

## **Absent Brethren:**

### **The Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope and the English Benedictine Congregation**

St Benedict in his Rule instructs us to pray at the end of the Divine Office for our absent brethren, and we do. The nuns of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope were absent from the English Benedictine Congregation for 270 years: the community left the Congregation in 1656 and only returned in 1926. This may be a relief to historians of the EBC, who can forget about one house. But does this do justice to the situation? What was the real relationship?

This paper aims to outline that real relationship, using material available to the enclosed nuns within their own house. The hope is that it will help anyone who is carrying out wider research to identify more easily this particular community.

#### **The Foundation and Separation**

The facts of the foundation are well enough known, and need only be outlined. In 1651 two nuns and a lay sister were sent from the English Benedictine nuns in Cambrai to Paris, to see if there were benefactors to support a foundation. The motive was to relieve the poverty of the Cambrai community, by reducing the number of mouths to feed. In 1652 more members were sent, they all moved into a rented house, and the Paris nuns elected a Prioress, Dame Bridget More.<sup>1</sup> At the 1653 General Chapter in Paris, the foundation was recognised as distinct from Cambrai, the election of the Prioress was ratified, and draft constitutions were considered. Father Dunstan Pettinger was elected Vicar and Confessor by General Chapter.<sup>2</sup>

In 1655 the Paris community sent a petition to the President and the Regimen, which included reference to their desire to be under the Ordinary of the place where they were then living. This petition was remitted to the next General Chapter. They had moved out of the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Paris. The part of Paris where they lived was an enclave under 'the Grand Prior of St. Germain'. The Paris nuns always wanted to remain in the English Benedictine Congregation and this move need not necessarily have entailed separation from the EBC. In the similar case of the "Blue Nuns", who made a foundation in Paris in 1658, their English Franciscan Provincial:

“made all the friends he could to get them into the suburbs of St. Germain, that place permitting religious to live under their Order, but he staying about six weeks labouring in this affair, could not bring it to pass”.<sup>3</sup>

The Benedictines of Perpetual Adoration also tried to settle in the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain, Their foundress, Mère Mechtilde de Bar, had a similar experience in 1652:

“The Ecclesiastical Superior, from whom it was necessary to obtain permission, was the Duc de Verneuil, Bishop of Metz and Abbé de Saint-Germain des Prés, under whose jurisdiction the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain lay. . . . He had promised the Queen [Anne of Austria] that he would not give permission for any new establishments, because most of the old ones could not subsist”.<sup>4</sup>

The Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope did not stay long in the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain. For reasons outside their control, they again moved house, and this time they were they were back in the territory of the Bishop of Paris. In 1656 they made submission to bishop and he approved the Constitutions.

The Bishop would not allow the establishment of the English monastery unless it submitted to him, and in this case it was considered to be an extraordinary favour, since the community had no financial capital. The submission had to be total, since, according to the House History, “the Bishop would have all or none”. The Bishop was Cardinal de Retz. The prime mover was his Vicar General, de Hodenc. The motive for this insistence was no doubt the Gallican position, that the French did not want to have foreign jurisdictions such as the English Benedictine Congregation operating in France. The same thing happened to the English Blue Nuns. They also had to submit to the Bishop. The English Franciscan Provincial:

“in the presence of all the religious delivered us up to the clergy, Dr. Holding [sic] being present whom the bishop ordained to be our superior”.<sup>5</sup>

There was however a practical reason for the insistence of the Bishop of Paris that he control these nuns. There were a lot of the beggars rambling about the city! The Life of Mère Mechtilde de Bar:

“Paris was full of nuns, refugees from every Province . . . Not all had put themselves into enclosure, to attend simply to observance of their Rules while waiting for help from Divine Providence. Some, with a view to soliciting the charity of the faithful, were to be seen on all sides, wandering in the streets of the great city, thus exposing themselves to many dangers . . . The decision was taken to gather them all together into one House . . .”<sup>6</sup>

So, for our community, having failed to settle in the monastic enclave of the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain, the only way to establish permanently in Paris as a distinct house, and achieve the aim of relieving the finances of Cambrai and the Congregation, was separation.

It may be that the President and General Chapter thought that some real disobedience lay behind this action, taken while General Chapter was not in session, and this would explain the fairly lengthy protestations by the Paris community, which are detailed in the House History. The case of Cambrai two years previously may have put a doubt into the monks’ minds. For in 1655 Cambrai had threatened to leave the Congregation, for quite a different reason. At that time, the President demanded that the Cambrai nuns give up their manuscripts of the works of Father Augustine Baker for examination. Father Baker had been spiritual director at Cambrai and had written down for the nuns his teaching about contemplative prayer. This teaching was approved in 1653, after some controversy. In 1655 the controversy threatened to flare up again, and Abbess Catherine Gascoigne of Cambrai saw no reason for the previous approval to be put in doubt. The Abbess,

“intimated to [Father Claude White] her resolve to preserve the manuscripts intact by withdrawing from the Congregation, if driven thereto by necessity, and placing the monastery under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Cambrai. ‘It will indeed be much against the hair with me to think of leaving the Congregation, and not to be admitted of but as a last and only remedy’.”<sup>7</sup>

In the event it proved unnecessary for Cambrai to carry out this threat. However, the Paris community’s decision to leave the Congregation before gaining the consent of General Chapter may for this reason have required more explanation.

## **The Concordat and Letters of Confraternity**

In 1657 the nuns elected Father Peter Salvin as chaplain. General Chapter was held in Paris. The nuns sent in a petition, setting out what they had done. They desired always to have confessors from the English Benedictine Congregation and to remain united to it.

At the 1657 General Chapter a Concordat was drawn up, which set out the future relationship. To the nuns this was very important, but by the time the House History was written (1695) the original of the agreement, which was supposed to be kept at St. Edmund’s, Paris, and the copy to be kept at Cambrai, had already disappeared. So it was a text of the Concordat in the hand of Dame Clementia Cary of the Paris house that was transcribed into the House History, where it is summarised:

“And by the contents of this Concordat, or Agreement, etc. it doth plainly appear, that our very Rd. Beginners and Predecessors intended that they and their successors should always remain true Members of the said Congregation, as for our Confessors and spiritual Directors; although they quitted them of the care and charge of temporals.”<sup>8</sup>

There was to be a special relationship with the community of St. Edmund’s, as set out at the end of the Concordat:

“The Congregation by these presents, doth further charge and command the said Confessor thus admitted, the Prioress, her Successors and Convent that they show really and truly all cordial love and respect to the Prior of St. Edmund’s for the time being, and that Convent: and to correspond together, like true Brothers and Sisters . . . And mutually, the Prior of St. Edmund’s and that Convent, and every one of the Convent, are strictly charged to show the like love and respect to the Confessor, the Prioress and her Convent, and cordially and sincerely like Brothers to advantage them, what they and every one of them can, by all friendly favours and correspondence”.<sup>9</sup>

The original Letters of Confraternity, between Our Lady of Good Hope and the EBC, which are stated to have been composed by Father Serenus Cressy, have been lost, but again the text is preserved in the House History. This gives the benefit of mutual spiritual benefits, and includes:

“Lastly, we do declare, that the Constitutions of each of us touching Masses and other devotions to be said in behalf of all or any Religious departed, do and shall remain in full force amongst us; they in like manner promising the same to us.”

We know that this was faithfully observed.

The original aim of the Paris foundation, to relieve the poverty of Cambrai, was to some extent achieved. Six members left Cambrai permanently, but two others went back. It is possible that some applicants were also redirected to Paris, such as the Brussels nun, Dame Ethelred Smith.<sup>10</sup>

## Later Contacts with Cambrai

Contacts between two enclosed communities could only be in writing, or verbal messages by travellers. There is no evidence in the manuscript books still at Colwich that any copying took place at Cambrai for Paris after 1657. Deaths were notified: there are brief notices in the Paris History of the Cambrai nuns who went back. There is also part of an exchange of letters about the death of Mother Clementia Cary in 1671, preserved in her obituary notice.<sup>11</sup> This is also an example of family correspondence, between Abbess Catherine Gascoigne of Cambrai and her niece, Prioress Justina Gascoigne of Paris. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, we know of letters from Dame Mary Louisa Hagan of Cambrai to Mother Teresa Hagan at Paris.<sup>12</sup> Further evidence of contacts is lacking until after 1795 when both communities were in England.

## Visitations

Visitations did not take place at fixed times. They were the responsibility of the Archbishop of Paris, but English-speaking priests were always required because most of the community did not know French. For the first Visitation, about 1673, the French external superior appointed an Irish secular priest to carry out the interviews. However, he reported his findings by letter to Father Serenus Cressy, as well as to the Visitor.<sup>13</sup> At the last Visitation in Paris, in 1791, the Vicar General appointed three English-speaking priests to interview the community, and two of these were monks of St. Edmund’s, Paris.<sup>14</sup>

The Visitation of 1698, which was a model of its kind, is reported in the House History as follows:

“The Rd. Lord Archbishop, Cardinal de Noailles, at his entrance [into his See] ordained a Visit to all the monasteries in his Diocese. We made choice according to our Constitutions for Visitor, the very Rd. Father Bernard Gregson, President General of the English Benedictine Congregation, who made

us a very discreet and charitable Visit, December 1698, much to the satisfaction of his Eminence and the community.”<sup>15</sup>

## Monks as Procurators and Confessors

When the community was in Paris, and not formally part of the English Benedictine Congregation, a monk still served as Procurator in England. The missionaries also seem to have carried out active vocations promotion, even recruitment for the nuns in Paris, thus serving them as they did Cambrai, which was inside the Congregation.

The monks' main service to the nuns was as confessors. There is a list of Confessors of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope as Appendix 2. This shows that the Congregation honoured its agreement to provide a Confessor all the time the community was in Paris. The nuns did not always get the monk they asked for. In 1661:

“The Chapter answered, that they could not spare Father Starkey out of the Mission.”<sup>16</sup>

There were three brief exceptions in the early days when Irish and “Scotch” seculars were Confessors, not always successfully. Also there were periods when there was no named confessor, and the Fathers of St. Edmund's in Paris supplied. This could not always have been satisfactory, because there was one occasion when a nun went out of the enclosure to confession at the Blue Nuns, and died there!<sup>17</sup>

As one Prioress wrote to the President:

“I have often remarked that change of Confessors is always attended with some difficulties.”<sup>18</sup>

It was prudent to spell out the conditions:

“The salary 300 livres a year. The Conventual Mass daily to be said by the confessor as far as he is able and the intention of the Mass for the community. The breakfast of the house is either tea or wine, if chocolate etc. they furnish it themselves. A bottle of wine a day, and the diet the same as the community, only meat every day and a larger quantity of it.”<sup>19</sup>

In 1784 Rd. Mother Mary Clare Bond wrote to the President before General Chapter to express satisfaction about the confessor, making it clear that the community still wished that it were possible for them to be part of the English Congregation:

“I thought it would not be improper to write to your Paternity before Chapter to give you the satisfaction of knowing that the conduct of Dom Edmund [Pennington] has invariably continued to give the most solid contentment . . . [This is] a community that is most sincerely and cordially attached to your Paternity and the Congregation, there is nothing but a necessity which cannot be remedied by us that has deprived us of being under the Obedience of our holy Order.”<sup>20</sup>

After the community came to England, they had virtually no Benedictine confessors, because the English monks were in difficulties themselves, and French priests were in relatively plentiful supply. When Bishop Augustine Baines became the Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, and their external superior, the community experienced great difficulties. The Bishop sought to intervene in the internal affairs of the community. He also stopped the nuns from keeping the confessor of their choice, the Abbé Prémord, a French secular priest in whom they had the greatest trust. When the community's friends engineered their removal from the Bishop's jurisdiction, it was not in order to return to the English Benedictine Congregation. The nuns were placed directly under the Holy See, with Cardinal Weld as Protector. In 1834, Mr. Rollings O.S.B. was appointed as confessor, as part of this rescue operation. The community then moved house, to its present location at Colwich, and was soon under another Benedictine Bishop, Bishop Ullathorne.<sup>21</sup>

The last in this 19<sup>th</sup> century series of Benedictine confessors was Father James Benedict Dullard, who died in 1863. He had been the confessor when he was a secular priest and then as an Augustinian. Through serving the nuns, he was attracted to the Benedictines and made a noviciate at Douai, where he was professed for Lambspring, but he never went there. He ended as Benedictine chaplain to the nuns at Colwich, and Bishop Ullathorne said he had the spirit of Father Augustine Baker, which he presumably learnt from the nuns.

The provision of monk Confessors did not start again until 1924, as part of the process of restoring the community to the EBC.

## **Relations with EBC in England**

EBC monks helped when the community came to England in 1795, including the offer of a house in Lancashire. Mother Teresa Joseph Johnson wrote of their arrival in London:

“Some of our Benedictine friends came of whom we saw several, and one particularly that was a great pleasure to us was Revd. Mr. Brewer from Woolton near Liverpool who was at London for some business. He was formerly Confessor at our house and ever was a great friend to our Community. He told us of a place in Lancashire called Fernihough, a large house and chapel that we might have even for a pepper corn a year, that is, only for a trifling acknowledgement . . . But several circumstances, especially the nuns in Lancashire none of them being permitted by the Bishop of that District to wear their habits, which we wished to do, and besides the going there so near many of our friends [i.e. relatives] was not the thing we wished for.”<sup>22</sup>

Instead they settled in the Western district (first at Marnhull), under a Benedictine Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Gregory Sharrock. They were allowed to keep enclosure as best they could and to wear the habit. The Prioress frequently wrote to the Bishop to ask for permission and advice, so the question of rejoining the EBC probably never arose.

From 1805 the Congregation’s Procurator of the South Province, Dom Michael Anselm Lorymer, acted for the Community for 23 years.<sup>23</sup>

His main function was in collecting the monthly allowances doled out by “The Committee” to the nuns, as refugees from the French Revolution. His first letter, dated May 2nd 1805, is addressed to Mrs Johnson, Marnhull, Shaftsbury, Dorset. This was the Prioress, Mother Teresa Joseph Johnson.

“Dear Madam,

I have the pleasure to inform you that the Committee have paid for the months of March & April, and that I have paid into Messrs. Wright & Co. [the Catholic bankers] the whole if I except the few shillings, as I thought it was as well a round sum and leave the shillings till we settle the account and they will answer for letters or any expense which might occur. You may depend in future of my informing you as soon as I can of the moneys paid in, but I don’t always know when the committee pays so that some days may elapse before I can get notice of it.

I was glad to have the pleasure of a letter from you, and to learn from yourself how much better you were. May God grant you a perfect recovery and every blessing to yourself & Community, is the earnest prayer of,

Dear Madam Your Very Humble & Obedient Servant Michael Lorymer.”

He also received donations for the nuns, and subscriptions to a book, the translation of the “Life of Princess Louisa” by Abbé Prémord, published to finance the community’s move to Cannington. Some of his letters were written on Death Bills, notifying the death of a member of the Congregation. He also sent out notices of deaths in the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope.

Sometimes he gives details. In a letter of April 30<sup>th</sup> 1807, he says:

“I lost no time in recommending your good Sister to the prayers of our Brethren. In return I recommend you our Confrere Mr. Warmoll. He was very well apparently on Sunday till night when he began to complain of pains all over him, they kept increasing till morning when he made his Confession received Extreme Unction and shortly after expired about 8 o’clock. He is the 5<sup>th</sup> we have lost since our Chapter and all from Douay Community, besides a lay Sister of Cambray. I shall see if anything can be got for the burial of your Sister.”

Another he wrote to Mother Teresa Catherine Macdonald in 1809 is rather severe, considering there had been two deaths in the community in a week:

“I was not a little surprised on receiving your last dated 3rd Inst. to find that Sr. M. A. Towsey died on the 17<sup>th</sup> March and that so long a time had elapsed before I had notice of it. Our Congregation are bound to pray for those of your Community as for those of our own Congregation. On the receipt of your letter, the same day, I sent off a dozen letters to those of our Province, and always make a point to avoid any delay in such business. When we consider the sufferings in Purgatory, and what may be our fate, one cannot I think be to exact in rendering them all the assistance in our power. Excuse me, Dear Madam, for taking the liberty to make these reflexions”.

Father Lorymer became ever more of a friend, as Superiors quickly succeeded each other due to death or illness, and he continued to receive notice of deaths in the little community:

“27 June 1812. I was really concerned to hear of the loss of your dear Sister Thickness, I have given most of our people notice of it. If you have by you any quantity of the printed Death-Bills, I shall be glad to have some, when an occasion offers as it will save paper and facilitate the speedy communication to our confreres &c.”

In his next:

“19 August 1812. I received your parcel of Death-Bills and hope it may be long before I shall have occasion to use them.”

He instructed the young Prioress, Mother Mary Clare Knight, in the politics of Government handouts:

“23 March 1813. At this time of the year Government does not pay in general till the Chancellor of the Exchequer settles his finance plans, and the money is voted for the different purposes by Parliament. The Minister has not as yet brought forward the Budget whence I thought it quite useless to go to the Committee.”

He also gave her a lesson in keeping accounts:

“5 February 1819. I am sorry to observe from yours and your predecessor’s letters that you seem to be ignorant what you are to receive, relying entirely on me. It is a great satisfaction to me to know that those, whose concerns I am charged with, keep an Account against me, by that means when they both agree there is great probability the Account is correct. For it is so easy to make mistakes and if an account is not kept they are not discovered. I wish therefore on the receipt of this you would open an Account in your book or on 2 or 3 sheets of paper stitched together. On the left hand page make me a Debtor first for the Balance £82:12:5. Then for the amount of Allowances . . . at the end of every month . . . On the right hand side give me Credit for what sums you shall find paid to Messrs. Wright & Co. Then you will see in one minute what is your due. On the other side I have shown you how to begin it”.

There were very helpful contacts between the two communities of nuns in England.

The nuns of our community were able to help the community of Our Lady of Consolation by making a habit and cowl, for which they themselves had no pattern. A letter written in 1823 by Mother Mary Clare Knight, the Prioress at Cannington, to the Abbess at Salford, says:

“I must again assure you, much revered Lady Abbess, how sincerely happy we have been in having an opportunity of obliging you even in so slight a matter . . . Miss Mendaza intended herself to have had the pleasure of supplying materials for Habit as well as the Cowl, had the piece she sent been sufficient, and this gave us only the opportunity of supplying serge for the Habit such as we wear; I hope they fit one of your dear nuns as well as they did our good Sister Placida. Your kind promise of praying for us is an ample amends for a few days’ employment, which was a real pleasure.”<sup>24</sup>

Later, the Salford nuns were able to help those at Cannington. The obituary notice of Mother Teresa Maurus Sidgreaves says:

“The unfortunate troubles with Bishop Baines took place during her noviciate and . . . as His Lordship made many objections to her Profession, it was thought advisable to allow her to pass part of her noviciate with the Benedictine nuns at Salford (now at Stanbrook). The Father President (Barker)

kindly consented to this arrangement. Later he wrote about her . . . The nuns are very pleased and edified with Sister Teresa Maurus. I have obtained permission for her to rise in the night to adore the Blessed Sacrament . . . Lady Abbess and Community were very pleased to assist you in your trial and will do their best for the novice . . . The year of her noviciate expired and the community would gladly have kept her at Salford, but Sr. Teresa Maurus preferred waiting until she could return.”<sup>25</sup>

Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament had been adopted at Cannington. This is why the foster-novice was allowed to pray in the night before the Blessed Sacrament at Salford, and probably the main reason why she wanted to return to Cannington.

## **Return to the EBC**

There had been developments in the English Benedictine Congregation during the “legal absence” of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope. The Cambrai nuns settled at Stanbrook and built up their Benedictine life again. This included the adoption of new constitutions. Two more houses of nuns joined the Congregation. Holme Eden Abbey (now dispersed), which had been founded by German monks at Fort Augustus, joined the EBC in 1909. The community now at Curzon Park, Chester had originally been an Anglican community. The nuns were received into the Catholic Church in 1913 and joined the EBC in 1921. All these communities were Abbeys with nuns in Solemn Vows and kept strict Papal Enclosure.

The community at Colwich had remained a Priory, under the Archbishops of Birmingham, with the original constitutions of 1656 little changed. The spiritual focus had altered somewhat because of the practice of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. However, there is evidence that the original spirituality of Father Augustine Baker persisted quietly in the community.<sup>26</sup>

The process by which Colwich returned to the EBC was a long one, and a trial to those involved. It does not seem to have been caused by any desire to rejoin the mainstream of Benedictine life or for any other desire for change. The main, or only motive given for returning to the EBC was to regain Solemn Vows. In 1905, the case of an individual nun was submitted to Propaganda by the Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Ilsley, and the answer came back that the community had neither Papal Enclosure nor Solemn Vows. This was a serious shock to the nuns, but later attempts to get a different decision were also unsuccessful.

In 1919, the Prioress’s Council at Colwich voted to return to the English Benedictine Congregation. The entry in the Council Book states:

“In consequence of the new Code of Canon Law and the obligation of revision of Constitutions, after several discussions in Council & the reading of letters from Cardinal Gasquet, it was unanimously voted that – we think it desirable to petition to be received back to the Anglo Benedictine Congregation by which we were founded, thereby renouncing our privilege of being directly under the Holy See. We have communicated with Father President, Abbot Butler, who has promised to come & discuss the matter & give us all necessary information”.<sup>27</sup>

The Chapter vote was delayed until 1921, until after the resignation of Archbishop Ilsley. The community chronicler records:

1921 Feb 27. Summoned to Chapter to have the question concerning a Petition to return to the English Congregation put before us. The votes to be taken on Thursday March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Our dear Mother spoke briefly. With reference to our remaining as since circa 1835 an “exempt” House with a Cardinal Protector in Rome, Rome wished that the Archbishop of Birmingham should be ex officio Protector of the Community which took from us all the advantages enjoyed under Cardinal Weld. Hence, now that the Archbishopric is vacant it seemed a fitting moment to petition to return to the English congregation, which was only left under compulsion – when Cardinal [de] Retz refused to allow the Community to settle in Paris unless they accepted his jurisdiction. Thus many canonists hold that when they left Paris they reverted to the Congregation of their origin. . . Our dear Mother pointed out that by the mere fact of returning to the congregation our vows would again be recognised as solemn.

March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Voting took place today. Our dear Mother called up the Senior Counsellors to count the votes, and then remarked quietly as she showed us the box: There is no need to count; the voting has been unanimous.

There was not one black bean”.<sup>28</sup>

The Council Book records the next move:

“Accordingly a petition was sent to the Quadrennial Chapter of the English Congregation to be re-admitted. The reply was – that although we had their sympathy, it would be necessary first to obtain the goodwill of the Archbishop of Birmingham who, though we are exempt, is delegated by the Holy See as our Superior, and being also Archbishop of the diocese, it would be very imprudent to act contrary to his advice.”<sup>29</sup>

The new Archbishop of Birmingham, Archbishop MacIntyre, did not give his official permission until 1924. It was hoped matters could be finally arranged at the General chapter the following year.<sup>30</sup>

However it was only in 1926 that the community petitioned Rome and finally rejoined the EBC. The community diarist:

“About 10.30 in the morning we were all startled by the great bell ringing vigorously. We rushed in, no one could tell us the reason - we were to assemble in the Chapter-room. Most of us had given up hopes of hearing from Rome until November so few guessed the reason before our dear Mother read Fr President’s letter announcing the arrival of the Rescript from Rome, which he forwarded, and addressing us as at last belonging to the English Congregation”.<sup>31</sup>

After an interval of 270 years, the community was back in the EBC. However, the nuns did not automatically get their solemn vows back just by returning to the EBC. Declarations and Constitutions for the four houses of nuns in the EBC were produced in 1934, and the nuns of Our Lady of Good Hope, by that time called St. Mary’s Abbey, Colwich, had to make Solemn Vows.

## **Absent Brethren**

So who in fact were the “absent brethren”?

All the members of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope, at their Profession, immediately after pronouncing their vows, made a promise to offer their lives for the Conversion of England, in the following words from their Constitutions of 1656:

“According to the vocation and holy institute of this Convent, I offer myself and all my actions for the Conversion of England, **in union with our Fathers’ labour of the Mission**, and as they promise and swear to go and return as they are commanded, so will I live and die in this my offering in this Convent.”<sup>32</sup>

This promise remained unchanged during the time that the community spent outside the Congregation. It was, after all, the monks who were the “absent brethren”, and the enclosed nuns who were at heart in the Congregation and who were praying for them.<sup>33</sup>

## ***Appendix 1: Places of Residence***

November 1651	First party stayed with the Austin Nuns, Paris
February 1652	Community began in a rented house, Mr Hulose, rue St. Dominique, Paris (under Grand Prior of St. Germain)
October 1652	Notre Dame de Liesse
October 1653	Mr Beroons, rue St. Dominique
April 1655	Mr. Anglois, rue d'Enfer (under Archbishop of Paris)
1 <sup>st</sup> September 1657	formally left the government of the EBC
October 1657	Mr Armand, rue St Dominique
April 1664	Community acquired the property rue du champ de l'Alouette, later named rue des Anglaises
July 1794	Imprisoned in Chateau de Vincennes
November 1794	Stayed with the Austin nuns
July 1795	Left France
July 1795	3 Orchard Street, London (Vicar Apostolic, London District)
September 1795	First party arrived at Marnhull, Dorset(Vicar Apostolic of the Western District)
February 1807	First party arrived at Cannington Court, Somerset (Western District)
16 July 1833	(Cardinal Weld: Protector)
July 1836	First party to St. Benedict's Priory, Colwich (Midland District)
1926	Rejoined EBC
1928	Raised to the rank of an Abbey: St. Mary's Abbey, Colwich

## Appendix 2: Confessors

### In France, from 1651

Serenus Cressy OSB  
 Thomas Swinburne “  
 Dunstan Pettinger “  
 Peter Salvin “  
 Hugo Starkey  
*Mr. Fountain* *Scotch secular*  
*Mr. Price* *secular*  
 Thomas Anderton OSB  
 Joseph Shirburne “  
*Mr. Duley* *Irish*  
 Benet Nelson All OSB  
 Jerome Hesketh  
 Benet Nelson (again)  
 James Nelson  
 Huge Starkey (again)  
 Maurus Corker  
 Celestine Shaftoe  
 Placid Francis (chaplain in 2<sup>nd</sup>)  
 Fathers from St. Edmund’s  
 Benet Gibbon  
 Gregory Timperley  
 A gap: presumably Fathers from St. Edmund’s  
 Robert Robinson  
 A gap: presumably Fathers from St. Edmund’s  
 Alexander Catteral  
 Father Davis (OSB?)  
 Bede Brewer  
 Basil Brindle  
 Edmund Pennington  
 Placid Naylor

### In England, from 1795

*Mr. Le Pelletier* *French*  
*Mr. Prémord* “  
*Mr. Cambois* “  
 Mr. Holden OSB  
*Bp. Collingridge* *Franciscan*  
 Mr. Lawson OSB  
*Mr. Simon* *French*  
*Mr. Sumner* *Franciscan*  
*Mr. Normand* *French*  
 Dr Toumy  
*Mr. Normand (again)*  
*Mr. Dullard* *secular, then*  
*Augustinian*  
 Mr. Lyons  
 Mr Burgess OSB  
*Mr. Prémord (again)*  
 no regular confessor  
**1834** Rollings OSB  
 Sinnott “  
 Dullard now OSB  
**1863** *Canon Richmond,* *secular*  
*Fr. Gibbons* *All secular*  
*Fr. Hopwood*  
*Fr. Nock*  
*Dr. McIntyre*  
*Fr. Nary*  
*Fr Calman*  
*Fr Joseph Jones*  
**1924** Fr Hilary Wilson OSB  
 Fr Benedict Adams  
 Fr Gabriel Geary  
 Then continues in EBC

Sources: Colwich Archives:  
 House History R3,  
 P20, CAN17, COL108, COL152,  
 Notes for History: D. Juliana Murray.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> For places of residence, see Appendix 1.
- <sup>2</sup> House History reference R3, dated 1695. Copied in part by Weldon. The 19<sup>th</sup> century expanded version was used by Allanson, and published in the Ampleforth Journal 1906-8, nos. 11,12& 13. This was also the basis for the first part of the book "The Benedictines of Colwich", by Father Robert Eaton 1929. The archives and books at St. Mary's Abbey Colwich are private, but can be shown at the discretion of the Abbess.
- <sup>3</sup> Blue Nuns' Diary CRS Vol. 8.
- <sup>4</sup> Vie de la Vénérable Mère Catherine de Bar dite en Religion Mechtilde du S. Sacrement, Institutrice des Religieuses de l'Adoration perpétuelle (1775) Page 224.
- <sup>5</sup> CRS Vol. 8.
- <sup>6</sup> Vie de la Vénérable Mère Catherine de Bar, page 207.
- <sup>7</sup> In a Great Tradition, Benedictines of Stanbrook (1956), quoting a letter to Father [Anselm?] Crowder.
- <sup>8</sup> House History, page 121.
- <sup>9</sup> House History, page 127.
- <sup>10</sup> CRS Vol. 9 No. 11. I am grateful to Paul Arblaster for telling me at the History Symposium 1999 about her letters asking to transfer to Cambrai, which he saw in the Mechlin Diocesan Archive, Regulieren Brussel, Engelse Nonnen, carton 3-8, 11-13.
- <sup>11</sup> CRS Vol.9 No.11 page 345.
- <sup>12</sup> Paris Archives Nationales S4619, 8 August 1789 and 26 March 1791, copied in Colwich Archives P14 and P15.
- <sup>13</sup> House History, page 194.
- <sup>14</sup> V. R. Henry Parker, Prior, and Fr. Kellett, the Procurator. Colwich Archives, CAN 17.
- <sup>15</sup> House History, page 147.
- <sup>16</sup> House History, page 139.
- <sup>17</sup> CRS Vol. 8.
- <sup>18</sup> Colwich Archives P33: Lille Archives du Nord 18H31/18H42, Rd. Mother Mary Magdalen Johnson To President Walker, 11 February 1784. I am grateful to D. Eanswythe Edwards who transcribed from a microfilm supplied by Ampleforth Abbey.
- <sup>19</sup> Lille: Rd. Mother Mary Clare Bond to President, July 1784.
- <sup>20</sup> Rd. Mother Mary Clare Bond to President, 2 July 1785.
- <sup>21</sup> "The Benedictines of Colwich" gives an exhaustive account.
- <sup>22</sup> Colwich Archives P9, MS. 45A, Rd. Mother Teresa Joseph Johnson.
- <sup>23</sup> Letters and accounts from Dom Michael Anselm Lorymer 1805-1828: Colwich Archives M11. He died at Downside in 1832.
- <sup>24</sup> Letters of Rd. Mother Mary Clare Knight, copy of letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> January 1823.
- <sup>25</sup> Colwich Obit Book, Page 314, Mother Teresa Maurus Sidgreaves, died December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1878.
- <sup>26</sup> For the continuing importance of the spirituality of Father Augustine Baker in this community, see my paper for the Abergavenny Celebrations, May 2000.
- <sup>27</sup> Council Book, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1919, signed by Sr. M. Magdalen Astley, Prioress and Sr. M Evangelista de Capitain, Secretary. The letters from Cardinal Gasquet have not been found.
- <sup>28</sup> Notes for the History of the House, by Dame Juliana Murray.
- <sup>29</sup> Council Book, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1921.
- <sup>30</sup> Murray, Chapter on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1924.
- <sup>31</sup> Murray, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1926.
- <sup>32</sup> Constitutions, Colwich Archives, P2.
- <sup>33</sup> I am grateful to Abbot Geoffrey Scott for suggestions made on the first draft of this paper.