polding's basic psychological problem was that he had "a keen imagination and is very sensitive to the affection of others, and moreover has an unusual fear of...attracting the people's displeasure".

Ullathorne accuses Polding of taking credit for what he did not do. For instance, he claimed to Propaganda that he had completed Saint Mary's Cathedral, whereas Ullathorne says that Therry did. Actually, it was Ullathorne himself who completed the church, but he is right in apportioning credit to Therry for the basic construction of the building. Polding had also attacked Therry's wealth, and used this as the basis for a generalised attack on the prosperity of the secular clergy. He had contrasted the "sacrificial spirit" of the Benedictines with the wealth of the seculars.
Ullathorne commented that it was true that Therry was wealthy and that some of the seculars were preoccupied with money. But he pointed out that Therry did well in the early period when land was cheap, and that he had given his money to the church (including 16,000 pounds to Polding for Saint Mary's). Ullathorne admitted that some of the secular clergy were poor quality priests (this, he says was especially true if they were restless men who were recruited for Australia after ordination), but he is strongly critical of Polding for not placing "himself at the head of the secular clergy" and "for showing a preference for the Benedictine clergy". Thus he has failed as a bishop to fulfill his primary task - the leadership of the secular clergy.

In order to attempt to get Polding to turn his attention to the secular clergy and to break the nexus between the Benedictines and the diocese, Rome terminated the "abbey-diocese" experiment in 1854. Polding largely ignored this Roman decree and continued to favour the Benedictines. Suttor has criticised the termination of the experiment (he blames Polding's opponents for it). His comment that a "bold and radical experiment in evangelization was over...Christianity in Australia had lost its apostolic orientation and never recovered it" is patent nonsense.169

In his letter to Propaganda, Ullathorne was particularly incensed by the treatment of the Sisters of Charity. He says that Polding claimed to have paid their fares to Australia, whereas he himself

169. Suttor, op. cit., p 82.
paid this out of the money collected in Europe in 1836-1837. He rightly pointed out that William Davis paid for their house, not the Archbishop. He accuses Polding of passing over in silence their great work in the Female Factory and correctly blames Gregory for interfering with their rule.

Another claim of Polding particularly annoyed him. Ullathorne found himself at the head of a list, drawn up by Polding, of thirty-five priests who had left the colony. "The list is made up of priests described as drunkards, incontinent or adulterers". Polding weakly explained that Ullathorne left Australia because of "sickness". In response to the suggestion that something was wrong with him, Ullathorne pointed out that the Archbishop offered him the position of auxiliary bishop and then the dioceses of Hobart and Adelaide. But he could never be a suffragan bishop to Polding because...he could never treat those who had been his novices or disciples otherwise that if they were still novices or scholars. Moreover I knew that the great fear that he had of popular opinion would lead him to abandon others in difficulties, at the same time that he would want to be followed in everything.

What Ullathorne says is accurate. It is a damming inditement of the Archbishop's administration. It should be noted that a re-assessment of Polding is beginning to emerge in Australian Catholic historiography. McGovern and Suttor presented Polding as the principal figure of 19th century Australian Catholicism and his great pastoral achievements were rightly emphasised. But
since Hosie's article "1859, Year of Crisis in the Australian Church" a more balanced and critical view of Polding has emerged. His inept autocracy and maladministration have slowly come to light.

In his letter Ullathorne also turned his attention to those attacking Polding. The supporters of the Freeman's Journal stood against clerical centralism and what Suttor calls "the ultra ultramontanism" of the Archbishop. Ullathorne was a strong supporter of episcopal authority and, as I have pointed out, suspicious of "liberal" laity. Thus he was quick to accuse the lay group of introducing a democratic, presbyterian principle into the church.

It has always been necessary to keep in mind what sort of people the population is made up of. They are very ignorant of the laws and nature of the church, while they exult in having obtained a democratic system from England which makes them self-governing and gives the desire of directing everything of which they are part...It seems that there is a tendency in the population generally to weaken and lower the principle of authority...It is a strange thing to see. Catholics trying to introduce the principle of Presbyterianism or rather Calvinism into their church.

He singles out W. A. Duncan and Jabez King Heydon ("both converted Scotch Presbyterians") as promoters of "calvinism". Polding had also accused his lay critics of "a presbyterianism controlled

---

170. For a good explanation of the views of the lay group, the position of McEncroe and an excellent summary of what actually happened see Hosie, Challenge, pp 121-130; 151-153.

171. Heydon was actually not a former Presbyterian. He was from Plymouth and his father had been a supporter of Wesley. See ADB, II, pp 534-536.
by the wretched tyranny of money or loud-tongued oligarchs". The Archbishop claimed that these laymen wanted to "subvert the discipline of the church and bring her ministers into an unseemly, intolerable bondage". It is tragic that neither Polding nor Ullathorne was able to recognise the sincerity and genuine concern for the church which characterised these laymen who were trying to play an active role in church life.

It is a tribute to McEncroe that he did recognise this lay movement and in his letter Ullathorne defended the Archdeacon against Polding's accusation of disloyalty. But he claimed that "in recent years McEncroe has lacked prudence", in particular by allowing himself to be identified with the Freeman group. The idea that Ullathorne go to Australia as a representative of the Holy See came originally from McEncroe and the lay group. It was taken up enthusiastically by Propaganda. Ullathorne was especially annoyed with the Archdeacon because he quoted him "without my consent" of being in support of the visitation idea. McEncroe had told Monsignor George Talbot of the Roman Curia that Ullathorne was "prepared to go (to Australia) for this task".

Ullathorne gave Rome several reasons as to why he should not go to Sydney as representative of the Holy See. It would be seen as a victory of the lay party over the Archbishop. It would lead to disunity in the church, "cause a great deal of trouble for the

bishops” and not solve anything, for Polding would still follow Gregory "forceful in purpose and weak in judgement and learning". Finally Polding would not

make a full explanation of any difficult business whatsoever, whether because he lacks sequence in his ideas, or because he likes being mysterious, or through prudence. But whatever the cause, it is certain that it would not be possible to get to the bottom of Mons Polding's ideas and acts since they often change.

This is hardly a ringing endorsement of Polding's administration.

There is no doubt that Ullathorne was primarily responsible for Gregory's recall. He says bluntly in his report to Propaganda:

All the facts and opinions point to the Vicar General as the principal cause of the difficulties that exist there. The dismissal of him would lighten all minds and open the way to general peace.

Rome accepted this advice and it was decided that Gregory would be recalled by the President of the English Benedictine Congregation.173

Ullathorne was asked by Barnabo to use his good offices with the President of the English Benedictines to inform Gregory of the decision.174 Propaganda was aware of the pain that this would cause Polding, but the decision had been made and they were determined to go ahead. Polding was very bitter. "The faction has

173. Polding to Propaganda, 19 January 1861. SAA.

174. Barnabo to Ullathorne, 13 July 1860. BAA, B 3960. This is the most important of four letters from Propaganda to Ullathorne in 1860 concerning events in Sydney. The others are dated 22 May, 16 August and 5 December 1860.
triumphed", he told Barnabo and added that the departure of Gregory "was a public disgrace for the local authority". Barnabo blandly replied that "Men prudent and worthy of trust have several times placed before this Holy Congregation the necessity of recalling home the praiseworthy and religious man". Polding seized on this to argue against the decision: why recall a "praiseworthy and religious man"?

Shanahan attempts to delineate the forces that persuaded Rome to recall Gregory. She says that Polding suspected Ullathorne and Willson: "Because of Ullathorne's influence, the Benedictines in England were ready to believe what they heard about Gregory". She also indicates that Cardinal Paul Cullen may have used Irish influence in Rome to enhance the influence of Irish clergy in Australia. But Ullathorne is the key to the dismissal. He was well known at Propaganda as a successful and pastoral bishop who had both an intimate knowledge and objectivity about Australia.

It was Ullathorne who first informed Polding about Gregory's recall. Polding commented: "The peremptory order to that effect has not been received, but in the present state of affairs it

175. Polding to Propaganda, 14 April 1860. SAA.


would be folly to wait...Father Abbot is preparing to return to England on leave of absence". He was grateful, however, that "the reluctance of Dr. Ullathorne has prevented a Delegate from even now visiting our shores". In his bitterness he struck out at his enemies: "Lay influence has prevailed and lay influence must be crushed". He felt that "a grievous blow has been struck at the independence of the bishop".179

The dismissal of Gregory saw the beginning of a new era in the Australian church, as the vast territory of Sydney was broken up into separate dioceses: Brisbane in 1862 and soon afterwards Maitland, Bathurst, Armidale and Goulburn. Polding was not consulted and all the new dioceses were given Irish bishops. The Irish were coming into their own. Outside of Sydney, the Australian church was being "hibernicised". Ullathorne's prediction of 1837 was coming to fulfillment. Australian Catholicism was Irish in origin; therefore, it should be pastored and governed by Irish priests and bishops. The year 1860 saw a decisive break in the influence of the English. It is significant that Ullathorne should have been a major influence in that break.

PART EIGHT - The Final Years

After 1860 Ullathorne's connections with Australia lessened, but

never ceased. In 1865 Barnabo consulted him again on the question of an Australian episcopal appointment. Willson had asked for a Co-adjutor in Hobart and had suggested the name of Canon George Jeffries of Birmingham diocese. Jeffries did not get the appointment to Australia.

In 1866 Polding was back in Europe trying to get permission for Gregory to return to Australia. He was not successful. He was also determined to maintain an English, if not Benedictine presence, in his diocese. As O'Donoghue has shown, he wanted Herbert Vaughan (later Cardinal) for his Co-adjutor. Vaughan had just founded the missionary college of Mill Hill and he was unwilling to accept. He told Ullathorne that he had refused the nomination because he had just started "on a large and vast field of work and if I leave it, I know no one in England who will take it up." After his refusal, Polding asked his brother, Roger Bede Vaughan, a Benedictine, to accept the Sydney appointment. This led to a bitter letter from Brown (by then Bishop of Newport and Menevia), who had always opposed Polding's missionary ideas and was against Benedictines going overseas. It was not until 1873 that Polding got his way, and Roger Bede Vaughan was appointed

180. Barnabo to Ullathorne, 28 March 1865. BAA, B 4318.
181. A draft of Ullathorne's reply (April 1865) is in BAA, B 4320.
182. O'Donoghue, op. cit., pp 150-152.
183. Vaughan to Ullathorne, 24 June 1866. BAA, B 4424.
his Co-adjutor.

For the last two decades of his life Ullathorne's contacts with Australia were largely personal. Most of the letters reflect a quiet nostalgia for his missionary days, and a warm affection for the people who were part of his life in the Antipodes. His years of maturity had brought a whole new dimension to his personality. He had become more affectionate, developed a genuine sense of humour and lost the pomposity that had characterised him as a younger man. This is especially true in the years after the First Vatican Council (1870) when there was a real development in his personality. His letters reflect a warmer, humorous, almost playful person. Indeed, he had become a great letter writer in a period when letter writers flourished.

The outstanding fact of the letters is that they show him as a man with a great capacity for friendships, deep, warm and lasting. He had a wide circle of friends of many kinds, with whom he kept up a regular correspondence, writing on all the occasions of life, great and small.\textsuperscript{184}

Butler notes that several of his "very real and affectionate" friendships were with nuns. This probably explains why Ullathorne developed into a far more interesting and balanced personality than Polding. As O'Donoghue points out, Polding's whole life was lived in an almost exclusively male world. "His basic inability to accord women a recognisable role in the Church stemmed partly ...from the general nineteenth century attitude to the 'weaker

\textsuperscript{184}. LTBU, II, p 236.
sex' and was re-enforced by his monastic outlook”.185 There is none of this mysogony in the mature Ullathorne.

Ullathorne's attitudes are illustrated in a letter to the Benedictine Sister Justina written two years before his death.186 He talked about the old McArthur family vineyard on the Parramatta River, which had become the convent of the Benedictine nuns.

Mr Hannibal McArthur was a staunch conservative and churchman. I could never have dreamed of (the vineyard) becoming a Benedictine convent.

He also told Sister Justina about a visit from Dr. Dillon, the priest at Burwood. Ullathorne responded strongly to Dillon's suggestion that he did not know where Burwood was.

It is not very far from Parramatta on the road to Sydney. It was a wild bush with a rail on the roadside with the word "Burwood" printed on it in black letters. But the real Burwood is in my diocese, in Staffordshire. But now he (Dillon) said, it has forty thousand inhabitants.

Over a period of sixteen years there is a series of letters to Sister Xavier Williams in Hobart, the youngest of the Sisters of Charity who came with him to Australia in 1838. She had sent him a newspaper clipping on the death of Sister De Sales O'Brien.187 She then wrote asking for a copy of a Rescript that Rome had sent Willson concerning the Sisters of Charity. Apparently, her letter

---

185. O'Donoghue, op. cit., p 149.

186. Ullathorne to Sister Justina, 1 February 1886. SAA, file Ullathorne.

was very formal, but his reply was full of warmth and nostalgia about Australia:

Why dear child, did you write to me so formal a letter saying nothing about yourself as though we were strangers, saying nothing about yourself? (sic) Do you suppose I care nothing about you?...Your letter recalls old times to me with great vividness, the old ship, Parramatta, the Factory and all the rest, even poor Mrs Cahill's letter to me that "there was no one in the school baring the nuns and the goats". 188

By 1880 his visitors from Australia were few: "I rarely see anyone from what I may call, for it is to me, the old country now". 189 But his letters reflect a continuing interest in what is going on in the world and the church and especially in Australia. He often commented on the "marvellous growth" of the country. In 1888 he said that this made him

feel like a piece of antiquity. It is all the more kind of you to write to such a useless old mummy. 190

In 1887 he resigned his diocese because of a stroke. 191 He was appointed to the titular Archbishopric of Cabasa. During his retirement he revised the Autobiography. He commented to Cardinal Manning that "there are so many curious and piquant things in it,

190. Ullathorne to Mother M. O'Brien (Sydney), 29 October 1888. SCA H 412/33-35.
especially concerned with Australia, it is pretty sure to get out after my time". He wrote again to the Sisters of Charity for the golden jubilee of their arrival in Australia (30 December 1888).

To the end of his life he remained vitally interested in the outside world, proud of the books that he had written, with a warm interest in women's religious communities and a sense of humour intact. This was illustrated a few days before he died. He had been sent a special papal blessing and on receiving it he commented to the priest who delivered it "Young man you have been smoking a good cigar!" Butler comments: "He had old-fashioned views on clerical smoking, though he himself was a great snuff-taker".

He died on 21 March 1889, conscious to the end.


CONCLUSION

ULLATHORNE IN AUSTRALIA - AN ASSESSMENT
Throughout his long life as priest, Ullathorne was always in a position of authority. He was successively Vicar General of New South Wales, pastor of Coventry, Vicar Apostolic of the Western District and Midlands and finally Bishop of Birmingham. He was primarily responsible for the foundation of the structure of the Australian Church and the re-establishment of the hierarchy and diocesan government in England. Yet he has been neglected by historians in Australia, and to a lesser extent in England. Perhaps Australians have been deceived by the brevity of his stay in the Antipodes and their English colleagues distracted by the towering figures of John Henry Newman and Henry Edward Manning.

In England it has only been the more comprehensive historians who have recognised Ullathorne's central role in 19th century Catholic Church. David Mathew has referred to him as "the standard reference for the Catholic tradition in England", and Edward Norman speaks of him as a "great prelate". However, with the exception of the writings of Judith Champ, there is no major study of any aspect of his work in England.

The brevity of his stay does not entirely explain his neglect by Australian historians. Part of the problem lies in the debate in Australian Catholic historiography between those who emphasise the role of the Benedictines, especially Polding, and those who

---

stress the pioneering work of the Irish clergy and laity, particularly Therry. This polarisation has meant that others, like Ullathorne, whose work appeared peripheral to this debate, have been neglected.

There has also been a lack of recognition by historians of the importance of the establishment of a church structure to underpin ministry. The primary focus has been on the ministerial work of Polding and Therry, heros of the two historiographical traditions. Yet neither of these were able to do much in terms of the establishment of structures. Polding himself recognised that he and Ullathorne made a "complete man" between them and that his departure would be a major loss to himself and to the Australian mission. Without a church structure ministry was simply chaotic and ad hoc, as Therry's activities in the 1820s and 1830s demonstrated. Without Ullathorne, Polding's administration of the Vicariate would have degenerated into chaos and he would never have achieved the amount that he did in his early years in the colony.

But, as I have pointed out, Ullathorne had already set up a working structure for the church before he departed at the end of 1840. His achievement in so short a time was remarkable. No one else in the Catholic community at the time would have been capable of doing so much. Historians may justly complain about his bombastic manner, but unfortunately this has clouded their
judgement as to his achievement.

Apologists for the Irish have seen Ullathorne primarily as a Benedictine and as a critic of Therry. Pro-Polding protagonists have criticised him for what they see as disloyalty to the Archbishop. But Ullathorne was not taken in by Polding's schemes for Sydney. His realism saved him from vague dreams of missionary monasticism. By 1839, after his return from Europe, he frankly recognised that the Australian church was an Irish church, and that as such, it ought to be administered by Irish ecclesiastics. No matter what one's view as to the quality of some of the 19th century Irish bishops and clergy, they certainly shared a social and cultural unity with the Catholic laity. Ullathorne recognised the essential justice of this. As we have seen, he withdrew to England and consistently refused an Australian mitre.

Finally, perhaps he has been neglected simply because he was his own worst enemy. "Monsignor Ego Solus" often exhibited a righteousness that is off-putting. In some ways he had a naively high estimation of his own importance. Historians, like most human beings, find pomposity hard to take and many may have neglected him simply because he was too anxious to stress his own importance.

I have emphasised that part of his importance was that he was symptomatic of the fundamental shift that was sweeping across the
Catholic Church in the 19th century. He belonged to the first generation of professional clergy. His view was that it was the role of the priest to enter into the private aspects of the lives of Catholics through moral supervision, personal guidance, the delivery of social welfare and the celebration of the rites of transition. The intimate involvement of priests in the lives of church members also helped to extend centralised control of the Catholic community by the local bishop and, in the long term, by the papacy. This process, which began in Ullathorne's time, lasted right into the 1960s. In many ways, the church was ahead of secular governments in the development of centralised control through professionalisation.

But Ullathorne was more than just a churchman. He had a strong sense of social justice, which was underpinned by compassion and a feeling of solidarity with the suffering. This was a trait that ran right through his life-long ministry. As an older man he certainly became a paternalist Tory who distrusted liberalism and democracy. But his ministry with the convict poor in Australia and the urban and Irish immigrant poor in Britain, ensured that he never lost contact with those who suffered from economic and social exploitation. In fact, he was one of the first social critics in Australia.

His stand against transportation and assignment was both brave

and radical. But it was not out of character. At the core of his social justice ethic was the theology of a merciful God who forgave even the worst sinners. He recognised that most of the men and women caught in the web of transportation and assignment were more sinned against than sinning. His assertion that most of the worst aspects of the system were the results of the system itself rather than the depraved and criminal intentions of the convicts, was a radical view for its time and has a remarkably contemporary ring. His recognition of the reality of structural evil shows considerable insight.

But Ullathorne was never a coherent theoritician of social reform. His thought was derivative and, at times, confused. Nor did his religious publications show profound insight. His genius was essentially practical. His spiritual and moral writings, both in Australia and later in England, were controversial and apologetic rather than theological. It may well be this very practicality which has made him less interesting to historians, who are often more fascinated by the influence of ideology and ideas than by practical achievements. It is in the realm of the practical world that Ullathorne's importance lies. There is no doubt that he provided the Catholic Church in New South Wales with a structure upon which it was able to build its massive achievements in the 19th century.

The neglect of the role of Ullathorne in the foundation of
Australian Catholicism is unfortunate and has led to an unbalanced reading of the early period. Elsewhere I have argued that for most of its history, the responses of the Catholic Church in Australia to the challenges facing it have been "ad hoc, unplanned (and) a response to the latest and most insistent stimulus". If this is true, it seems that a pattern was set right from the start, of an approach to church structure and ministry that was incoherent, unplanned and chaotic. What I have tried to do in this thesis is to get behind current historiography see if there is another tradition (or way of operating) which can be used as a model upon which to build.

It seems to me that William Bernard Ullathorne, Benedictine monk and Vicar General of New South Wales, has provided Australian Catholicism with just such another model.

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. MANUSCRIPTS: The following archives were consulted in the course of preparing the thesis.

ARCHIVES IN AUSTRALIA

Australian National Library (Newspaper Section)
Canberra Archdiocesan Archives
Melbourne Archdiocesan Historical Commission
Mitchell Library
New South Wales State Archives
Saint Patrick's College, Manly
Sisters of Charity Archives, Pott's Point
Sydney Archdiocesan Archives

OVERSEAS ARCHIVES

Allen Hall Library (London)
Beverley Public Library
Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives
Borthwick Institute, University of York
Bristol Record Office (Clifton Diocesan Archives)
British Museum
Catholic Library, Westminster
Dominican Sister's Archives (Stone, Staffordshire)
Douai Monastery Archives (Reading)
Downside Monastery Archives (Stratton-on-the-Fosse)
Dublin Archdiocesan Archives (Drumcondra)
English Jesuit Archives (Farm St., London)
Liverpool City Archives
National Library of Ireland
Oscott College Library (Birmingham)
Propaganda Fide Archives (Rome)
Public Record Office (Kew)
Saint Edmund's College, Ware (In WDA)
Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth
Scarborough Public Library
Sisters of Charity Generalate Archives (Dublin)
Westminster Archdiocesan Archives

2. OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT SOURCES

British Parliamentary Papers, Irish University Press Edition
Historical Records of Australia, Series I and Series III
Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, NSW
Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons
3. PUBLICATIONS BY W. B. ULLATHORNE CONNECTED WITH AUSTRALIA

A Few Words to the Rev. Henry Fulton and his Readers with a glance at the Archdeacon. Sydney. 1833.

Observations on the Use and Abuse of the Sacred Scriptures as exhibited in the Discipline and Practice of the Protestant and Catholic Communions. Sydney. 1834.

The Ceremony of Blessing and Laying the Foundation Stone of a new Church; with a Preliminary Instruction by the Rev. W. B. Ullathorne, V.G. Sydney. 1836.

The Horrors of Transportation briefly unfolded to the People. Dublin. 1836.


A Reply to Judge Burton of the Supreme Court of New South Wales on The State of Religion in the Colony. Sydney. 1840.

Sermons with Prefaces. London 1842.


4. OTHER MAJOR PRIMARY SOURCES (BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS)


Broughton, William G.: A Letter in vindication of the principles of the Reformation addressed to Roger Therry Esq. in consequence of a Speech delivered by him in the Roman Cath-
olic Chapel at Sydney on Sunday July 29, 1832. Sydney. 1832.


Broughton, William G.: A Speech delivered at the General Committee of Protestants on Wednesday, August 3rd, 1836 by the Bishop of Australia. Sydney. 1836.

Broughton, William G.: A Speech by the Lord Bishop of Austra­lia in the Legislative Council upon the Resolution for the establishing of a system of General Education. Sydney. 1837.


Curr, Edward: An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land principally designed for the use of Emigrants. London. 1824.


West, John: The History of Tasmania. Launceston. 1852.

5. SECONDARY SOURCES (BOOKS, THESES AND PAMPHLETS)


Barry, John V.: Alexander Maconochie of Norfolk Island. A
Buckley, James: Ships Registered at Scarborough from 1786 to 1918. Private Printing. No date.
Butler, Cuthbert: Western Mysticism. The Teaching of SS. Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and the Contemplative Life. London. 1922.

Challoner, Richard: *Think Well On't; or Reflections on the Great Truths of the Christian Religion for Every Day of the Month.* London. 1728.


Eustace, John Chetwode: A Tour through Italy, etc. London. 1813.


Hartigan, John ("John O'Brien"): The Men of '38 and other


Hooke, Nathaniel: Roman History from the Building of Rome to the Ruins of the Commonwealth. London. 1738 to 1771. 4 Vols.


Legge, J. Gordon: A Selection of Supreme Court Cases in New South Wales. Sydney. 1898.


Religious of Holy Cross Abbey: *La Trappe in England*. Chron-


6. SECONDARY SOURCES (ARTICLES)


Carnegie, Margaret: "Father Therry in Friday Mount", *JACHS*, 4/3(12974), pp 33-36.


Hosie, John: "The Marist Fathers in Australia. The First Ten
Years - 1837-1847", JACHS, 2/3(1968), pp 1-21.

Hosie, John: "1859, Year of Crisis in the Australian Church", JRH, 7(1963), pp 342-361.


McGovern, J.J.: "John Bede Polding", ACR 11(1934) and subsequent volumes.


Southerwood, W.T.: "A Contemporary Episcopal View of Arch-


