



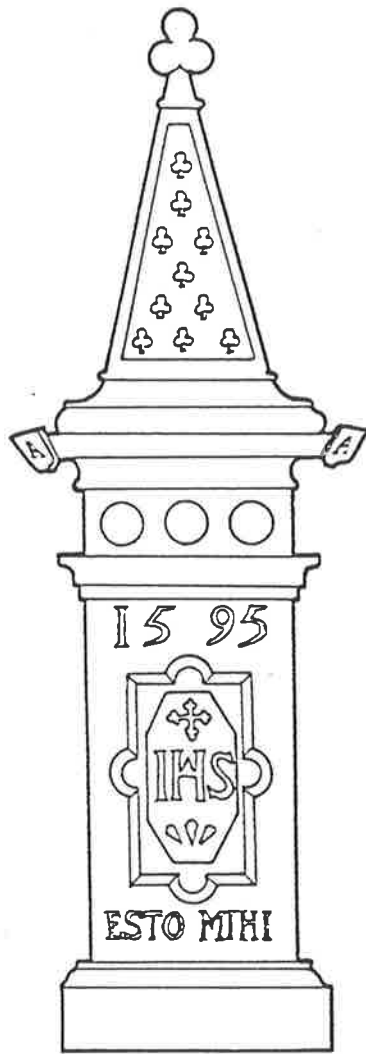
WILLIAM BYRD
AND THE
HEAVENLIE BANQUETT IN CAPTIVITIE

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Arts, Elder Conservatorium of Music,
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Awarded 1993



WILLIAM BYRD

&

*the Heavens Banquett in
Captivitie.*

M. Ruth McGee.

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The author consents to having the thesis made available for photocopying or loan.
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ABSTRACT

Little is known about the composer William Byrd, but one fact is definite; he was a fervent Catholic at a time in English history when it was illegal to practise outwardly the rites and disciplines of the Catholic faith. Moreover, in spite of his religious beliefs he served two Protestant monarchs - an apparently incongruous situation. Life in late sixteenth-century England was often perplexing and for an individual involved on both sides of the religious fence, complex issues and influences had to be faced. To date, Catholic historians have paid little attention to Byrd and his music, and musicologists tend to avoid or gloss over the religious complexities when dealing with the subject. This thesis therefore seeks to establish a theory of how Byrd lived a successful and productive life at a time of religious intolerance, and also show that he was not alone in his predicament, or his particular solution.

Because music does not exist in isolation but is an integral part of society with its many and various influences, an interdisciplinary approach to the subject has been assumed. The areas covered include the general religious/political background, and the particular situation of the English Catholics within it; the impact of the Jesuits, especially in terms of the specific nature of their mission and the way in which their unique influence found expression in the arts, namely: painting, architecture and literature. Finally, Byrd's liturgical music is analysed as an example of that influence. Since the weight of the theory lies in the effect of the Counter Reformation as transmitted to England by the Jesuits, particular emphasis is placed on the theology involved and its practical application in a country isolated from Rome.

**For my children and
their children**

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PREFACE

In writing about the life and music of William Byrd, I have adopted an interdisciplinary approach. We live in an age of fragmentation where the arts and sciences have been compartmentalised, creating artificial barriers. No aspect of human life exists in isolation, but is part of an intricate network of ideas, influences and circumstances. Interdependence is a basic law of the cosmos. Consequently William Byrd was a product of a specific time and place and all that was associated with it.

Late sixteenth-century England was often a perplexing time for anyone to live in, and for an individual involved on both sides of the religious fence as Byrd was, complex issues and influences can hardly have been avoided. The problem of these complexities has never been fully examined. To date, Catholic historians have paid little attention to Byrd, while music historians have either failed to grasp the significance of his situation or have been uneasy about his Catholicism.

In this context twentieth-century values and attitudes can go far to obscure the perspective of the past. It should be remembered that William Byrd and his associates lived, believed, hoped, feared and died in their own world four centuries ago.

The title is a combination of two sixteenth-century topical ideas which succinctly describe it. Firstly, the Mass or Communion was often referred to as the Heavenly Banquet (see for example p. 245), and, secondly, Catholics at this time frequently likened their position to a form of captivity. The idea was expressed by many writers; one such example has been used as a prelude to the introduction on page xi.

*Captivity is our principal freedom;
and the prisons are ports where
God harboureth us here, and from
whence he conveyeth us unto the
shore of eternal felicity*

*Robert Southwell
"Epistle of Comfort"*

INTRODUCTION

"In the name of the most glorious and undevided Trinitye Father sonne holy Goste three distinct persons and one eternal God Amen. I William Byrd of Stondon Place in the parish of Stondon in the countye of Essex gentleman doe now in the 80th yeare of myne age but through y^e goodnes of God beeing of good health and perfect memory make & ordayne this for my last will & Testament: First: I give & beequeth my soule to God Almyhtye my Creattor & redemer and preserver: humblye cravinge his grace and mercye for y^e forgivenes of all my Synnes and offences: past present and to come. And y^t I may live and dye a true and perfect member of his holy Catholycke Church wthout w^{ch} I beeleve there is noe Salvation for mee ..." (sic).¹

To commend one's soul to God at the beginning of a will in seventeenth-century England was the accepted practice. The declaration of adherence to the holy Catholycke Church² was exceptional, although in musical history it is accepted along with the apparent contradiction that Byrd was simultaneously a member of the Protestant Chapel Royal. How can such incongruities be reconciled? This predicament has apparently proved disturbing and many musicologists have tried to explain it away by suggesting that either Byrd was unconcerned, or he assumed a policy of compromise.

E.H. Fellowes considered that too much can be made of the fact that Byrd was evidently content to serve two masters.³ In his book *Music in the Reformation in England*, Peter le Huray argues that there is nothing to show that Byrd ever had to choose between one religion or another.⁴ Gustave Reese asserts that there was no problem since Byrd was not seriously molested;⁵ while G.A. Philips states that in any case he was protected from persecution by Royal patronage.⁶ This theory has also been proposed by Frank Howes,⁷ and Michael Kennedy;⁸ a theory not without

its foundation of truth but hardly sufficient to explain the complexities of the situation. In all fairness one can trace a chronological development which culminates in the sensitive appraisals of Byrd's situation presented by Joseph Kerman⁹ and Philip Brett¹⁰. However, in spite of this, the prevailing attitude today appears to favour the opinion that Byrd was tolerant towards both the Catholic and Protestant religions.¹¹ This opinion extended by Geoffrey Sharp asserts that had Byrd "been alive today, he would doubtless have welcomed contemporary ecumenism."¹²

While this concept of Byrd as a Christian transcending the boundaries of sectarianism is admirable, and is perhaps what we would most like to find, it is in fact far from reality. Religious toleration is a largely contemporary ideal, a concept which had little to do with life in the sixteenth-century.¹³ It was the period in English history which engendered the origins of the Civil War. The Reformation was a time in which detailed analysis of the Bible sought to ascertain the truth of Christianity. This attitude which assumed that there was only one truth, similarly assumed that reason would lead all men to the common goal. Contrary to expectations, many interpretations of the truth resulted, frequently differing only in 'minor' points of theology. Once the tenets of any church were established, or substantiated they were defended to the bitter end. Admittedly it was theologians who debated these issues and how much they affected the common 'man' is difficult to ascertain. However seen in that perspective, Byrd would have found it difficult to accept the disciplines of two different churches simultaneously as he strengthened his ties with Catholicism.

So the debate has come full circle. How did Byrd come to terms with serving two masters, in the latter part of his life, since in sixteenth-century terms it probably would have presented a dilemma? Did he in fact ever find a solution? This thesis developed as a result of considering these questions and has taken its

form from the range of topics which emerged, often unexpectedly, from the research. The objectives of this thesis come to be largely defined into three categories: to examine the prevailing socio-political circumstances in which Byrd lived; to ascertain the type of people with whom he associated, and the way in which they resolved the problem of maintaining their unlawful religious practices; to identify the influences on Byrd through his involvement with other Catholics, and the ways in which they affected his life and work.

The writer was led to compare Byrd's creative work with that in other fields such as painting, architecture and literature, and which may have been inspired by Jesuits, and conclude that his art had much in common with theirs. It is also suggested that through early retirement from the life of the court, Byrd apparently chose to bring himself into closer association with the lives and suffering of his fellow Catholics.

Agreement has not yet been reached on a definition of the character of English Catholicism practised at that time. Several historians favour the view that it was traditional and conservative, a continuity from the past. In contrast, others pose the theory that it was revitalized, and modified by Counter Reformation influences. The former premise has been proposed by Christopher Haigh¹⁴ and A.D. Wright,¹⁵ largely in response to the work of J. Bossy.¹⁶

This thesis does not seek to identify the factions within Catholicism, or in English political life. Furthermore, it does not claim that the individuals featured here were necessarily representative of either of the views stated above. It proposes that they demonstrated a distinct form of spiritual inspiration largely derived from their connections with Rome, and which contributed to English cultural history.

A great deal of the discussion in this thesis understandably revolves around the Roman Catholic Church and its practices in the sixteenth-century and thus has been described it in the past tense. Because of the secrecy surrounding the lives of Catholics in that period, the hypothesis advanced is often based on circumstantial evidence. It is a premise formed as a logical conclusion from the available facts. Based on the given facts this is just one interpretation of William Byrd's predicament.

NOTES

- ¹Cited in Edmund H. Fellowes, *William Byrd* (London, 1963, 2nd. edition) p.246
- ²It was uncommon to use the word Catholic in wills at this time. Even if Byrd used the word in its universal sense, he was allying himself with the broad concept of Christendom which implied the Roman Catholic Church. Was it coincidence that this particular wording was almost identical to Garnet's speech on the gallows just prior to his execution? See note 28 Chapter 5 ii
- ³E.H. Fellowes, *op.cit.*
- ⁴Peter le Huray, *Music in the Reformation in England 1549-1660* (London, 1967) p.229
- ⁵Gustave Reese, *Music in the Renaissance* (London, 1954 Rev. ed.) p. 94
- ⁶G.A.Philips, "Crown Musical Patronage from Elizabeth I to Charles I" *Music and Letters* Vol.58 (1977) p.29
- ⁷Frank Howes, *William Byrd* (London, 1928) p.215
- ⁸Michael Kennedy, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music* (London, 1980 3rd. ed.). p.106
- ⁹Joseph Kerman, see bibliography for full list of publications
- ¹⁰Philip Brett, see bibliography for full list of publications
- ¹¹A recent broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation about William Byrd continued to propagate this view.
- ¹²Geoffrey Sharp, "Master of Music and Compromise" *Church Music* Vol.2 Part 23 (1968) p.5.
- ¹³"When the acts of parliament to eliminate Catholic practices were introduced in response to the Bull Regnans in Excelsis only one voice was raised against them in the House of Commons. Edward Aglionby member for Warwick argued that even the greatest monarch in the world could not enforce laws regarding a man's conscience. This, the only plea for toleration received no support." Sir Simons D'Ewes, *Journal of all the Parliaments of Elizabeth (1682)* (1682) p.177 Cited in Philip Caraman, *Henry Garnet 1555-1606 and the Gunpowder Plot* (London, 1964) p.9
- ¹⁴Christopher Haigh, "The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation" *Past and Present* No. 93 (Nov. 1981) p.37, and "From Monopoly to Minority: Catholicism in Early Modern England" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 5th.Series* Vol. 31 (1981) p.129
- ¹⁵A.D. Wright, "Catholic History, North and South" *Northern History* Vol. 14 (1978) p.126

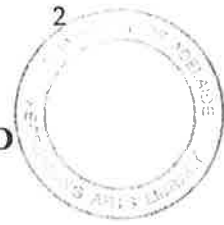
- ¹⁶J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570-1850* (London, 1975), and "The Character of Elizabethan Catholicism" in T. Ashton (ed.) *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660* (London, 1965) p.223

CHAPTER 1

*The time hath been we had one faith,
And strode aright one ancient path,
The time is now that each man may
See new religions coined each day.*

*Sweet Jesu, with thy mother mild,
Sweet Virgin mother with thy child,
Angels and Saints of each degree,
Redress our country's misery.*

*'A Catholic Lament'
Verses among the Blundell papers*



CHAPTER 1.i THE GENERAL RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

When Henry VIII became head of the English church in 1535 he not only eliminated papal influence, he embarked upon a new course of unifying the church and the State. The State greatly influenced the thinking of the church, and love of God and love of sovereign became merged for many subjects. But most important, the separation from Rome introduced the notion of alternative approaches to God. While never having been universal, at least the concept of Christendom had given a semblance of cosmic unity. For ordinary people the break with the traditional order was disconcerting since it heralded not only the disintegration of religious truths, but also all that was familiar. To confuse the matter further, in the space of eleven years the three successive following monarchs each had distinct and different views on the subject.¹ Thus in the intervening time between the death of Henry VIII and the accession of Elizabeth I, the polarised religious policies of Edward VI and Mary I caused greater difficulties.

When stability was finally reached in the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559, the laws that were introduced solved the problem of uncertainty, but created restriction on a nation which by now manifested multifarious attitudes to religion. The Act of Supremacy reinstated the integrated roles of head of the church and State; while the Act of Uniformity which sought compromise between the contending factions, forbade worship other than from the prescribed Book of Common Prayer, and made attendance at church compulsory.² Furthermore a fine of twelve pence was imposed on those who failed to comply. These measures may have been designed to steer the middle path between Rome and Geneva, but they imposed unparalleled restraints. "Never at any time had the public been so regimented in their dealings with God."³ Not unexpectedly these restrictions often exacerbated a sensitive situation.

The response of the general population whose belief was dictated and who suffered uncertainty as to the duration of the latest religious bias, was both resentment and bewilderment. Under these circumstances, how did the situation affect people, for instance those who considered the Church of England heretical or those like Byrd who probably believed that their means of salvation was through the "holy Catholycke Church"? It is important to remember that for most people at this time a spiritual life was of far more consequence than a worldly one. For example, while being tortured to reveal information about other Catholics, the Jesuit John Gerard declared, "Do you think I am going to throw away my soul to save my life?"⁴

Since the circumstances were confusing, and there was no local authority representing Rome in England, the initial reaction of Catholics was uncertain and varied. Some people conformed outwardly merely as an empty gesture, while receiving spiritual reassurance through private Masses conducted illicitly at home.⁵ Others flatly refused to attend their parish church, and these offenders were labelled 'recusants'. Prosecution however, especially in the early days of Elizabeth's reign, was inconsistent and erratic.⁶

A decade or so later the situation began to change, both from within England and outside it. The first serious event to adversely affect Catholics was in fact designed to assist them. In 1570 the Papal Bull of Excommunication was issued which also urged the deposing of Elizabeth in favour of a Catholic monarch. Far from advancing their cause, it initiated the escalation of suspicion and persecution, as the English authorities took measures to reduce the threat. In the wake of the Bull a number of laws were introduced to safeguard the Queen and her country. It became a treasonable offence to call Elizabeth a heretic, and Papal Bulls and Catholic devotional material were made illegal. In addition, those who would not conform to the new religion were forbidden to leave the country, and furthermore it

was prohibited to train for the priesthood overseas.⁷ It was at this juncture that the notion of heresy became known as treason.

The Bull of Excommunication and its repercussions were a watershed, for in effect it forced individuals to choose to be Protestant or Catholic rather than just Christian, a dilemma which was based on the decision to be either a traitor to the State or disobedient to the Roman Church.⁸ Meanwhile, the suspicion justly aroused in the government became exaggerated and distorted, generating a largely unreasonable bigoted attitude to Catholics and the Roman religion. As early as 1564 the plague was blamed on "the superstitious religion of Rome" in a sermon given by the Archdeacon of Essex at Paul's Cross,⁹ but with the real danger of invasion, the campaign of suppression and defamation was accelerated.

It was the arrival of the first Jesuits in 1580 that instigated the next series of anti-Catholic laws. Not only did this event demonstrate a campaign of re-conversion to the traditional faith by newly-trained priests (both seminary and Jesuits), but a strengthening of unwelcome Catholic connections between the priests and Rome and Spain. As a result, measures were taken in an attempt to distinguish between political and religious motivations. Thus it became a treasonable offence for a priest to convert someone to Catholicism if it was done with the intention of absolving them from their allegiance to the Queen. As it stood it was a reasonable law under the circumstances, but in reality it tended to become tainted by prejudice. Linked to this legislation was that which made it illegal to harbour a priest. At the same time the fine for not attending church was increased to twenty pounds a month, and recusancy cases were transferred from the Ecclesiastic, to the Civil Courts.¹⁰ The penalty for saying Mass was two hundred marks, (£133 6s 8d), and one year's imprisonment; and for hearing it, half the fine and the same amount of time in prison. If for any reason a convicted recusant was unable to pay the fines, the "queen may seize and enjoy" all movable property and two thirds of his land.¹¹

In 1585 a further set of laws were introduced to repress those likely to encourage seditious acts or open hostility against Protestant England. It became a treasonable offence for any priest trained abroad to be in the country, and the death penalty also applied to those people sheltering or assisting them. Catholic parents were forbidden to send their children to the continent to be educated, and all students who were overseas for that purpose were ordered to return home and obey the Act of Supremacy.¹² The last law to be passed in order to eradicate Catholicism in Elizabeth's reign, was the Five Mile Act of 1593. Due to suspicion that people "under false pretext of religion and conscience" were secretly wandering the countryside on seditious business, all convicted recusants were confined to a five mile radius of their homes. They "shall not, at any time, (forty days after the session of parliament which passed the Act), pass or remove above 5 miles from thence."¹³ Permits were issued to those affected by the law who needed to travel beyond the limits for business or other pressing needs. The penalty for breaking the law was loss of all property.

Thus by the end of the sixteenth-century anti-Catholic laws involved a wide variety of possible persecution: being spied on, raids on homes, registration of homes, fines, restriction of movement, forfeiture of property or land, arrest, torture and death. Originally legislation was introduced to contend with both Protestant non-conformists and Catholics, but was gradually designed particularly to eliminate the latter. The protective measures taken to cope with real Catholic threats began to deteriorate, and tended to be used to inflame intolerance and hatred against all papists. Inconsistency in applying the anti-Catholic laws was widespread, and implementation of penalties often depended on the disposition or personal attitude of the particular individual enforcing them.¹⁴ By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the government attempted to stigmatize Catholics by associating them with public scandals. Not only was the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 used extensively to discredit them, but it was preached in sermons that both the

Pope and the King of Spain had been in collusion with the Earl of Essex at the time of his uprising.¹⁵

Bearing that in mind, it is interesting to observe the anti-papist sentiment expressed by one individual. John Case (or whoever the author was)¹⁶ gave vent to extreme feelings on the matter in an otherwise rational defence of music: "For I professe that rotten rhymes of popery and superstitious invocation of praying to saints doth not give greater cause of vomit to any man than myself; and al either unwritten or unwarantable verities, I so far abhor, as that I judge them fitter for Grocers shops, and fishmongers stals, than for God's congregation."¹⁷

This manifestation of bigotry is hard to credit in view of the fact that John Case was considered to have popish tendencies.¹⁸ The fact that it was incorporated may be proof that the book was not written by him. On the other hand it has been suggested that if Case was a Catholic, he deliberately included such statements as a cover.¹⁹ The latter opinion seems somewhat improbable since it was out of character for a sincere member of the Roman Church to publicly declare against it. On the contrary, it was considered necessary to make a public stand in order to separate from the new religion.

Whatever the reason for its inclusion, it illustrates the fanatical opinions that prevailed. It also shows that it was of great importance on which side of the religious fence a person was, and the lengths people took in order to justify their choice. In this period of English history, religion and politics were often inextricably intertwined, and it was not always easy for the authorities to discriminate between a Catholic who peaceably followed his conscience, and one who had ambitious schemes for Catholicism in England. However, the real predicament was fanned by the flames of an increasingly intolerant attitude which tended to single out and isolate Catholics from the rest of society. An isolated

minority living a life of insecurity and tribulation was bound to seek strength and reassurance within its own community. And this is what it did, creating a network of Catholic families connected by friendship, patronage, marriage and location.

NOTES

- ¹Henry VIII, from Catholic to Protestant to Protestant (although only largely in name); Edward VI, Reformed Protestant; Mary I, Catholic; Elizabeth I, Protestant
- ²A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (Glasgow, 1983) p.408
- ³Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (London, 1954) p.117
- ⁴John Gerard, *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan* translated by Philip Caraman (London, 1951) p.107
- ⁵J. Bossy, "The Character of Elizabethan Catholicism" in T.Aston (ed.) *Crisis in Europe* (London, 1965)
- ⁶A.G. Dickens, *op cit.* p.423
- ⁷Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England: From the Elizabethan Settlement to the Second Vatican Council* (Oxford, 1985) p. 12. Between 1570 and 1603 nearly two hundred priests and members of the laity were put to death for their faith.
- ⁸A.L. Rowse, *The England of Elizabeth I* (London, 1961) p.495
- ⁹"He gave us warning to beware thereof, calling it a false religion, worse than even the Turks or the devil's religion. Moreover he said it stood upon four pillars which were rotten posts, that is to say, Images, Purgatory, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and Transubstantiation, against which he did inveigh, and said that if we did not beware of false religion, although God has clean taken away the plague, he would send worse upon us..."John Stow, *Memoranda* cited in P. Caraman, *The Other Face, Catholic Life Under Elizabeth I* (London, 1960) p.31
- ¹⁰E. Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England*, *op.cit.* p.12. Many cases of recusancy still continued to be heard at Ecclesiastic courts in addition to the Civil courts.
- ¹¹P. Hughes, *The Reformation in England*, *op.cit.* p.363
- ¹²E. Norman, *op.cit.*
- ¹³P. Hughes, *op.cit.* p.367
- ¹⁴J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community* (London, 1975)
- ¹⁵P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet 1565-1606, and the Gunpowder Plot* (London, 1964) p.282
- ¹⁶The authorship of *The Praise of Musicke* has long been disputed. See for example, Howard B.Barnett, "John Case - An Elizabethan Scholar" *Music and Letters* Vol.50 (1969) p.252; J.W. Binns, "John Case and 'The Praise of Musicke'" *Music and Letters* Vol.55 (1974) p.444; Ellen E. Knight, "The Praise of Musicke"; John Case, "Thomas Watson and William Byrd" *Current Musicology* Vol.30 (1980) p.87

¹⁷John Case, *The Praise of Musicke* (London, 1586) p.136

¹⁸E.E. Knight, *op cit.* p.44ff

¹⁹*Ibid.* p.45

CHAPTER 1.ii CATHOLIC NETWORKS¹

The discussion of Catholic networks in relation to William Byrd serves to show the social background against which his artistic projects were placed. Since the networks were intricate and far-reaching, it may seem to deviate from the main thrust of the thesis to pursue the lives and interests of remotely connected individuals. On the contrary, as part of a network of Catholics, they illustrate the importance of the connection, and its function for people who were involved; people, like Byrd, who demonstrated their desire to utilize their creative talents for that community. Because of their role in a network of Catholics in which William Byrd was deeply involved, they are relevant to this study and will therefore be observed in some detail.

It is difficult to evaluate the extent of loyalty to the traditional faith in the latter part of the sixteenth century. One method of assessment is through the legal documents, but since enforcement of the law was erratic and inconsistent, only a rough estimation can be made. Not all Catholics were identified as recusants since many avoided presentation because of the negligence of church wardens, or because they had the 'right' connections. Furthermore, children under the communicating age of sixteen (until 1606 when it became nine), were exempt.² Another possibility of assessing the extent of Catholicism is through records of the privileged and titled men of rank who often steered a precarious path between prominence and disgrace. This, however, does not produce a balanced account of the general Catholic population. Nevertheless since the anti-Catholic penalties were largely designed to squeeze the lesser person out of existence,³ the upper echelons of society were more likely to remain constant in their faith. This is not to imply that they did not suffer. They often did, but they were of course more able to contend with the burden of heavy fines. Because of their advantages, this minority greatly contributed to the survival of English Catholicism; a minority which caused the

government discomfort but could not be ignored due to the intellectual and social status of its members. This is illustrated by the high percentage of gentry entered in the recusant rolls, and the fact that Catholics tended to form communities around the homes of many of these gentlemen.⁴

Due to their status in English society some of these people maintained positions of respect and even authority, while others withdrew from public life in order to work out their own personal salvation and survival, often with those of like mind. To attempt a survey of this minority group presents problems since the connections were complex and far-reaching. The intertwining of the lives of these people formed an intricate web, and to pick up one thread often leads in many directions. Furthermore, with a mesh of connections where does one begin the process?

A logical point of entry into the labyrinth is with that renowned Catholic Edward Somerset, fourth Earl of Worcester who, as Queen Elizabeth admitted, was able to reconcile the impossible, "a stiff papist to a good subject".⁵ All three of Somerset's daughters made 'good' Catholic marriages. Elizabeth the eldest married Sir Henry Guildford, Blanche married Thomas, Lord Arundel, and Somerset's youngest daughter married William Petre, Lord Writtle. In spite of his illegal allegiance, the Earl of Worcester held high office under both Elizabeth and James. In 1604 he was selected as a member of the commission for the expulsion of Jesuits, and was also one of the examiners of suspects in the Gunpowder Plot. The situation seems ambivalent, but it may have been in the government's interest to maintain a Catholic in a position of authority for such occasions.

Anthony Browne, first Viscount of Montague, was in a similar position, although he lost his seat in the Privy Council for two years after having voiced opposition to the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity. It is more than probable that

the Somerset and Browne families were acquainted as they shared the same religion and mixed in court circles, in addition to their both being listed as guests of Sir John Petre.⁶ After the death of the Viscount, his wife, the Lady Magdalen Montague, devoted herself entirely to the service of the Catholic Church. She maintained chapels in her London house and two country seats in Sussex and Kent, employing three priests for the purpose.⁷ Lady Montague was presented as a recusant and had her Sussex home searched twice, but in spite of this, continued sharing her spiritual resources and encouraging others in the faith.⁸

Many Catholics were not as fortunate as the Earl of Worcester and the Viscount and Lady Montague. Punishment was justifiable if they were involved in more dangerous acts of defiance, but many suffered as a result of being merely implicated. Lord John Lumley was confined to his home and several prisons. The most notable period of internment was in the Marshalsea for his alleged involvement in the Ridolfi plot. The government's response was hardly surprising since the plot entailed Mary Stuart's rescue and the assassination of Elizabeth, backed by foreign money and arms. However, apart from brief periods of detention, Lumley remained largely in favour at Court, and even enjoyed the prestigious honour of entertaining the Queen at Lewes in 1591.⁹ None of these events, either positive or negative, distracted him from a resolute adherence to the old faith, and he strengthened his bond with the Catholic community by marrying Jane FitzAlan, daughter of the twelfth Earl of Arundel.

Henry FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, was probably one of the most powerful Catholic peers of his time.¹⁰ After having served Henry VIII and Edward VI as Lord Chamberlain, and Mary Tudor and Elizabeth as Lord High Steward, he became disillusioned with the latest bureaucracy and retired from public life. It is known that a seminary priest served in his household,¹¹ but the fact that he had also been implicated along with his sons-in-law in the Ridolfi plot and put under

house arrest may well have contributed to his decision to retire.¹² The complexity of the connections among Catholics begins to be revealed when it is noted that Arundel's only other daughter was married to the Duke of Norfolk. She however, died shortly after the marriage, but not before she had produced a Catholic heir.

Although Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk¹³ (cousin of the Queen and England's only Duke), was ambiguous in his religious beliefs, his children became committed Catholics. His eldest son, Philip, who was the issue of the union with Mary FitzAlan, endured a great deal of tribulation on account of his faith. Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, strengthened his bond with the network by marrying Anne Dacre from a prominent Catholic family, and spent eleven years imprisonment in the Tower where he died. The Queen was particularly harsh in her treatment of him, denying his request to see his wife and child when he was dying unless "he would but once go to their Church."¹⁴ Philip Howard would not recant, and his wife remained inflexible in her faith supported greatly by the Jesuit, Robert Southwell, whom she employed.¹⁵

On the whole the Howard family led precarious lives due to Norfolk's disgrace, and their own inclination to popery. The Duke's sons from his second marriage, William, and Thomas, Earl of Suffolk, both reinforced a connection with the English Catholic community by marrying Mary and Elizabeth Dacre, sisters of Anne, wife of Philip Howard. The Duke's youngest brother (and uncle to Philip, William and Thomas), Henry Howard Earl of Northampton, was also distrusted by Queen Elizabeth although she apparently accepted his reasons for attending Catholic worship.¹⁶ However he was imprisoned twice and generally led an unfulfilled life because of his religion until the accession of James I. His situation improved after this, and in a short period of time he was elevated to the positions of Privy Councillor, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Earl of Northampton and a Knight of the Garter.¹⁷

The most prominent members of society, several of whom Byrd associated with, illustrate the intricate web of people drawn together through ties of religion and blood, as well as the inconsistent attitude of the government. While often less well documented in comparison, those of a lesser status demonstrated a similar involvement with the Catholic network. Sir John Petre (later first Lord of Writtle) is an interesting and relevant case. In spite of a tradition which suggests he was reconciled to Catholicism by the Jesuit Robert Persons,¹⁸ it is more likely that he gave some semblance of accepting the Anglican Church.¹⁹ Apart from that, he was connected by blood, marriage or friendship to a large number of Catholics with whom he fraternised, and as a result was excluded from holding public office in central government. This restriction however did not preclude him from the position of local magistrate sitting at the Quarter Sessions and Assizes; ironically the courts at which recusants were presented.²⁰

John Petre's youngest sister, Katherine, married John Talbot, a lesser member of the distinguished family, but whose son eventually succeeded to the Shrewsbury Earldom.²¹ While not declared Catholics, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Gilbert Talbot and his wife were reputed to be "great favourers of recusants".²² Sir John's own marriage created similar Catholic connections, for in 1570 he married Mary Waldegrave. Not only was Mary herself uncompromising in her religion, being presented as a recusant, but her father was likewise. Sir Edward Waldegrave died in the Tower nine years earlier, where he had been confined for allowing Mass to be celebrated in his house.²³ Not unexpectedly the children of the union between John and Mary were brought up as Catholics.²⁴ Their eldest, William Petre, strengthened the family connections with the Catholic network when he married Katherine Somerset, daughter of the fourth Earl of Worcester that "stiff papist and good subject".²⁵

It would seem that the Earl and Lady Worcester were on particularly close terms with the Petre family not only through the union of marriage, but because they were guests at Ingatestone, one of the Petre's country seats.²⁶ Furthermore Worcester was named as overseer of John Petre's will, and was to receive £100 in gold, while the Countess was bequeathed "my jewel with thirteen diamonds in it that I did use to wear in my hat."²⁷ Another probable guest of the Petres according to their account books was Sir William Cornwallis, a member of a well-known papist family, and whose father was removed from public office because of his religion.²⁸ Slightly more tenuous evidence suggests that there was also a connection between John Petre and Edward Paston of Norfolk.²⁹ Although Paston was never prosecuted for his faith, he was no nominal papist and was therefore unacceptable at Court.³⁰ He was sufficiently committed to risk the dangers incurred by maintaining a chapel as a Mass centre for the local Catholics. Moreover, his children were obviously guided by Catholic principles. Three of the children entered the religious life on the Continent, several of them suffered under the recusancy laws, and his eldest son, Thomas, married Mary Browne, granddaughter of the renowned Catholic Lady Magdalen Browne, Viscountess of Montague.³¹ If a relationship existed between the Petre and Paston families, founded on religion, it may well have included an affinity through music and thus extended to other Catholic families with similar interests, such as the Talbots.³² Given that Byrd was both a papist and a celebrated musician, it is highly probable that he was also included in their activities,³³ and therefore had access to an extensive network of Catholics.

It was with the Petre family that Byrd was particularly associated.³⁴ John Petre was not a professed Catholic but he allowed his involvement with them to restrict his prospects and he permitted his children to be brought up in the faith. In the prevailing circumstances this hardly seems a matter of toleration, but suggests a degree of choice. How much did Mary Petre's attitude to religion

determine relationships outside the family and the atmosphere within it? Whatever the case, it is apparent that a papist viewpoint predominated, and many of the people employed by the Petres shared the same faith. Apart from household servants who were presented from time to time, more eminent individuals in their service were also Catholics. In 1582 the priest, John Payne, was executed at Chelmsford. While not arrested on Petre property, he must have been a frequent visitor since he was the Confessor of the dowager Lady Anne, John Petre's mother, until her death the previous year.³⁵ The services of a priest was also apparently considered essential to Mary Petre, although there is no definite evidence to substantiate it. However, speculation based on the facts suggests that the Petres maintained a priest at Ingatestone Hall because of its isolated location.³⁶

Another well-known Catholic who served the Petre family was Mary Petre's physician, Dr Atslove. He was apparently so resolute in his beliefs that on one occasion he was racked "almost to death" in the Tower.³⁷ In 1590 a certain John Bolt (or Bold) became a servant to the Petres in the capacity of organist and page.³⁸ Bolt had recently left the Chapel Royal because of his religion, but apparently against the Queen's wishes. Four years later he was arrested in a raid on a London house owned by an employee of another Essex Catholic family, the Wisemans.³⁹ Not only were there signs of Catholicism such as books, pictures and crosses, but it had also been used by the Jesuit, Henry Garnet.⁴⁰

After his release,⁴¹ Bolt left for the Continent where he was ordained a priest in 1605.⁴² Bolt was not the only recusant musician employed by the Petres. Between 1608 and 1615 Richard Micoe was a resident member of the household, but their most celebrated servant in this capacity was the composer William Byrd. Byrd's relationship with the Petre family served as a catalyst by creating

access to many other people in the network and will be dealt with in depth in a later Chapter.

NOTES

- ¹This section is indebted to the *National Dictionary of Biography* and when not stated otherwise, the material has been derived from it.
- ²J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community*, *op. cit.* p.187
- ³A.L. Rowse, *op. cit.* 504
- ⁴J. Bossy, *op. cit.* p.175
- ⁵Cited in Neville Williams, *All the Queen's Men* (London, 1974) p.243
- ⁶A.C.Edwards, *John Petre* (London, 1975) p.72
- ⁷One of the priests in the Lady Montague's employ was a great grandchild of Sir Thomas More, an association which was considered particularly beneficial to English Catholics. See Chapter 3, section 1
- ⁸A.C. Southern, (ed) *An Elizabeth Recusant House Comprising the Life of the Lady Magdalen Viscountess Montague 1538-1608* (London, 1954) p.39
- ⁹Edmund H. Fellowes, *William Byrd* (London, 1963 2nd ed.) p.71
- ¹⁰Neville Williams, *op.cit.* p.54
- ¹¹D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1981) p.157
- ¹²Neville Williams, *op.cit.* p.53
- ¹³The Duke of Norfolk was executed in 1572 for conspiring to marry Mary Queen of Scots, and for his involvement in the Ridolfi plot. N.Williams, *op.cit.* p.134
- ¹⁴Cited in Philip Caraman, *The Other Face, Catholic Life Under Elizabeth I* (London, 1960) p.221
- ¹⁵Nancy Pollard Brown, *Two Letters and Short Rules of a Good Life* (Charlottesville, 1973) p.xii. The Countess of Arundel was obviously not trusted since she lived in Arundel House (her London home) on sufferance, which she shared with her brothers-in-law, William and Thomas Howard, and representatives of the government. P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet and the Gunpowder Plot*, *op.cit.* p.43.
- ¹⁶Henry Howard admitted attending Roman Catholic worship because of personal scruples over sacramental details. N.Williams, *op.cit.* p.200.
- ¹⁷E.H. Fellowes, *op.cit.* p.81
- ¹⁸There are two ways of spelling Persons' name, the alternative being Parsons. For the purpose of this thesis the former will be used.

- ¹⁹A.C. Edwards, *John Petre Essays on the Life and Background of John, 1st Lord Petre, 1549-1613* (London, 1975) p.21
- ²⁰*Ibid.* Sir John's father may not have been a Catholic but it is probable that he was brought up as one since his mother, Lady Anne, stated in her will that she lived and would die "a true member and in the unity of the Catholic Church." Cited in F.G. Emmison, *Tudor Secretary, Sir William Petre at Court and at Home* (London, 1961) p.292.
- ²¹*Ibid.* p.13
- ²²N. Williams, *op.cit.* p 243. The Earl was temporarily banned from Court due to the fact that his followers had intimidated the local officials so that they "did find means to keep notable recusants from appearing at sessions and from being indicted at the assizes". Cited in J.S. Cockburn, *A History of English Assizes 1558-1714* (Cambridge, 1972) p.216
- ²³A.C. Edwards, *op.cit.* p.17
- ²⁴*Ibid.* p. 26
- ²⁵*Ibid.* p.27
- ²⁶*Ibid.* p.72
- ²⁷*Ibid.* p.111
- ²⁸D.C. Price, *op.cit.* p.93
- ²⁹See Chapter 4, Section i.
- ³⁰ D.C. Price, *op.cit.* p.96
- ³¹Philip Brett, "Edward Paston (1550-1630): A Norfolk Gentleman and his Musical Collection" *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliography Society* Vol.4 (1964) p.53.
- ³²D.C. Price, *op.cit.* p.98
- ³³P. Brett, *op.cit.* p.58
- ³⁴A great deal of evidence supports this fact, see for example A.C. Edwards, *op. cit.* and D.C.Price *op. cit.*
- ³⁵A.C. Edwards, *op.cit.* p.22
- ³⁶*Ibid.* p.74
- ³⁷*Ibid.* p.25
- ³⁸*Ibid.* p.31 ff.
- ³⁹*State Papers Domestic*, Elizabeth 248. Nos.37-40

⁴⁰P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.187

⁴¹Bolt was released because of the intercession of Lady Penelope Rich. There appear to be two ways of spelling the name of Lady Rich, the other being: Riche. For the purpose of this thesis the former will be used.

⁴²P. Caraman, *John Gerard, the Autobiography of an Elizabethan* (London, 1951) Notes p.226

CHAPTER 1.iii CATHOLIC RESPONSE

A partially clandestine Catholic network among the noble families of England thus developed in response to the prevailing circumstances. As a minority group, it sought not only moral and spiritual support, but ironically, also an identity. What is more, the members appeared to value the sense of separation which divided them from the rest of society, a perception which perhaps contributed to the character of the community. The relationship between people, and the way in which the network functioned was likewise instrumental in the formation of English Catholicism as a phenomenon in the sixteenth-century. However, individuals who followed the same doctrines did not necessarily react in a uniform way. Since religion before the Reformation was not homogeneous there is no reason to expect it to be afterwards, in spite of the regulations imposed to achieve it. Nevertheless, apart from a few extreme cases of people who allowed their political views to dominate, it appears that the majority of Catholics were a determined collection of people who attempted to follow their own consciences with considerable sincerity, a stance which of course brought them up against the law.¹

A selection of reasons for not going to church as expressed by people of the lower classes can be found in the York Civic Records. Since the government put this section of society under particular pressure if they did not conform, there is no lack of official examples of their personal reaction to the situation. However, all responses were based on the same principle which was reiterated at all levels of society; a need for spiritual salvation in the manner each of them considered to be 'the only' way as can be seen in the following extracts from the York Civic Records:

"20th November 1576 Walmegate Ward

All Hallows on the Pavement

Elizabeth Wilkinson, wife of William Wilkinson, milner, sayeth she cometh not to church, because their is neither priest, altar nor sacrifice.

Margaret Taylor, wife of Thomas Taylor, sayeth she cometh not to the church because there is not a priest as there ought to be; and also that there is not the sacrament of the altar.

St.Dionys Parish

Agnes Wiggan, widow, sayeth she cometh not to the church, because their is neither priest nor sacrament; she is nothing worth as we think.

St.Mary's in Castlegate

Gregory Wilkinson, Feltmaker, sayeth he cometh not to church because his conscience will not serve him to do so, for he will remain in the faith that he was baptised in.

Christ's Parish

Jane West, single woman servant to George Hall draper, sayeth she cometh not to the church, for she thinketh it is not the right church, and that if she should come there it would damn her soul."²

While a certain amount of conservatism is definitely evident in the need to retain a traditional faith, it is also apparent that the decision to stay away from the Church of England was made as a result of deliberation. From higher up the social scale Helen and Mary Copely also demonstrated that they gave the matter serious thought, arriving at the only solution that would allow them to be honest with themselves. When asked by the Justice of the Peace what their religion was and whether they went to church, the eldest replied, "that they were well known in Southwark to be recusants ..." When she added that they would not go to church, the Magistrate inquired why, her response was that, "she would not be a dissembler, to be in her mind of one religion and make a show of another."³

Although some of the rank and file may not have been aware of the Bull of Excommunication, it created two major problems for many English Catholics. Firstly, since the decree absolved an allegiance to the Queen it forced those who were acquainted with it to make a choice between State and Church.⁴ There were therefore three possibilities open to papists. Firstly, they could accept the Pope as

authority, and hazard persecution from the government. Secondly, they could accept the supremacy of the sovereign putting their soul in jeopardy and attracting anathema, or, thirdly, they could attempt to combine allegiance to both establishments and risk condemnation from both. This dilemma caused considerable discomfort and frustration since the majority of English Catholics remained entirely loyal to their monarch while persisting in the traditional faith. They had no wish to choose between them. The result for some was a lifetime of insecurity, while for others the only solution was to retire to the Continent where at least one could follow one's conscience in peace. Robert Southwell explained the predicament: "If we live at home as Catholics, professing our faith and refusing to profess a contrary Religion, we can neither keep our places in the Universities or follow our studies in the Inns of Court, but we are imprisoned for Recusancy, impoverished, troubled and defamed. And yet if we leave all and seek free use of our conscience, and depart the Realm ... we are straight reckoned for unnatural subjects."⁵

The second problem instigated by the Bull was to focus the government's attention on the possibility that Catholics were traitors, and in the understanding of the prosecuting authorities the labels 'papist' and 'traitor' frequently tended to become synonymous. For the practising Catholic there was, on the whole, a decisive difference. The dilemma prompted Sir Thomas Tresham, Lord Vaux and Sir John Arundell to petition the Queen in 1584 on behalf of the Catholic gentry regarding the subject of allegiance. Contrary to the proposed bill which made it a treasonable offence to harbour a priest, the gentry considered it their right to employ them in much the same way as they would employ a lawyer.⁶ In the letter they explained their predicament, pleaded their cause and proposed what they hoped would be an acceptable division between the two loyalties:⁷

"... And we know by no possible means how to clear and keep ourselves free from it (the offence of sheltering a priest ordained on the continent since the

accession of Elizabeth I), for when the prophets and anointed priests of God, moved by zeal to save souls, do repair hither to distribute spiritual comforts according to every man's need, and coming to our gate do crave natural sustenance for their hungry and persecuted bodies, proffering us also ghostly food, and medicine for our unclean souls, what shall we now do? We do verily believe them to be priests of God's church. We do certainly know that they daily pray for your Majesty; their predecessors in that calling have ministered Baptism and Confirmation unto your Majesty by their ministry. Your Majesty is anointed Queen, and ordinarily and rightfully placed in your regal seat as all your ancestors have been If we receive them (by whom we know no evil at all), it shall be deemed treason in us. If we shut our doors and deny our temporal relief to our Catholic pastors in respect of their function, then are we already judged most damnable traitors to Almighty God and his holy members, and are most guilty of that curse threatened to light upon such as refuse to comfort and harbour the apostles and disciples of Christ, saying: *And whosoever shall not receive you nor hear your words: Truly it shall be easier for them in the land of Sodom and Gommorrha in the day of judgment.* Against which irreprovable sentence we may in no wise wrestle" (sic). In addition they made it quite clear that this attitude in no way interfered with their loyalty to the Queen: "... your Majesty shall find us such subjects as God requireth and your Majesty desireth, that is, most obedient first to God, and next, to your Highness most loving, most loyal, and most dutiful ..."8

In a later appeal on behalf of all Catholics, Tresham expressed a fierce determination to prove allegiance to Queen and country, a stance which it was hoped would demonstrate to all concerned that it was quite feasible to combine loyalty to their religion and the State:

"... When the enemy shall dare attempt any invasion against this realm, that then we may have that honour done us, as not to be bestowed in the rearwood, or in the battle, but in the vainward and before the vainwood, to

witness to the world and leave record to all posterity of our religious loyalty and true English valour in defence of her sacred person and noble realm of England."⁹

No relief was forthcoming as a result of any of the petitions. While not receiving the prescribed punishment for treason, the three gentlemen and many like them, were imprisoned for long periods particularly at times when England was under threat. The government's attitude at such times was often arbitrary. While some members of the Catholic community who constantly professed loyalty to the crown were imprisoned for the safety of the country, Lord Howard of Effingham, also a devout Catholic, was given command of the English Fleet against the Spanish Armada.

Fear of treason was understandable, but in reality court proceedings demonstrated pre-conceived anti-Catholic attitudes. The 'bloody questions' used to test the loyalty of the accused, were taken from their original context to accentuate a rebellious intent.¹⁰ Furthermore, the questions themselves presented a dilemma to devout Catholics, who had to publicly choose between the Queen and the Pope, and the questions asked were designed to elicit such a decision: Should the Bull of Excommunication be obeyed? Was the Queen a lawful authority? Was the Pope empowered to permit rebellion? Did the Pope have authority to absolve Catholics from their allegiances? Were particular sections of Sander's and Bristow's books true? And which authority would a Catholic support in the event of a Papal invasion of England?¹¹ The response left little option but evasive tactics or silence, both of which were considered evidence of disloyalty, and therefore treasonable.

Above all, most Catholics wanted to prove that they were not disloyal but only following the traditional religion which until recently was that professed by all English people. A certain James Bird (no relation to William), illustrated the

prevailing circumstances when he skilfully elicited the proof that he was being hanged for his faith and nothing else:

"I beg you, Mr Sheriff ... seeing that I am a native of this city (Winchester) that you would grant me one favour before I die." "What favour" said he. "Tell me what I am to die for." "I know not", quoth the Sheriff. "You received the death sentence in the presence of the judge. Who can know better the reason for which you were condemned?" "Nay", said the other, "I do not understand at all". "Then" said the Sheriff, "come, now, confess your crime. Promise to go to church and the Queen's pardon will be begged for you". "Right heartedly do I thank thee, ... if by going to the Church I can save my life, surely all the world will see this, that I am executed solely for faith and religion and nothing else. It was just this that I wished to elicit from you. Now I will gladly die."¹²

The crime of treason was referred to at the trial of Father Edmund Genning. He responded by delineating the differences between human law and God's, while exposing the statute introduced at the end of the sixteenth-century as being an expression of prejudice in its indiscriminate application. "I must obey God rather than men, and must not in this case acknowledge a fault where none is. If to return into England (as a) priest and to say Mass be Popish treason, I here confess I am a traitor: but I think not so."¹³ While the Catholic problem was undoubtedly complex and frightening for the government, their reaction not only caused protective measures to be implemented but it engendered intolerance, causing suffering to many innocent people. Although there is evidence demonstrating Byrd's religious views, there is little to suggest his political position, but he and his family were confronted with the dilemma of allegiances and were also identifiable targets for the anti-papist prejudice.

NOTES

- ¹Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise: The Political Thought of Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge, 1982) p. 12
- ² From the York Civic Records cited in *Yorkshire Archaeological Society* Vol.7 p.130
- ³ Adam Hamilton (ed), *Chronicle of St. Monica's* Vol.2 (O.S.B., 1906) p.114
- ⁴ J.H. Pollen, *English Catholics in the Reign of Elizabeth* (London, 1920) p.149
- ⁵ Robert Southwell, *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty* (1591) p.5-6
- ⁶J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community*, *op.cit.* p.37
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸ Sir Thomas Tresham, "Rushton papers" p.51, cited in Godfrey Anstruther Vaux of Harrowden, *a Recusant Family* (Newport, Great Britain, 1953) p.178
- ⁹*Ibid.*
- ¹⁰P. Holmes, *op.cit.* p.26, p.31. The questions were taken from Nicholas Sanders' *De visibili monarchia* (1571), and Richard Bristow's *A Brief Treatise of divers plain and sure ways* (1574).
- ¹¹*Ibid.* p.45
- ¹² Henry Garnet to Claude Aquaviva, 17th March 1593 in *Catholic Record Society* Vol.1 p.232
- ¹³ *Life and Death of M. Edmund Genning* (1615) p.84 cited in P. Caraman, *The Other Face*, *op.cit.* p.265 For similar arguments, see also Owen Chadwick, *The Pelican History of the Church: The Reformation* Vol.4. (Harmondsworth, 1978) p.289

CHAPTER 1.iv DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES¹

Since it is the view of the author that Byrd's music sought to reflect the differences between Catholic and Protestant doctrine, it is relevant to examine the differences between the Catholic dogma of the time with that of the Church of England. It is obvious that the beliefs which prompted Protestants and Catholics in England to adopt conflicting points of view were powerfully motivated as will be shown. Why should a nation with a common cultural background become so divided over religious practices and customs? Although the dispute was still evident at the end of the Elizabethan era, it was in fact initiated earlier in the century. The Reformers who attempted to rectify religious errors through analysis of the scriptures, arrived at differing conclusions to some doctrinal points. Although the major concern for Protestants and Catholics alike was the salvation of the soul, by the end of the century theological controversy still revolved around the Eucharist and its meaning.

Since the crucifixion was understood by Catholics to atone for original sin, the Mass was a 'work' essential for the absolution of daily sins, both for the living and the dead. The liturgical enactment of sacrifice linked to the concept of transubstantiation necessitated a series of related beliefs and practices which were largely rejected by English Reformers. The priest, for example, served a special role as mediator between 'God and man' in a ceremony created to express the sacrifice of the living God. All aspects of the Mass including the altar, vestments, Massing equipment, gestures, text, and the music, were instrumental in reinforcing the doctrine. Small wonder that when such symbols and agents were largely rejected by the Church of England, Catholics were affected by the loss:

"To take away the holy sacrifice of the Mass, they take away both altar and priest, because they know that these three (sacrifice, priest and altar) are dependent and consequences one of another, so they cannot be

separated. If there be an external sacrifice, there must be an external priest to offer it, an altar to offer the same upon."²

It should be stressed that although most of what was considered Catholic superfluity was discarded by the Church of England, not everything of value was thrown out. A desire to restore the original church ensured that much of its heritage of beauty, such as the buildings, music and liturgy (although not in Latin) were retained. It was the different emphases of the Mass and the Communion Service which were most evident and which best serve to demonstrate the emerging dual attitude to Christianity in sixteenth-century England. For members of the Church of England the Communion Service was interpreted not as a sacrifice but as a sign of God's favour exemplifying His promise through the Word. This different understanding instigated a different chain of reasoning. Obviously it removed the need for sacrificial agents. The altar became a table and was sometimes moved to a more central position in the church or was removed completely, and the priest's function as mediator was rendered redundant. Instead of an act of oblation, the shift of emphasis generated an expression of thanksgiving.

All the Reformers were in agreement that the Eucharist was not a sacrifice, but on the subject of transubstantiation their views were very varied. Thus, over the period when Protestant religious policies were being established in England, the spectrum of Continental opinions were available for adoption. In the Prayer Book of 1549 words were chosen to eliminate the idea that a change took place in the bread and wine at consecration: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life."³ However, when Bishop Stephen Gardiner and other conservatives claimed that the phrase reflected the Catholic and Lutheran doctrine, the sentence was changed in the 1552 Prayer Book to, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and

feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving".⁴ The latter stance demonstrated an acceptance of Zwinglian teaching.

Although the Elizabethan Settlement re-established the Church of England, Elizabeth's personal attitude to transubstantiation was ambiguous. Maybe because of this, or because her government sought a compromise between polarised beliefs in the Act of Uniformity, the final decision on the subject allowed for a variety of interpretations. The words of administration incorporated the phrases used in both the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books, thus linking their implied meanings.⁵ In spite of this it was quite apparent that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not endorsed when the Thirty-nine Articles were eventually ratified in 1571. It is set down in Article xxviii *Of the Lord's Supper* that,

"... transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy Writ: but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped."⁶

While Church of England doctrine largely denied those aspects of Catholicism which were mystical and sacramental, the Counter Reformation sought means to revitalize and reinforce them. The Council of Trent stressed the sacramental life, and among other things restored the Host to a central place in worship.⁷ This was not only designed to emphasise and elucidate transubstantiation, it was in direct opposition to the Reformed religions with their contrasting beliefs.

It is hardly surprising that disagreement of opinion developed as a result of two such different interpretations of the same event. Whether or not it was typical in the late sixteenth-century to build an argument from the central point of the Eucharist, it serves as a useful point of departure from which to compare the Church of England and Catholicism, and one which is pertinent to this thesis. Belief in the mystery of transubstantiation, automatically strengthened a connection with the doctrine of Incarnation with its affirmation of Christ's humanity. God as flesh was not only the redeemer of 'man's original sin' through the Passion, his daily sins were absolved through the sacrifice of the real presence in the Mass. As a tenet the significance of 'God-made-man' was in direct contrast to the current Protestant accentuation on the divinity of the Saviour.

Sacerdotalism which extended to include a need for other intercessors between God and man, similarly derived from the concept of transubstantiation. Conversely, as a result of their belief in justification through faith alone, not only was the role of the priest modified for the Church of England,⁸ but they no longer required the assistance of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints. Thus, individuals and events associated with these 'erroneous' beliefs were condemned in derogatory terms. The doctrine of justification similarly divided the two religions, since members of the Church of England were dependent on God's grace for salvation and could in no way affect the consequences by their own efforts. "The condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God ..." ⁹ Conversely, Catholics maintained that penance, works, satisfaction and intercession were essential in the constant striving for perfection, a struggle which lasted beyond death and purgatory, until everlasting life was achieved.

In practical terms the divergent beliefs were exemplified in the changes introduced originally into the Royal Primer of 1545, which significantly influenced the attitudes found in the Elizabethan Prayer Book. The alterations from the Catholic missal demonstrated a repudiation of the mystical and sacramental with the emphasis on penance and the need for intercession, in a more pragmatic approach to religion. They included:

"i)Prayers concerned with the Passion were written to stress the benefits gained from the contemplation of it as a practical instruction, rather than identifying with the human suffering of Christ.

ii)Psalms of thanksgiving were substituted for those concerned with penance and mercy.

iii)The emphasis of worship in the hymns of the Little Hours was transferred from the Blessed Virgin Mary to Christ.

iv)The Litany was altered to reduce veneration of the Saints."¹⁰

With such polemic attitudes on fundamental issues of faith, it is apparent that for many it became difficult to remain detached, and not easy to maintain an ecumenical approach. Once a set of beliefs had been formulated by theologians they were passionately adhered to, making it almost impossible to objectively assess the opposing view point, or cross the barriers between one combination of tenets and another. Understood in this context, it is evident why it was so important for some English Catholics to maintain their distinct and separate way of life. Furthermore, although there are no details about Byrd's beliefs apart from the fact that he was a recusant, it is likely that the Catholic doctrines outlined above were respected and cherished by him.

NOTES

- ¹This section has been largely based on two books, and when not stated otherwise the information has been derived from these sources: Francis Clark S.J., *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation* (London, 1960), and C.W. Dugmore, *The Mass and the English Reformers* (London, 1958)
- ² Gregory Martin, *A Discourse on the Manifold Corruptions of the Holy Scriptures* (1582) p.72 in P. Caraman, *The Other Face*, *op.cit.* p.89
- ³A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, *op.cit.* p. 303
- ⁴Owen Chadwick, *The Reformation*, *op.cit.* p.121
- ⁵A.G.Dickens, *The English Reformation*, *op.cit.* p.413
- ⁶Article xxviii. "Of the Lord's Supper" in the *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion* (1571) in *The Book of Common Prayer* (Cambridge, 1940) p.355
- ⁷H.O. Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter Reformation* (Cambridge, 1968) pp.38, 40
- ⁸See Article xi "Of the Justification of Man" in the *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion* in the *Common book of Prayer*, *op.cit.* p.351
- ⁹*Ibid.* Article x "Of Free-Will" p.350
- ¹⁰H. Davies, *Worship and Theology in England from Cranmer to Hooker 1534-1603* (Princeton, 1970) p.411

CHAPTER 2

*We have sung the canticles of the Lord in a strange land,
and in this desert we have sucked honey from the rock
and oil from the hard stone.*

Robert Southwell to Claude Aquaviva, 8th. March 1590

CHAPTER 2.i THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

During Byrd's long lifetime neither the 'Catholic situation', nor the practice of Catholicism remained stable for very long. There were fluctuations both in the degree of persecution, and in the Catholic attitude to the government and sovereign. The dominant ideology promoted loyalty to the Queen (or King), and political non-resistance, apart from two fairly brief periods when an active form of resistance was encouraged.¹

Just prior to the issue of the Bull of Excommunication, an event occurred which was to have both positive and negative ramifications for English Catholics. A seminary was founded at Douai in Flanders specifically for the training of English priests, which became a centre for exiled English Catholics.² Since the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, the number of Catholic priests had of course rapidly declined. The remaining few, if considered harmless, were allowed to die out.³ For the Catholic Church to resume authority as the official religion of England, there was an urgent need for new men to be trained for the work. At that time the majority of English Catholics were lacking any means of spiritual instruction, guidance or comfort. Without a priest neither the vital sacraments of penance nor the Mass were possible. However the arrival by stealth of the newly trained priests in 1574 not only raised despondent and flagging spirits, it also agitated an already antagonistic government, who responded to this further threat by imposing even harsher penalties.⁴

Matters were not improved by the subsequent arrival of the Jesuits in 1580 and two other political events which exacerbated the plight of English Catholics: the plots surrounding Mary Stuart, and the threatened invasion of the Spanish Armada. The suffering of those who, on the whole, remained loyal to their sovereign was intensified, and rather than breaking the spirit of the people as was

intended, persecution had the converse effect of instilling a stubborn persistence. This stance was both encouraged and supported by the missionary priests, especially members of the Society of Jesus who were prepared to risk everything for the sake of saving souls.

Although the part played by the seminary priests was very important, it was the ministry of the Jesuits which was particularly relevant to the Catholics with whom this thesis is concerned. Founded in the 1530's by Ignatius Loyola, the Society of Jesus was largely an embodiment of the Catholic Reformation ideals.⁵ Although initiated several decades earlier, their aims and intentions reflected those instigated at the Council of Trent, which were in essence to establish an active form of spirituality. "Action was prayer, and prayer led to action."⁶ Ignatius sought to create this principle by combining the contemplative with the active in a life of service to God. "Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means save his soul. All other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him fulfill the end for which he is created. From this it follows that man is to use these things to the extent that they will help him attain his end."⁷

Ignatius relinquished some of the formal duties of a traditional Order, to facilitate an active apostolate with the intention of using every available means for the cause.⁸ Members of the Society were required to make an additional vow, that of obedience to the Pope, a principle which was augmented by Ignatius in his instructions, *Rules for Thinking with the Church*. Thus armed, and prepared by a humanist based training, the new Society set out to revitalize the faith. The spirit which was harnessed to reclaim souls from the Protestant Reformation and spread to the newly discovered lands of Japan, China, America and the Indies, was the same which fired enthusiasm for an English mission.⁹

With similar zeal, Jesuits began an active campaign to rejuvenate Catholicism in an ailing and exiled community. The initial request to augment the priests from Douai was met with reluctance by the General, who anticipated two problems. Firstly, the hostile conditions would prevent the members from conforming to the requirements of the Society, and secondly, they were likely to be blamed for sedition, a situation which would hinder their work.¹⁰ On both counts the General was correct, but it was the latter point which caused the greatest concern.¹¹

By the end of the sixteenth-century Jesuits had become the focal point of all anti-papist feeling. Disagreement between the secular clergy and Jesuits which revolved around organisation and ideals of the mission, were carried to governmental levels.¹² Lord Burghley accused them indiscriminately of political intrigue. His attitude towards them went far beyond a rational approach to a political problem. "... These are the most evident perils that necessarily should follow, if these kind of vermin were suffered to creep by stealth into the realm and to spread their poison within the same, however, when they are taken, like hypocrites they colour and counterfeit the same with profession of devotion in religion."¹³ The general attitude of animosity towards the Jesuits was expressed by a Protestant pamphleteer when he described them as *the horns of the Papal Bull*.¹⁴ While they were without doubt implementing papal instructions, theirs was a spiritual, not a political mission.¹⁵ The first and all subsequent Jesuits were issued with orders that clearly stated that "... they must take no less care to avoid anything to do with political affairs of the Kingdom whether in spoken word or writing," in fact, "they must so behave that all men must see that the only gain they covet is that of souls".¹⁶

That however, was easier said than done as politics and religion were inexorably intertwined. Apart from being accused of conspiring against the State,

Jesuits were faced with the problem of allegiance like other Catholics. There was no conflict of loyalties for John Gerard, or doubt about his personal conduct in that regard while on the mission. When accused of having been "sent to seduce people from the Queen's allegiance to the Pope's, and to meddle in State business", he replied, "... things of State ... are no concern of ours and we are forbidden to have anything to do with them. This prohibition is general to all Jesuits; and there is besides, a special prohibition included in the instructions given to the Fathers sent on the mission. As for the allegiance due to the Queen and the Pope, each has our allegiance and the allegiances do not clash."¹⁷ Similarly, Robert Southwell considered that the dual allegiances were compatible. They were both furthermore, the motivation for his risking his life in England. "... soe if we seeke with our deepest perills to plant it (the Catholic faith) in our Realme, and to winne soules from misbeliefe unto it, we thinke that we owe a most sincere and naturall love unto our Cuntry"(sic).¹⁸ This attitude was publically and privately reiterated by numerous Jesuits. Father Henry Walpole ingeniously explained how his loyalty to the Queen obviously included her spiritual welfare. "As a faithful subject, I obey and love the Queen my Sovereign. I pray God daily however, to enlighten her with the Holy Spirit so that she may follow those counsels in this life which will bring her the glory of eternal life."¹⁹

The problem was indeed a vexed one. Because of their special connection with Rome, it was an obvious progression to assume that the Jesuits were involved in plots to depose the Queen. The grounds for alarm were not entirely without foundation. However, apart from Robert Persons who is known to have participated in such plans,²⁰ the majority of Jesuits remained true to the spiritual mission. As such they had a distinctive influence on some members of the gentry, and a resulting creative movement with which this thesis is concerned.

NOTES

- ¹Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise op.cit.* p.12. In the early 1570s several events contributed to the notion of active resistance: the Bull of Excommunication was issued, religious controversy in Europe increased, tension between England and Spain intensified, and there were a number of plots aimed at installing Mary Stuart on the English throne.
- ² John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, op.cit.* p.13
- ³ J.H. Pollen, *The English Catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1920) p.40
- ⁴Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England, op.cit.* p.303
- ⁵ H.O. Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter Reformation* (Cambridge, 1968) p.42
- ⁶ *Ibid.* p.75
- ⁷ *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* translated by Anthony Mottola (New York, 1964) p.47
- ⁸H.O. Evennett, *op.cit.* p.43
- ⁹J.H. Pollen, *op.cit.* p.267
- ¹⁰B. Bassett S.J., *The English Jesuits from Campion to Martindale* (London, 1967) p.34
- ¹¹The English government were understandably apprehensive. Even if adherents of the Catholic faith protested otherwise, they created a reason for invasion from Catholic countries who wished to put the Bull of Excommunication into practice.
- ¹²J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, op.cit.* p.44
- ¹³'The Execution of Justice'(1583) cited in P. Caraman, *The Other Face, op.cit.* p.273
- ¹⁴Cited in B. Bassett, *op.cit.*
- ¹⁵Attitudes involving opposition or ideas of rebellion were not fixed, but were constantly changing. The most serious period of Catholic political resistance began around 1584. During this time some Catholic writers criticised English political policies and justified the possibility of an uprising. William Allen and Robert Persons S.J., in exile, were behind most of these publications. However, by 1596 this situation had reverted to compromise, and Persons' last book *A Memorial of the Reformation of England*, completely rejected the notion of seditious behaviour of any kind. P. Holmes, *op. cit.* p.165
- ¹⁶Instructions to Persons cited in *Catholic Record Society* Vol.39 p.319
- ¹⁷John Gerard, *Autobiography* trans. P.Caraman (London, 1951) pp.66-67

¹⁸Robert Southwell, *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty* (1591) cited in Helen White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Wisconsin, 1963) p.249. While it is recognised that Jesuit bibliographical material was compiled for propaganda purposes, the accounts express in general the realities that confronted them on the mission. Quotations from such works are used in this thesis for that purpose, and make no claim to complete accuracy.

¹⁹More, Henry, *The Elizabethan Jesuits: Historia Missionis Anglicanae Societatis Jesu 1660* Translated and edited by Francis Edwards (London and Chichester, 1951) p.269

²⁰A.Lynn Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians* (Geneva, 1973) p.67

CHAPTER 2.ii THE JESUITS IN ENGLAND

The need for an active ministry must have been considered urgent to justify the risks taken by those who attempted to supply it. While Garnet's account of the sort of people required for the mission may not have been entirely serious, it conveys the general attributes needed for such a task. "Father let these persons who intend to come to these countries and conduct themselves well here, bring with them minds alert and bodies dead. They are not permitted any relaxation save the game of football, which consists of clashes and kicks, with extreme force, as well as being trampled on; and on this game they have to put their lives in jeopardy in order to gain souls."¹ Since the priests were in the country illegally, their entire existence had to be carried out in secret. As a result they were frequently lonely, separated from authority, and constantly under threat of discovery. Communication was erratic and the annual letters to Rome and their replies were often intercepted.² These letters were written partly in code in order to avoid incriminating anyone should such a thing occur.³

Contrary to normal procedures for members of a religious order, the Jesuits in England obviously could not wear the uniform of their office. They were forced to resort to disguise in order to protect their anonymity.⁴ Persons, who acquired at least ten pseudonyms, arrived on English shores as a soldier. "He was dressed up like a soldier; such a peacock, such a swaggerer, that a man needs must have very sharp eyes to catch a glimpse of any holiness and modesty shrouded beneath such a garb, such a look, such a strut."⁵ This was a very different image from that presented in the portrait of him as a priest. An unnamed Jesuit working in the vicinity of Worcester, "kept in store all kinds of dresses which he used to adopt according to the circumstances, appearing one while as a clown upon a pack horse, then, in splendid attire, entering the houses of nobility, he made himself, like the Apostle, all things to all men that he might gain all."⁶ Campion appeared to find

the whole idea of disguise somewhat absurd, and Southwell was suitably modest in his choice of dress being, "... wonte to goe apparelled in black rashe".⁷ John Gerard used nine different assumed names, and Henry Garnet had as many as eleven.⁸ It was characteristic of the mission that priests were frequently on the move, changing both name and dress. Abandonment of clerical dress and identity were drastic changes, and obviously affected the relationship between priests and laity.

The way in which Jesuits lived was as varied as the people and places involved. Frequently the dwelling place was not a fixed abode. They moved among the gentry under their protection whenever possible, or operated from a few strategically chosen houses that were rented for short periods of time. Garnet described one such house and the way in which it was used in a letter to his General, Aquaviva, in March 1593. "At quite a low price we hired one of these small gardens, very well placed for our purposes, and in it a tiny cottage with a kitchen, a dining-room and a third room set aside for a chapel ... we had a rule that no one must speak except in a very low voice, so as not to be heard in the street nearby, and a fire was never lit there, even in the depth of winter, but all provisions had to be cooked at night and eaten cold the next day."⁹

Bossy has indicated that from the beginning of the mission until 1616 there was a gradual move towards more permanent housing of priests in the homes of the gentry. However, it is also clear that three distinct types of existence continued simultaneously. These possibilities included serving the community on an itinerant basis, and being employed either openly or secretly in a large household.¹⁰ Permanent employment in a Catholic household did not necessarily ensure any greater security or comfort. If Henry More's account of Southwell's position as priest to the Countess of Arundel is anything to go by, a Jesuit could lead an extremely isolated life with only the bare necessities. "Remote from everyday life, only one or two of the servants might know of his existence. He was shut up in

obliged to get his fresh air cautiously through a window, moving about carefully lest he be noticed by those who were not supposed to be aware of his presence ... From the well furnished tables only a modest something would be carried to him ..."¹¹

Fear of being captured was a constant companion, an emotion which would have coloured all their reactions. To live under such emotional pressure was extremely stressful, possibly to the extent of impeding the ability for work. On the other hand the constant threat of capture could become so familiar that it removed the capacity to actually feel fear. Campion conveyed the latter response in his explanation of how the situation affected his mental state. "I read letters sometimes myself, that in the first front tell news that Campion is taken which, noised in every place where I come, so filleth mine ears with the sound thereof that fear itself hath taken away all fear."¹²

Several Jesuits wrote about the avoidance of capture through hiding in places especially contrived for the occasion. Usually the compartment was extremely small and uncomfortable. Furthermore, priests often had to spend long periods of time in them because of the persistence and thoroughness of the pursuivants. Imagine the feelings of Robert Southwell as he hid in Lord Vaux's house in Hackney while a search was in progress. "I heard them threatening and breaking woodwork and sounding the walls to find hiding places, yet, by God's goodness after four hours search they found me not, though separated from them only by a thin partition rather than a wall."¹³ More often than not priests were concealed in isolation, but there is evidence indicating that sometimes there were two or even more together. A rather unusual occurrence took place in 1591 when priest hunters searched a house in which all the Jesuits in England at that time had congregated. Had the searchers been successful, they would have landed a rich haul. As it was, the unlikely and unpleasant hiding place was effective. It

was "below ground level; the floor was covered with water and I (Gerard) was standing with my feet in it all the time. Father Garnet was there; also Father Southwell and Father Oldcorne ..., Father Stanney and myself, two secular priests and two or three laymen."¹⁴

After the constant anxiety of insecurity, actually being caught was often expressed as a sense of relief. However, although death was frequently the eventual outcome of being taken, the longed-for release in martyrdom was not swift to follow. Between the two events there were often long years in prison. While the majority suffered "the squalor, the confinement, the solitude, the underfeeding, the scourges and cudgelling,"¹⁵ not to mention the terrible atrocities of torture, remarkable exceptions did occur. After a few months of imprisonment in the Clink, John Gerard had "by God's grace everything so arranged that (he) was able to perform there all the tasks of a Jesuit priest ..." With bribes and a little coaxing, Gerard induced his gaoler, "not to pry too closely into (his) doings, (and) with this concession of liberty (he) was able to take up (his) apostolic work again." He "heard a large number of confessions and reconciled ¹⁶ many people to the Church".¹⁷ Perhaps more astonishing is the fact that within the prison he "said Mass and gave the sacraments to the Catholics who were confined in that section", and "six or seven men went through the Exercises," in a chapel set up in a room upstairs.¹⁸ The latter event was a remarkable feat under such circumstances, since the full duration of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises was four weeks.

Deviation from the normal course of justice for a priest, especially a Jesuit, was rare. Typical treatment usually entailed a spell of torture in the Tower. When the torturing and suffering were over there was only one more undertaking in this life, and that was death itself. However, a martyr's death was welcomed by priest and laity alike. To die well in the sixteenth-century served a two-fold purpose: it was important for the soul of the dying person, and it was expected to be

inspirational and encouraging to the observers.¹⁹ Martyrdom of course had further relevance in that it was a form of propaganda for the cause.

Following the death of Edward Campion in 1581, who along with Father Briant became the first Jesuit to be executed in England, the Spanish Ambassador commented on its effect: "I cannot exaggerate the beneficial effect that this has had, and the confidence that it has inspired in all sorts of people, to reconcile and convert them to the Catholic faith, as before they saw their friends the English were shy of attaching themselves to the cause."²⁰ While the Ambassador may well have sensationalised the events especially since there is no way to evaluate the impact, at least two people were affected by it. Philip Howard Earl of Arundel was reconciled by Weston and spent his remaining life in the Tower, as the result of having witnessed Campion's debate and execution.²¹ Similarly, Henry Walpole, "wrote some beautiful English verses in his (Campion's) honour, telling how the martyr's blood had brought warmth into his life and many others too, inspiring them to follow the more perfect way of Christ's counsels."²² Not only did Walpole himself become a Jesuit and return to the English mission where he likewise died as a martyr, he also inspired three of his brothers and a cousin to join the Society.²³

When the death penalty was imposed on a priest, the indictment was treason against the State and incurred all the barbarities by which traitors normally met their end. In spite of this, Jesuits demonstrated fortitude as they actively welcomed the opportunity to die publicly for the faith. Campion sang hymns on the way to his execution as he was being dragged through the streets on a hurdle, while Garnet conducted himself in a similar courageous manner, in contradiction to his alleged irresolute behaviour in the Tower.²⁴

Father John Cornelius expressed his attitude by embracing the gallows and saying "Oh holy cross so long desired!", and kissed the noose held out to him before putting it around his neck.²⁵ Dying for these martyrs meant more than a public acceptance of death; it signified a special heavenly distinction. On his way to the scaffold, Southwell called out, "Christ my God, you give your unworthy servant too much honour. You allow him too much glory."²⁶ Once there he was eventually allowed to give his valediction to the assembled crowd. "This is my death my last farewell to this 'unfortunate life, and yet to me most happy and most fortunate ... which death, albeit that it seem here disgraceful, yet I hope that in time to come it will be my eternal glory."²⁷ His appropriate behaviour did not go unnoticed. A pursuivant observing the events was heard remarking to a companion "You have deceived me! I never saw a man die so well as this man".²⁸

Not all Jesuits and secular priests suffered the penalties described above, but those whose names have been linked with Byrd did in fact suffer death for their activities. The exception to this was William Weston who was imprisoned for seventeen years before he finally escaped to safety on the Continent.

NOTES

- ¹Garnet to the General, London 11th March 1601
- ² B. Bassett, *The English Jesuits, op.cit.* p.123
- ³For details on the code that was adopted to avoid incriminating individuals should the letters be intercepted, see Chapter 4, Section iii.
- ⁴This deviation from the rules required special permission from Rome. B. Bassett, *The English Jesuits, op.cit.* p.41
- ⁵Campion to Mercurian cited in Bassett, *Ibid.* p.43
- ⁶*Ibid.* p.41
- ⁷*Ibid.*
- ⁸*Ibid.*
- ⁹ Cited in Christopher Devlin, *The Life of Robert Southwell Poet and Martyr* (London, 1956) p.240
- ¹⁰J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, op.cit.* p.251
- ¹¹ Henry More, *The Elizabethan Jesuits, op.cit.* p.235
- ¹² Campion to Mercurian cited in J.H. Pollen *The English Catholics, op.cit.* p.370
- ¹³ Southwell to Aquaviva 21st December 1586 cited in C.R.S. Vol.5, p.310
- ¹⁴John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.42
- ¹⁵ William Weston's description of his long years of imprisonment. *William Weston: An Autobiography from the Jesuit Underground* trans. by P. Caraman, (New York, 1955) p.206
- ¹⁶ Reconciliation according to Garnet's definition was the first sacramental confession made to a priest on a convert's reception into the church. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.159
- ¹⁷John Gerard, *Autobiography, op. cit.* p.78
- ¹⁸*Ibid.* p.81. Masses were also recorded as having been celebrated in the Marshalsea and Wisbech Prisons. See William Weston accounts in his autobiography, pp.117 and 164.
- ¹⁹Philippe Ariès, *Western Attitudes to Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present* translated by Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore, U.S.A., 1974)
- ²⁰*Calendar of State Papers Domestic Spanish* Vol.III p.604
- ²¹William Weston, *Autobiography, op.cit.* pp.12-13

²²John Gerard, *Autobiography*, *op.cit.* p.105. This poem is the one beginning "Why do I use my Paper, Pen and Ink". Byrd set the first verse to music and published it in *Psalmes, Sonnets and Songs 1588*

²³B. Bassett, *The English Jesuits*, *op.cit.* p.277

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵Henry More, *The Elizabethan Jesuits*, *op.cit.* p.227

²⁶*Ibid.* p.252

²⁷Cited in Christopher Devlin, *The Life of Robert Southwell*, *op.cit.* p.320

²⁸*Ibid.* p.324

CHAPTER 2.iii THE RESPONSE OF THE LAITY

When in the summer of 1580 the first members of the Society arrived on English shores, they came with a clear purpose. The intention of the mission was to encourage and inspire people in the faith as defined at Trent; strengthen them when possible with the sacraments; reconcile those who requested it and generally comfort the community in their tribulation. On their own admission, the Jesuits received dedicated assistance wherever they went, in spite of the fact that it increased the vulnerability of those involved. Robert Persons writing to Rome in 1580 described the incongruous situation. "Such are the conditions in which we live that by public edict no one is allowed to come near us, everyone wants to see us notwithstanding. Wherever we go we are most eagerly received. Many people make long journeys in order to have our conversation for a few hours. They profess themselves wholly at our disposal. Everywhere give us what we need."¹ These people were not risking their lives and reputations for nothing, since they saw themselves as providing the means of salvation.

Due to the lack of contact with Rome, many hosts were unprepared for a priest's visit initially, a shortcoming which was soon rectified. As John Gerard explained:

"At first I used to take round with me my own Mass equipment ... I should explain. My hosts could seldom provide the essentials for Mass and I had therefore to bring them myself. But after a few years there was no need to do this. In nearly every house I visited later I would find vestments and everything else laid out ready for me. Moreover, before very long I had so many friends on my route and so close to one another that I hardly ever had to put up at a tavern in a journey of a hundred and fifty miles. In my last two years I don't think I slept in one a single night."²

It is interesting to observe the development of instruction as the effect of the mission strengthened English Catholics in their resolve. At the beginning of the venture, Campion gave an insight into his particular approach to the work as an itinerant priest. "On horseback I meditate my sermon; when I come to the house I polish it. Then I talk with such that as come to speak with me, or hear their confessions. In the morning, after Mass, I preach They hear with exceeding greediness, and very often receive the Sacraments ..." ³ Persons' description of his duties illustrates a similar approach. He usually arrived at a new house in the late afternoon. In the evening he heard confessions and gave spiritual instruction, and the following morning celebrated Mass and preached a sermon. And after the mid-day meal he left for the next household. ⁴

A decade later John Gerard gave an account of the duties he thought necessary when residing with the Wiseman family in Essex. ⁵ The less ephemeral nature of his position of course allowed for a more thorough procedure, but a degree of refinement in spiritual training is evident. "My first concern ... was to see that the whole house came to the sacraments frequently. With the exception of the widow they had been used to coming perhaps four times a year at most: now it was every week. On feast days and usually on Sundays I preached in the chapel, and instructed all how to examine their conscience, and taught those who had the leisure for it the way to meditate. Another practice I started was reading ascetical books, which we did even at table, when there were no guests present." ⁶

Those who were inspired and influenced by the Jesuits frequently altered their lives to enhance its spiritual content. Sir Everard Digby and his wife "built a chapel and sacristy and provided it with rich and beautiful vestments. As a chaplain they received a Jesuit priest who stayed with them until the day of Sir Everard's death." ⁷ This demonstration of faith was seen as exemplary and was

imitated by others. "What this family did, others did too. Many Catholic gentlemen, when they visited this house and saw the arrangements there, took it as a model. They founded congregations centred around their own homes, furnished their chapels, and designing accommodation suited to a priest's needs, maintained one there with reverence and respect."⁸ It should be pointed out however, that the number of recusants with the intention and resources to emulate this way of life was relatively few.

For the Catholic householder who was able to choose this way of life, special responsibilities had to be considered. The house needed to be adapted to provide a suitable chapel and rooms for the priest. It was also advisable to prepare places where they and the Mass equipment could be hidden in emergencies. Ideally the house would be situated in a secluded area to allow free and concealed access for all concerned. Elizabeth Vaux, daughter-in-law of Sir William Vaux, went to the trouble and expense of reorganising her house to accommodate two priests, and a religiously orientated lifestyle. John Gerard explained the lengths to which this lady went to facilitate her salvation. "She built us separate quarters close to the old chapel where the former barons used to hear Mass when the weather was too wet for them to go to the village church. Here she erected a three-storied building for Father Percy and me. It was conveniently designed and secluded. From our quarters we could pass out un-noticed into the private garden and through the broad walks into the fields, and there mount our horses to go wherever we wanted."⁹

The impact of the Mission was uneven and only affected a small percentage of the population, those being particularly among the mid, and poor, land-owning gentry.¹⁰ The foregoing descriptions reveal a series of small social systems often linked together through the Catholic network, within the framework of sixteenth-century Protestant England. Many of the patrons and other individuals that

William Byrd is known to have associated with, managed households along similar lines and were connected to others of a similar nature. It was probably largely due to just such a social system organised around the Petre's Essex homes, that Byrd decided to move into the vicinity, to a specifically Catholic environment.

NOTES

¹ Cited in Henry More, *The Elizabethan Jesuits, op.cit.* p.95

² John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.40

³ Cited in C.R.S. Vol.2. p.200

⁴J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, op. cit.* p.252

⁵John Gerard was a priest to the Wiseman's between 1591 and 1594.

⁶ John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.32

⁷*Ibid.* p.168

⁸ *Ibid.* p.169

⁹*Ibid.* p.161

¹⁰J.C. Aveling, *The Handle and the Axe* (London, 1976) p.66

CHAPTER 2.iv THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF IGNATIUS LOYOLA AND THEIR IMPACT IN ENGLAND.

Although the English mission was by no means always successful, or even harmonious, its existence had a direct influence on the behaviour of many Catholics. A renewed determination to affirm Catholic doctrine was evident, and there was a marked increase in religious enthusiasm. In spite of the fact that the numbers of Jesuits remained small, their impact was considerable, if not greater than the other priests. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, the Jesuits had wide connections with the gentry, who assisted them both practically and financially. This advantage gave the Jesuits an understanding of the special needs of Catholics, and the contacts to place priests accordingly.¹ By the time of Henry Garnet's execution (in 1606), he had, as Superior, created an organisation which far surpassed that of the seminary priests. This was not always an asset, and from about 1590 onwards caused controversy both within the clerical ranks and outside them.²

The other advantage the Jesuits had in terms of the mission, was a distinct spiritual direction, which had among other results the effect of attracting many priests to the Society. Central to Jesuit spirituality was the use of the Spiritual Exercises, which Ignatius had created as a tool for revitalising the spiritual life in the course of founding the Jesuit Order. Although they were originally only intended for himself and candidates for the Society, the Spiritual Exercises became of far greater consequence, especially in the course of the Counter Reformation.

According to Ignatius, the "expression *Spiritual Exercises* embraces every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activity For just as strolling, walking and running are bodily exercises, so spiritual exercises are methods of preparing and disposing the

soul to free itself of all inordinate attachments, and after accomplishing this, of seeking and discovering the Divine Will regarding the disposition of one's life, thus insuring the salvation of his soul."³ While Ignatius mentioned several activities as being 'Spiritual Exercises', his system of prayer and meditation was designed essentially as an entity, creating a cumulative effect. The full duration of the Exercises was four weeks but they were not necessarily to be performed consecutively; neither was the exercitant obliged to complete the procedure for it to be beneficial. "A person engaged in public affairs or necessary business, if he is educated and has ability, can make the Exercises by taking an hour and a half for them each day."⁴

The Spiritual Exercises, which also included the methods of examination of conscience and general confession, were in fact a summary of Catholic theology. From the outset in the 'first week', the aim of the Exercises was to rid the exercitant of worldly attachment and false principles in order to follow God's will, reforming life accordingly. "Indifference" as Ignatius termed the process of separation, was a prerequisite for spiritual progress. Only after achieving indifference could the participant focus on the Kingdom of Christ and the Two Standards (of Christ and of Satan) through a study of Christ's three-fold life: his public life, the Passion and his risen life. By following the Exercises consecutively, a movement of progression was created. From a state of indifference the exercitant proceeded to a state of compunction, and devotion to Christ; and then through reflection upon His mysteries came to acknowledge the necessity for a reformed life conducive to union with God.⁵

The structure of the Exercises was designed to emphasise a different aspect of the process in each successive week. The focus in the first week was on 'man's sinful nature', and in the second, an awareness of God's call and the desire to follow it. Contemplation on the significance of the Passion was the theme of the third

week, while the main concern of the fourth and final week was union with the risen Lord. The procedure of each week was further divided into an adaptable structure, but one which largely followed a basic pattern: a preparatory prayer, two or more preludes, followed by several points of meditation and concluding with a colloquy. For example, the meditation of the first Exercise "is made with the three powers of the soul, and the subject is the first, second and third sins".⁶ It contains the preparatory prayer, two preludes, three points of meditation and a colloquy and begins as such:

"Prayer: The purpose of the preparatory prayer is to ask God our Lord the grace that all my intentions, actions, and works may be directed purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty.

The first prelude is a mental image of the place ... when the meditation or contemplation is on a visible object ... the image will consist of seeing with the mind's eye the physical place where the object that we wish to contemplate is present ... for instance, a temple, or mountain where Jesus or the Blessed Virgin is depending on the subject of the contemplation. In meditations on subject matter that is not visible, as here in meditation on sins, the mental image will consist of imagining, and considering my soul imprisoned in its corruptible body, and my entire being in this vale of tears as an exile among brute beasts ...

The second prelude is to ask God our Lord for what I want and desire. The request must be according to the subject matter. Therefore if the contemplation is on the Resurrection I shall ask for joy with Christ rejoicing; if it is on the passion, I shall ask for pain, tears, and suffering with Christ suffering. In the present meditation I shall ask for shame and confusion, for I see how many souls have been damned for a single mortal sin, and how often I have deserved to be damned eternally for the many sins I have committed."⁷

In the Second Exercise for the first week there are concise examples of the points of meditation and the appropriate colloquy:

"*The first point* is the review of my sins. I shall recall to mind all the sins of my life, looking at them year by year, and period by period ...

The second point is to weigh my sins, considering the loathsomeness and the malice that every mortal sin committed has in itself ...

The third point is to consider who I am and abase myself by these examples:

- 1) What I am in comparison to all men?
- 2) What are men in comparison with the angels and saints of heaven?
- 3) What is all creation in comparison with God? Then myself alone, what can I be?
- 4) Let me consider all my own corruption and foulness of body.
- 5) Let me see myself as a sore and an abscess from whence have come forth so many sins, so many evils, and the most vile poison.

The fourth point is now to consider who God is against whom I have sinned, recalling his attributes and comparing them to their contraries in me: His wisdom to my ignorance; His omnipotence to my weakness; His justice with my iniquity; His goodness with my sinfulness.

The fifth point is to be struck with amazement and filled with growing emotion as I consider how creatures have suffered me to live, and have sustained me in life. How the angels ... tolerated me, guarded me, and prayed for me. How the saints have interceded and prayed for me. How the heavens, moon and stars, and the elements; fruits, birds, fishes, and animals have all served my needs ...

Colloquy I will end this meditation with a colloquy directing my thoughts to God's mercy. I will give thanks to Him for having granted me life until now, and I will resolve with the help of His grace to amend my life for the future ..."⁸

This then is the procedure followed by those making the Spiritual Exercises, which was modified as the subject matter changed from the first week through to the fourth. It is interesting to note that there is a distinct connection between the rhetorical structure of literature and that employed in the Exercises.

The exposition is comparable to the prelude, the points of meditation form the corpus of the work which investigates the main ideas, while the colloquy can be identified as the peroratio or conclusion.⁹ The difference between rhetoric and meditation is however important to this thesis, for where rhetoric is purely intellectual, meditation is experiential. It is a critical point in assessing the relative influence of the two techniques in the creative work of Byrd.

In addition to the methods of meditation already described, Ignatius used the contemporary concepts of memory, understanding and will, the three powers of the soul, as instrumental in the process.¹⁰ The three powers of the soul were made use of in the Spiritual Exercises as follows: The *memory* was applied in the first section in which the subject for meditation was determined. The *understanding* was incorporated in the points of meditation as the subject was analysed, and the *will* put the spiritual experience to practical use.¹¹ The whole process was obviously an extremely dynamic method of meditation, but what enhanced it even further was the technique described as composition of place, which incorporated all the senses. In the first prelude of the second week for example, the exercitant was instructed to visualize a "mental picture of the place. Here we will see in our imagination the synagogues, villages, and towns where Jesus preached."¹² In the fifth exercise of the first week, Ignatius specified employment of all the senses to evoke the horrors of hell:

First point: To see in imagination the great fires, and the souls enveloped, as it were, in bodies of fire.

Second point: To hear the wailing, the screaming, cries, and blasphemies against Christ our Lord and all His saints.

Third point: To smell the smoke, the brimstone, the corruption, and rotteness.

Fourth point: To taste bitter things, as tears, sadness, and remorse of conscience.

Fifth point: With the sense of touch to feel how the flames surround and burn souls."¹³

All the techniques were applied with the specific intention of channelling the senses to the appropriate affection for a correct relationship with God.¹⁴ In the process, however, a two-fold operation is observable. Firstly, the intellect was required as the points of meditation and their implications were explained; and secondly, feeling was encouraged to implant the meaning and evoke the correct response. Here indeed was a subtle balance between the intellect and the emotion, between the active and contemplative in meditation. Furthermore, it was a practice which could be invoked for any religious activity, including that which involved the creative process.

In the practical application of their mission in England, the Exercises assumed a sufficiently significant role for the Jesuits to attempt to meet at least once a year for a retreat, in the course of which they renewed their vows and performed the Spiritual Exercises. One such occasion took place in the north-east of England. In a well-protected position on the banks of the Tyne, a Mrs Lawson had built a house with its own chapel for the use of local Catholics. It was here that "half a dozen of the Society made each year, the Spiritual Exercises in her house for eight days, with collegiate form and discipline ..." ¹⁵ These meetings were not necessarily restricted to Jesuits. Among those present at the gathering of 1591 held in the house of the sisters Anne Vaux and Eleanor Brooksby were, "nine or ten Jesuits and some other priests, besides a few laymen." ¹⁶

It is evident that knowledge of the Spiritual Exercises extended beyond members of the Society. John Gerard in particular saw the potential of the Exercises both for himself and others. It is therefore mainly through his documentation that it is possible to gain an insight into how they were made, and by whom. The importance that Gerard placed on the Spiritual Exercises is apparent in the way in which he turned to them when he was imprisoned. "The

first month I spent making the Spiritual Exercises as well as I could from memory, devoting four and sometimes five hours a day to meditation. During all this time I felt the great goodness of God and I realised how lavishly He treats His suffering servants when He deprives them of every kind of earthly comfort."¹⁷

NOTES

- ¹J. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community*, *op.cit.* p.193
- ²*Ibid.* p.206
- ³*The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* translated by Anthony Mottola (New York, 1964) p.37
- ⁴*Ibid.* p.42
- ⁵Robert W. Gleason, S.J. in his introduction to *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, *op.cit.* p.22
- ⁶*The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, *op.cit.* p.54
- ⁷*Ibid.* pp.54-5
- ⁸*Ibid.* pp.56-7
- ⁹ L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* (London, 1962) p.43
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*
- ¹¹L.L. Martz, *The Meditative Poem* (New York, 1963) p.xxii
- ¹²*The Spiritual Exercises*, *op.cit.* p.67 The opening of Byrd's 'Terra tremuit' is an example of such a mental picture, since it conveys the trembling of the earth.
- ¹³*Ibid.* p.59
- ¹⁴Anthony Raspa, *The Emotive Image. Jesuit Poetics in the Renaissance* (Fort, Texas, 1983) p.51
- ¹⁵H. Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus* (London, 1875-82) Vol.5 p.719
- ¹⁶John Gerard, *Autobiography*, *op.cit.* p.41
- ¹⁷*Ibid.* p.72

CHAPTER 2.v PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AND THEIR ADAPTATIONS

The Spiritual Exercises became both an expression of the spirit of the Counter Reformation, and a product of the general trend towards a more personal approach to God. The concept of meditation was not a new idea, but one which gained in popularity throughout the sixteenth-century.¹ However, by creating the technique known as composition of place, Ignatius not only instilled vitality, but synthesised the active with the contemplative, making it a unique method. It is apparent that in the hands of the Jesuit missionaries, the Spiritual Exercises were an extremely effective tool. Personal devotion served a particular need for English Catholics for whom the formal, communal liturgy was often irregular or not possible. Furthermore, the Exercises were expedient in that they emphasised the main points of Catholic doctrine, in particular penance and contrition.

According to John Gerard, the purpose of the Spiritual Exercises was the means of discovering "the straight road that leads to life, with Him for guide who is Himself the Way and the Life;"² and under his guidance a variety of people experienced this for themselves. There are instances of several seminary priests making the Spiritual Exercises, with profound results. William Hanse, the Chaplain of a Catholic house called Lawshall, "asked to make the Exercises - he had heard my host praise them so much - and went through them with great profit. In fact, he said afterwards in the hearing of others, that he had never before realized the full obligations of his priesthood."³ Similarly, Mr Woodward, "a good and devout priest" was changed by the experience. "He too wanted to join the Society, and he went over to Belgium to do so."⁴

In his biography, Gerard cites numerous examples of laymen who decided to become Jesuits as a result of making the Spiritual Exercises. Henry Drury of

Lawshall "got so much profit from them that he decided to do what he thought was the best thing, namely to join the Society with as little delay as possible."⁵ Although two of Roger Lee's attempts at making the exercises were interrupted by raids, he eventually completed them and entered the Society in 1600.⁶ John Bolt gave up his position as court musician "with all his hopes of fame, in order to attach himself to me and follow the counsels of Our Lord explained in the Spiritual Exercises."⁷ For a few years afterwards Bolt taught music in Catholic households including the Petre's and Wiseman's in Essex, but before long he left for the Continent where he became ordained in 1605.⁸ Another person who was similarly affected but was less resolute, was the poet William Alabaster. John Gerard said of him, "During this time I gave him the Spiritual Exercises, and he made up his mind to join the Society."⁹

Not everyone making the Spiritual Exercises completed the full course of meditations. Ignatius had stressed the importance of flexibility, depending on the individual and the circumstances.¹⁰ Hence, for a variety of reasons, they were adapted according to specific requirements. Some people were in situations which precluded their participation in the entire four weeks of the Exercises, while others were not considered suitable candidates. "There were two people who made only the Exercises of the first week; they wanted to lead good and holy lives. One of them is now the father of a family. He does many good works and is a loyal friend of ours."¹¹ The second was Henry Hastings, grandson of the Earl of Huntingdon who, "made the Exercises and profited a good deal from them."¹²

Sir Oliver Manners who was Clerk of the Council and King James' Carver, began his spiritual development with embryonic practices. "He examined his conscience carefully every day, learnt how to meditate, and made a meditation every morning." In addition he, "read devotional books eagerly." Eventually he sought a more concentrated religious training. "He asked ... to go through the

Spiritual Exercises, and in the course of them decided to leave the Court and devote himself to the things that would make his life more pleasing in God's sight and more profitable in his neighbour's service."¹³ For various reasons some people only practised techniques derived from the Spiritual Exercises. Gerard gave no explanation as to why he decided against giving the Exercises to Father Hart before he was admitted to the Society. Maybe the time available did not allow for such a lengthy process, or perhaps the circumstances were not suitable. Whatever the motive, the outcome of Gerard's instruction was possibly just as profound. "Though I did not give him the Exercises, I was able to see him from time to time ... and, in place of the Exercises I taught him the method of daily meditation. I also gave him some devout books to read ... and this worked in him a desire for a religious life and the Society. He is now a useful man on the English mission"¹⁴

Because meditation was an integral part of the Spiritual Exercises, it was often discussed as being synonymous with them. Hence, at this distance in time, accounts of such may not necessarily be clearly distinguished. Furthermore even when the technique of meditation can be identified as distinct from the Spiritual Exercises, the practice was derived from them.¹⁵ This method of meditation was in fact an adaptation of the Exercises for specific purposes as taught by Ignatius. Sir Everard Digby's wife used the process of meditation in much the same way as the Spiritual Exercises to help her choose the right direction in life. "She gave several days to learning the way to meditate, seeking out God's will in regard to her future, for she wanted to direct her life entirely to His greater glory."¹⁶ Lady Agnes Wenman who was married to a Protestant had to adapt her religious needs to her situation. "She determined to devote an hour a day to meditation and, when she had no guests, another one or two hours to spiritual reading and every six months made a general confession ..."¹⁷ Apparently not everyone was considered competent to practice meditation. Elizabeth Vaux, for example, was taught "how to meditate, for she was capable of it - in fact she had intelligence and talents of a

high order."¹⁸ Gerard's statement suggests that the technique required a certain mental capacity which would preclude those less able. Certainly the fact that women were predominantly cited as those who utilized meditation for their spiritual progress was an expression of adaptation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries women were not given the Spiritual Exercises.¹⁹

Both the Spiritual Exercises and the techniques derived from them created a foundation of contrition from which resolutions were made, and lives were dedicated to God in some form or other. The practice of such spiritual methods explains how the vigorous demands of the Catholic faith were met in the face of persecution. Under these circumstances evidence shows that Jesuit influence permeated various aspects of English life, and was expressed in a variety of ways. There is no means of knowing if William Byrd was involved in practice of the Spiritual Exercises, but the description of his compositional methods which occurs in the dedication of the *Gradualia* Vol I suggests a familiarity with the Jesuit techniques.

NOTES

¹ L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, op.cit.* p.26

² John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.151

³ *Ibid.* p.24

⁴ *Ibid.* p.141

⁵ *Ibid.* p.22

⁶ *Ibid.* see pp.151, 159 and 173

⁷ *Ibid.* p.49

⁸ C.R.S. Vol.iii, p.31, see also Chapter 1, Section ii

⁹ John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.140. Although Alabaster was imprisoned several times for his belief in Catholicism, his conversion was not permanent. After vacillating for years between the two religions, he finally settled for the Protestant Church. See L.I. Guiney, *Recusant Poets* (London, 1939) p.335

¹⁰ *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, op.cit.* p.42

¹¹ John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.193

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.* pp.186-7

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp.173-4

¹⁵ The contemporary books of devotion used for meditation are based on the structure and methods of the Spiritual Exercises. see Chapter 3, Section ix

¹⁶*Ibid.* p.167

¹⁷*Ibid.* p.169

¹⁸*Ibid.* p.147

¹⁹Nancy Pollard Brown, introduction to Robert Southwell, *Two Letters and Short Rules of a Good Life* (Charlottesville, 1973) p.xxvii

CHAPTER 3

*O sweet and bitter monuments of paine,
Bitter to Christ who all the paine endur'd,
But sweete to mee, who Death my life procur'd,
How shall I full express, such loss, such gaine.*

*William Alabaster
'Upon the Ensignes of Christes Crucifyinge'*

CHAPTER 3.i JESUIT INFLUENCE

A circle of Catholic families and individuals has been identified in the foregoing chapters; a circle which contained within its ranks those of high birth, and those with exceptional creative and intellectual abilities. In addition, it has been shown that although in the minority, many within this particular network were closely involved with, and supportive of, the Jesuit mission. Tension between worldly and spiritual demands obviously had an effect on these people. When conflict of this nature arose, the precept was the same that determined the Divine Right of Kings. Divine law was to be followed in preference to human law.¹ English Catholics were in fact in a unique situation. Nowhere else in Europe at this time was there a compact minority (of this sort), prepared to oppose a Protestant settlement. Because there were no generally accepted means whereby a Catholic could express belief in the first few years of Elizabeth's reign, Catholicism appeared to be waning. It was not until the decision made at Trent in 1562 was gradually implemented, that recusancy - the refusal to attend Protestant service - provided a definite way of proving one's faith. To believe the Catholic doctrine was not enough; it needed to be demonstrated to the world at large and to the individual concerned. Catholics were known by their actions, not simply by their personal faith.²

From this perspective, and with recusancy as an example, expressions of faith assumed many forms: internal and external, covert and flagrant. However, while some individuals put themselves at risk, their demonstration served several purposes. Firstly, it stressed a personal concern for Catholic doctrine, and could be a means of influencing others. Secondly, it indicated a need for an identity within a hostile environment; and finally, in the process, it inevitably strengthened the bond not only between those of like-mind at home, but also with the whole European community.

What was happening was not just an expression of the undercurrent of tribulation juxtaposed against the radiant activities normally associated with the golden age of Elizabeth. It was, rather, an English manifestation of the spirit of the Counter Reformation. This phenomenon is easily overlooked since historians tend to be more concerned with England's general acceptance of Protestantism. Where sixteenth-century English Catholic history is discussed, writers are inclined to concentrate on the political problems and the missions, but, as one writer goes so far as to say, "scarcely touch upon the far more important fact that they (the English Catholics) represented a new intellectual, educational, literary and devotional trend which was to mould the English quite as much as Protestantism itself, the effect of which is felt even at this present day."³

Whether one accepts the broader implications of this statement or not, it is evident that within the Catholic network there were individuals who gauged that the spiritual outcome of such expression far outweighed the risks involved, and as a result gave concrete affirmation of their faith in a variety of artistic and intellectual forms.

NOTES

¹Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise* (Cambridge, 1982) p.81

²*Ibid.* p.87

³Pierre Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation* (Milwaukee, 1951) p.303.

CHAPTER 3.ii PAINTING: THE FAVOURED LINE OF DESCENT

There is probably no other extant example which so aptly illustrates the significance of the Catholic network and its role in the survival of English Catholicism, as the painting of Sir Thomas More and his descendants. This work is not only particularly revealing when compared to a copy of the original of about 1530, it is a rare documentation of a recusant family in 1593.¹ Comparison of the two paintings, both by Rowland Lockey, shows significant differences. The version of Sir Thomas More with his immediate family is a copy of the original work of Holbein no longer extant, although the initial sketch for the painting survives.² Only five years after Holbein completed his informal record of the Lord Chancellor and his household, Thomas More was executed for rejecting the King's assumed supremacy in religious matters. Some sixty years later his grandson, similarly named Thomas More, was also suffering persecution over religious issues.³ The connection between generations of the More family is not difficult to recognise. The implications behind this connection are, however, a little more obscure.

As has already been indicated, Catholic families, their intermarriage and descendants were an important contribution to the survival of English Catholicism. When, as in this case, the line of descent could be traced to the first lay martyr of the English Reformation, the family concerned was considered especially fortunate. Soon after his death, Thomas More was deliberately chosen by Catholics as an example. Within the following sixty years, despite governmental opposition, four English and two Latin biographies were printed. Politicians of the new religion considered Sir Thomas' influence a threat. The members of his family were seen as potentially dangerous, and even possession of his writings was suspect.⁴ To the members of the More family these special connections were valued as being both prestigious, and a blessing. Christopher Cresacre More, the youngest



Illustration 1. Sir Thomas More and his family.



Illustration 2. Sir Thomas More and his descendants.

descendant featured in the later painting, expressed these sentiments in his biography of his great grandfather. "... myself and my Children (who are as small brooks derived by naturall propagation from that spacious sea of rare perfections; or like tender twigs drawing sappe from the fruitfull roote of his noble excellencies)."5

The painting of 1593 (see illustration 2) was thus deliberately designed to include both "that spacious sea of rare perfections" and the "small brooks derived by naturall propagation", since it incorporates five generations of the More family. Compare the two paintings. In the first version (illustration 1), Sir Thomas More is the central character surrounded by his father, son, three daughters, daughter-in-law, second wife, godchild and servants. The changes in the later painting (illustration 2), are thus very significant. It will be noted that not all of the people in the 1530 version appear in that of 1593. Only those who were directly related by blood to the contemporary descendants were retained, and they were shifted to the left and regrouped slightly. Thus, reading from the left of illustration 2, the characters are: Sir John More (Sir Thomas' father), Anne Cresacre (Sir Thomas' daughter-in-law), Sir Thomas More, John More (his only son), Cecily Heron (his youngest daughter), Elizabeth Dauncey (his second daughter), and Margaret Roper (his eldest daughter). On the right-hand side of the painting a new group of people has been added. Although skilfully integrated with their ancestors, it is obvious that they are extraneous because of the different costumes and more formal postures. The additional group, dressed in black with white ruffles, are : Thomas More II (Sir Thomas' grandson, and son of John and Anne), seated with his wife, Maria Scrope. The two men standing behind them represent their ten surviving children. John on the left was the eldest son, and Christopher Cresacre on the right, the youngest. The portrait on the wall above their heads is that of Anne Cresacre More, (daughter-in-law of Sir Thomas), mother of Thomas II and grandmother to his children.

It seems highly probable that Thomas II commissioned this painting as well as the other copies.⁶ This premise is substantiated when it is recalled that he was born and brought up in the More family home in Chelsea, and that he and his lineage were especially remembered in the last message Sir Thomas wrote before his execution: "Our Lorde blesse Thomas (that is Thomas II), and Austine (his brother), and all that they shall have."⁷ The significance of the Catholic network has been emphasised in the painting by featuring the coats of arms. Although all but three of them have been removed by the National Portrait Gallery along with two scrolls stating *Christiano Catholico More*, they would appear to have been a means of establishing a further sense of identity.⁸ These items were recently removed because they were not considered to have been Rowland Lockety's work, however, it has been argued that they could have been added either by Thomas II or his son Cresacre.⁹ The insertions suggest a definite claim to connections both with the network and the favoured line of descent.¹⁰

While there is no explicit proof that Thomas II and his family were involved with, or influenced by, the Jesuits, there are some indications to suggest that such a connection was highly probable.¹¹ Why, for instance, did the Mores move south from their family home at Barnburgh, Yorkshire in 1581, the year in which Jesuit activity was beginning to gain momentum? At this time a small Catholic community was beginning to form in the vicinity of their lesser estate in Lower Leyton, Essex.¹² Furthermore, members of the More family were presented regularly at the Quarter Sessions, Essex Assizes and Archdeacon's Court for their faith along with other recusants who are known to have fraternised with Jesuits.¹³ Perhaps even more indicative is the fact that Thomas II was imprisoned for four years on account of his religious belief.¹⁴ It is perhaps just as well that the painting was made after the raid on More's house and not before. A work of such dimensions¹⁵ could hardly have been concealed in one of the hiding places mentioned by Tesimond which had long been prepared in many Catholic homes as

a measure of security. These were for hiding "everything that could show that the house belonged to Catholics, such as books, altar vestments, pictures and everything of that sort."¹⁶ A family portrait may not be exactly what Tesimond had in mind when he made that statement, but it was without doubt evidence that could incriminate, that "could show that the house belonged to Catholics."

Maybe it was Thomas II's release from prison just prior to the original Holbein work becoming available that inspired the contrived painting; a painting which stressed both the continuity of the Catholic religion, and the significance of martyrdom for that cause. Although there is no direct evidence of a Jesuit connection here, the emphases are precisely the matters which the Jesuits stressed in their role as missionaries. Christopher Cresacre (already quoted), explained the importance of martyrdom to English Catholics in relation to his great grandfather: "His glorious martyrdom, and his death strengthened manie to suffer couragiously for the same cause", that same cause being, "the defence of justice and of the Catholike fayth"(sic).¹⁷

The recusant family in the painting manifests an appearance of suffering and fortitude. Their formal, serious demeanor is in sharp contrast to their ancestors. Note also the red books each member of the contemporary group is holding. The Council of Trent had recently stipulated the use of a unified liturgy throughout Christendom; a decree which was actively promulgated by the Jesuits and possibly implied in the painting. The display of crucifixes is also something only associated with papists at that time.

Finally, turning to the inscription at the bottom left-hand corner of the painting one discovers testimony which is to some extent enigmatic in its intent. The partly-Latin text which presents a brief description of each subject portrayed, ends with the words which when translated state: "In the 35th year of the reign of

Elizabeth A.D.1593 in the year of the world 5555".¹⁸ While the method of dating at the beginning of this statement is typical of that period, the latter is not. The reason for incorporating the date cannot be verified and so will be left open to conjecture. However, it will be disclosed that it was also used by a fellow Catholic similarly articulating his devout faith, Sir Thomas Tresham; an individual who was definitely both involved with, and influenced by, the Jesuits. It is to this man with his unique and cogent means of expression that our attention is now focused.

NOTES

- ¹This painting can be seen in the Tudor section of the National Portrait Gallery, London.
- ²Stanley Morison, *The Likeness of Thomas More, An Iconographical Survey of Three Generations* (New York, 1963) p.22.
- ³ Monsignor Daniel Shanahan, "The Family of St. Thomas More in Essex 1581-1640" *Essex Recusant* Vol.1 No.2 (August 1959) p.62.
- ⁴ *Ibid*
- ⁵ Christopher Cresacre More, *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1631) p.1.
- ⁶Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits in the National Portrait Gallery* Vol.2 (H.M.S.O. London, 1969) p.349.
- ⁷Daniel Shanahan, "The Family of St. Thomas More" *op.cit.* p.66.
- ⁸ Daniel Shanahan, "The Family of St. Thomas More" *Essex Recusant* Vol.16 No.2 (August 1974) p.58.
- ⁹*Ibid.*
- ¹⁰It is interesting to note that the painting was next found in the Arundel Collection owned by fellow Catholic Lord John Lumley (mentioned in Chapter 1). See Roy Strong *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits, op.cit.* p.349
- ¹¹Roy Strong, *Ibid.* All four of his sons were educated abroad and two became Secular Priests. One of these, also named Thomas, served in this capacity at Lady Montague's house in Battle, Sussex. See Chapter 1, Section ii. See also Shanahan *Essex Recusant* Vol.2 No.2 (August 1960) p.84. Christopher Cresacre studied for two years with the Jesuits. Shanahan, Vol.4 No.2 (August 1962) p.55.
- ¹²Daniel Shanahan, "The Family of St. Thomas More" *Essex Recusant* Vol.1 No.2 (August 1959) p.71
- ¹³See also the recusant rolls for this area.
- ¹⁴Daniel Shanahan, "The Family of St. Thomas More" *op.cit.*
- ¹⁵Size 10 feet x 3 feet.
- ¹⁶Father Tesimond describing the hiding places in a house some 12 miles out of London on the Oxford Road to which he and other priests were directed by Garnet to hide on the occasion of an imminent raid. P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet 1555-1606 and the Gunpowder Plot* (London, 1964) p.243

¹⁷Christopher Cresacre More, *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More*, *op.cit.* p.359

¹⁸Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, *op.cit.* p.346

CHAPTER 3. iii ARCHITECTURE: Sir Thomas Tresham

Sir Thomas Tresham was an important and integral part of an English Catholic network. He remained constant in his belief and suffered greatly as a result. Furthermore his specific predicament, combined with considerable religious zeal, gave rise to a curious form of articulation.

Both his family connections and the people with whom he was involved are indicative of Tresham's link with other Catholics. His first marriage was to Muriel, daughter of Robert Throckmorton whose family frequently recurs in the lists of recusants, while his second wife was Mary Vaux, sister of his life-long friend Lord William Vaux. The Vaux family were similarly known for their persistent adherence to the old faith.¹ Evidence also reveals continued interaction with members of the network already discussed. It was Tresham who was largely responsible for the Petition of Loyal Catholics to the Queen of 1585, and the later one addressed to James I.² When the threat of Spanish invasion necessitated interning certain members of the public for the protection of England, Tresham was confined alongside his two brothers-in-law, and others of the faith.³

Tresham was first implicated as a dangerous Catholic in the second year of the Jesuit mission, when he was charged with harbouring Edmund Campion. His first arraignment took place in the Star Chamber, where both his brothers-in-law were similarly accused. This event was significant since it heralded twenty-four years of persecution for Tresham, fifteen of which were spent in confinement.⁴ His association with the Jesuits can be traced intermittently through his life.⁵ It is therefore an enigma to discover that Father Tichbourne considered him an atheist since all the evidence of Tresham's life suggests the contrary.⁶ Father Thomas Hill, for example, voiced a favourable opinion in an illuminating letter written to Tresham just prior to his own expected execution:⁷ "I have an incredible desire to

behold the amiable countenance of all our confessed Catholics, and especially of yourself, who by the singular grace and assistance of God, have opposed yourself in defence of that cause *as a wall of brass against the forces of hostile domination* of whom I may boldly say as of another Moses, *if thou hast not stood in the breach against the violators of the Catholic Faith, many, I will not say have fallen, but would not have battled so stoutly in the lord.*"⁸

Sir Thomas Tresham paid dearly for his faith, both financially, and by forfeiting his liberty.⁹ In addition he spent a great deal of time and effort writing petitions and pleas in his defence and that of fellow sufferers. Apart from defending the practical side of his religion, Tresham gave creative expression to the spiritual, an aspect which was extremely important to him. His theological knowledge surprised Lord Hunsdon at the Star Chamber trial: "I had thought you had not been so well studied in divinity as it now seemeth you are"(sic). Tresham who had defended his case on the strength of the Vulgate and the early Fathers replied: "My Lords my studie is lytle; yet the most tyme I employe in studie ys in divintie" (sic).¹⁰ An interesting insight into the extent and quality of the "study in divintie"(sic) undertaken by Tresham, is revealed in a list of books discovered during a raid on his house at Hoxton on 27th August 1584. The list included:

"The Jesuit Testament in English
 Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis (part) ii
 Vauxs ' Catechism
 The First Book of Christian Exercise
 A Book of Prayer and Meditation (by Richard Hopkins, 1582)
 A Christian Directorie (by Robert Person, 1581)
 A Garland of Our Blessed Virgin (written manuscript)
 A Devout Treatise
 A Little Prymer
 Gioiello Cristiano (in Italian)
 Giardino Spirituale (in Italian)
 Le Liure de vraie et parfaicte oraison
 Hymni et Collecte Latine
 De Veritate Corporis Xti in Euchar (by Cuthberti Tunstall)
 The Historie of the Church of England (by Beede)
 A Prymer English and Latin
 FFoure Latine Prymers
 Tranquillitatis animi preservatio et monumentum ad sereniss

Pie afflicti animi meditationes divinaque remedia ad principem
Ye Greek Testament"(sic)¹¹

Tresham's commitment as he saw it may have been minimal but it was not perfunctory. The books demonstrate an academic interest in the subject especially in the range of contents and the languages in which they were written. Even more significant is the emphasis not only on Catholic theology but specifically that as practised by the Jesuits. Note also the books of Exercises and Meditations. While this religious attitude was not uncommon among fellow Catholics, Tresham's interpretation of the knowledge was fairly unique even by Elizabethan standards. For example, he took an increasing interest in mystical numbers and by associating a meaningful number with each word taken from a Biblical text he attempted to create a significant combination.¹² While imprisoned at Ely his imaginative form of creativity was utilized to decorate his cell with symbolic devices. It was there that he discovered the need for an obscure or equivocal means of expression: "And where some of my fellows having the crucifix paynted in ther chambers, the same was in ther absense washed owte and purposely defaced, yett ther armes, inscriptions &c to remayne. I therfor have hearin putt nothing wheratt offence ys to bee taken"(sic).¹³

The way in which Tresham solved the problem was to contrive devices of an emblematic or symbolic nature; devices which were intelligible to a greater or lesser extent depending on his specific intention, and for whom they were intended: " Most thinges in this contended ar so perspecuus of them selves that they nede no explaininge, and soome there ar which needeth explanation, for in impreeses (a type of emblem) yt observed to bee so putt downe as vulgarr apprehension and yet wyll redely bee interpreted by men of skyl, especially yf skilled that wherein the impresse or figuratore sene reacheth unto"(sic).¹⁴ Later Tresham modified this view slightly, by apologising for the 'fantastical' nature of his designs. He considered that the harder a conceit was to interpret the more efficacious would be

the results, "so long (ytt being discovered) ytt be perspicuously to the purpose"(sic).¹⁵ Initially a great deal of Tresham's creative output appears abstruse to the twentieth-century observer. However, a Catholic living in England at the end of the sixteenth-century would probably have gained some satisfaction from solving the cryptology. For behind it all were sermons related to Catholic doctrine, and a comment on the plight of those who could not practise it openly.

NOTES

¹Anstruther, *Vaux of Harrowden, op.cit.* p.95

²*Ibid.* p.154

³*Ibid.* p.173ff

⁴ Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham & His Buildings" *Reports and Papers of the Northampton Antiquarian Society* Vol. 65 Part II (1966) p.6.

⁵Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.98-99. Garnet's movements can be traced through Nicholas Owen's work (the principal maker of hiding holes) who "was so constantly in Garnet's company that he became known to the Council and to Catholics as Garnet's man who built priest holes in many homes, among them Rushton Hall in Northampton, Home of Sir Thomas Tresham." Garnet is also known to have stayed at Rushton Hall in 1605 on the return journey from a pilgrimage to Winifred's Well when Tresham had just died.

⁶It is likely that Father Tichbourne was in fact referring to his son, Francis Tresham, who was more radical in his approach to Catholicism, and was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot.

⁷Anstruther, *Vaux of Harrowden, op.cit.* p.278

⁸*Rushton Papers, op. cit.* p.114 cited in Anstruther, *Ibid.*

⁹ Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and His Buildings" *op.cit* p.7. The total cost of his faith was £7717.12.0d.

¹⁰Cited in J. Alfred Gotch, *The Buildings Erected in Northamptonshire by Sir Thomas Tresham* (Northampton and London 1883) p.7.

¹¹Cited in Anstruther, *Vaux of Harrowden, op.cit.* p.151-2

¹² *Ibid.* p.234

¹³ "The Manuscripts of T.B. Clarke-Thornhill" *Historical Manuscripts Commission* Vol.III. Introduced and prepared by Mrs S.C.Lomas (London, 1904) p.91.

¹⁴*Ibid*

¹⁵*Ibid.* p.xLvi

CHAPTER 3.iv ARCHITECTURE: Tresham's Buildings and their Religious Symbolism

The focal points of Tresham's religious zeal were the Trinity and the Passion. The reason he gave for their importance is interesting, if not entirely credible: "If it be demanded why I labour so much in the Trinity and the Passion of Christ to depaint in this chamber (a prison cell), this is the principal instance thereof: That at my last being hither committed, and I usually having my servants here allowed me to read nightly an hour to me after supper, it fortun'd that Fulcis, my then servant, reading in the *Christian Resolution*, in the Treatise of *Proof that there is a God, etc.*, there was upon a wainscot table at that instant three loud knocks (as if it had been with an iron hammer) given, to the great amazing of me and my two servants Fulcis and Nilkton"(sic).¹ The fact that this evidence apparently convinced Tresham of the significance of the Trinity is not entirely without logic, but its relevance to the Passion is obscure. It has also been suggested that his fascination with the Trinity was inspired through the connection with his own name; a notion which crops up frequently in the investigation of his work in the following section.² Whatever the motive these two doctrinal points form the pinnacle of Tresham's creativity and were expressed through the unlikely medium of architecture.

On being released from prison in 1593 Tresham commenced several significant buildings, but due to subsequent periods of internment, heavy fines, and his death in 1605, only one was completed while a second remains an unfinished testimony to his piety.³ These buildings are remarkable in their blatant affirmation of the Roman faith, blatant that is to an intelligent sixteenth-century observer. Less obvious is their reference to the plight of English Catholics and a possible Jesuit influence. What is immediately apparent on the other hand is the

profound and skilful use of a combination of Elizabethan creative techniques deliberately employed for didactic purposes.

Being buildings and not other forms of art, the immediate impact of Triangular Lodge and Lyveden New Bield is generated from the structures and their embellishments. Triangular Lodge, as the name implies, is completely triangular, an allegory of the Trinity. Lyveden New Bield was designed in the shape of the cruciform to give expression to Tresham's other theological preoccupation, the Passion. Symbolism not only influenced the structure of the buildings; it also pervades them in ornamental detail, especially that of an emblematic nature.

The use of emblems was a cultural phenomenon which permeated all aspects of art in this period, having its source in the combination of pictures and mottos presented in emblem books. The emblem at this time was a manifestation of the Elizabethan love of the conceit, combined with wit. Although not originating in England, it was absorbed from the Continent and moulded specifically as a distinct rhetorical figure for moral and religious purposes.⁴ There is evidence of the influence of emblems in painting, stained glass windows, jewellery, architecture, poetry, drama, literature and even in sermons.⁵

The emblem presents ideas in symbols which create an interplay of meaning between the picture and motto, and in the process incite investigation and interpretation. Before long the practice of meditation became connected with emblems and by the seventeenth century, Jesuits began utilizing the art to construct handbooks based on the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.⁶ In his emblem book *Parthenia Sacra* of 1633, Henry Hawkins of the Society explained through the allegory of a garden that the significance of each symbol could only be understood by degrees: "... a garden being so mysterious and delicious an Object, requires not to be rashly lookt upon, or perfunctoriously to be slighted over, but, as the manner is of

such as enter into a Garden, to glance at first thereon with a light regard, then to reflect upon it with a better heed, to find some gentle mysterie or conceipt upon it, to some use or other: and then liking it better, to review the same againe ... and so on until all is understood"(sic).⁷

Each symbol was thus strategically placed in the progressive scheme of the meditation. In the creative process the artist had to keep in mind the fact that the meaning of the symbol should not be immediately obvious, or conversely, be completely obscure or ambiguous. Understanding the significance of an emblem obviously also relied on familiarity with the subject. Here was an art form ideally suited to the needs of English Catholics, and Tresham applied it in the building of Triangular Lodge and Lyveden New Bield in a functional, didactic manner. Several suggestions can be made regarding Tresham's use of emblems. Firstly, they proclaimed and clarified Catholic doctrine, secondly, they stated the plight of the recusants, and lastly it is possible that they gave evidence of specific Jesuit influence and inspiration.

NOTES

¹Cited in John T. Page, *Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings* (Rothwell, 1903) p.7.

²Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *Reports and Papers of the Northamptonshire Antiquarian Society* Vol.65 Part II (1964-65) p.15. Isham suggests that the name was pronounced 'Traysam'. It was usually written 'Tressam' or 'Tresame', thus emphasizing the concept of three which was also featured in his coat of arms. The trefoil is similarly a symbol for the Trinity. Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and His Buildings" *op.cit.* p.15

³ Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" Vol.66 (1966) p.16.

⁴Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (London, 1948)

⁵Peter M. Daly, *Literature in the Light of the Emblem* (Toronto, 1979) p.176

⁶G.Richard Dimler, "The Egg as Emblem: Genesis and Development of a Jesuit Emblem Book" *Studies in Iconography* Vol.2 (1976) p.87

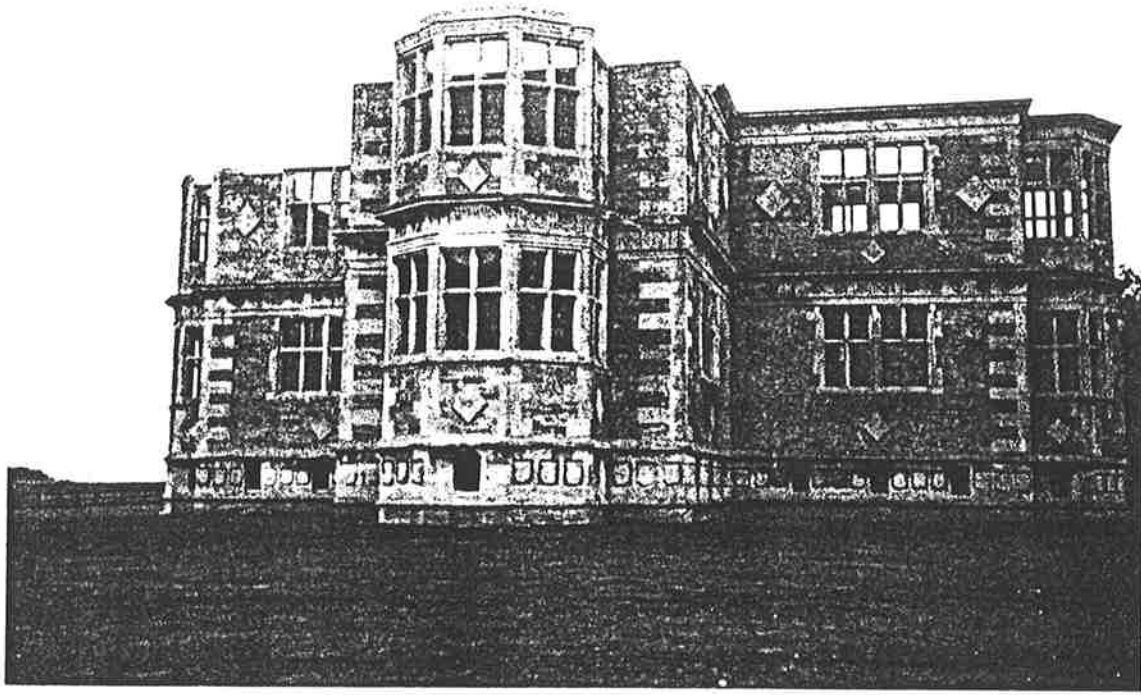
⁷Cited in Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books, op.cit.* p.184

CHAPTER 3.v ARCHITECTURE: Lyveden New Bield and Triangular Lodge

Sir Thomas Tresham may have been an unusual example of English Catholicism, but he appears to have had a specific purpose in his architectural projects. All that remains of Lyveden New Bield is the outer shell of two floors, but due to the scale of the design, one can assume that its purpose was of some consequence. The notion that it was designed as a Jesuit seminary¹ appears somewhat ambitious in the light of the prevailing circumstances, even for a 'stubborn papist'. However, a building in such a secluded location would have served admirably for a retreat, and it would have been ideally suitable as a Mass Centre for local recusants. Whatever the practical purpose Tresham had in mind for Lyveden, he did not limit it to that level; rather he conceived of a building that could function also as a spiritually didactic tool. The structure, ornamentation and meaning all contrive towards one end: definition and explanation of the Passion. Although this theme was significant for Catholics and Protestant alike, the manner in which it was achieved demonstrates a Catholic tendency.

The fundamental doctrine of the Passion is evident in the basic plan of the building which is cruciform. Tresham's fascination with mystical numbers was similarly utilized to contribute to the effect. Each arm of the cross ends in seven faces of five feet each. Seven was the number associated with God, and the number five represented salvation.² Due to the state of dilapidation only a few of the texts which surround the building are discernable. However, those that are still legible throw some light on Tresham's attitude to the Passion. This testimony gives evidence of a faith shaped by both the positive and negative forces in his life (see illustration 3):

Illustration 3. Lyveden New Bield.



Set on the frieze above the first floor windows on the inside of the eastern and northern arms of the cross is a text which explains the motivation behind the entire structure: 'MIHI AUTEM ABSIT GLORIARI NISI IN CRUCE DOMINI NOSTRI XP'. Taken from Galatians 6:14, this verse not only expresses Tresham's own theological interest but reflects the doctrine particularly stressed by the missionary priests: *Let it not be that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*. It also happens to be the Introit for the Maundy Thursday Mass *In Coena Domini*.³ On the opposite walls are the remnants of a text proclaiming the reverse side of the doctrine of the cross, that which applies to unbelievers, 'VERBUM AUTEM CRUCIS PEREUNTIBUS QUIDEM STULTITIA EST'. Found in Corinthians 1:18, this is possibly a reference to the position of English Protestants especially when contrasted with that of the Catholics, since the whole verse states: *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; [but unto us which are saved it is the power of God]*. The deterioration of Lyveden New Bield has not allowed more than a few other fragmented texts to remain for posterity. They however, illustrate a very pronounced glorification of the Virgin Mary. 'JESUS BEATUS VENTER' (Jesus, blessed the womb), 'MARIA VIRGO SPONSA INNUPTA' (Maria, Virgin, unwedded spouse), and 'BENEDIXIT TE DEUS IN AETERNUM MARIA' (God bless thee forever Maria).⁴ It should be recalled that the Jesuits particularly encouraged devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary⁵. One of the objectives of William Allen and Robert Persons was to provide an English translation of the *Tridenine Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*.⁶

Possibly the most telling texts are those that were contributed specifically to fit the end and focal point of each arm of the cross. 'JESUS MUNDI SALUS' (Jesus the salvation of the world) has been placed in order to feature the word 'Jesus' on the most conspicuous wall face left of the bay. While the text 'GAUDE MATER VIRGO MARIA' (Rejoice O Mother Virgin Mary) has been designed to balance it so that the word 'Maria' occurs in the same place on the

right-hand of the bay. The latter text which has been altered slightly to achieve the correct number of letters is from the Tract in Masses of Our Lady, from Septuagesima to the Purification.⁷ The significance of these focal texts is perhaps illustrated in a letter written to Tresham, imprisoned yet again, at Ely in 1597 for recusancy. The letter from his wife opens with the words, "Jesu Mary", and continues, "Good Tres ..."8

It appears that details of Tresham's buildings were always as carefully considered as the main structure, and the decoration of the frieze is no exception. Once again his interest in mystical numbers is evident in the choice of seven emblems which are repeated around the building between the ground and first floors. Five of these emblems follow the theme of the Passion as they depict episodes of the drama in chronological order (see illustration 4). The story begins with the temptation of Judas represented by the money-bag and thirty pieces of silver. The second emblem implies the capture of Jesus with swords, halberds, torches and a lantern all enclosed in a twisted rope. Note that the ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus, is attached to one of the swords, and also that there are seven items in all.

Jesus' trial is the subject of the third emblem with a scourge, reed, sceptre, crown of thorns and cock. The fourth scene in the Passion story is the crucifixion itself, here symbolized by seven objects: a ladder, sponge, spear, hammer and pincers surround the focal point, the cross. Looped over the cross is the crown of thorns, and on the top is a Tau cross,⁹ while the complete emblem is encased within a crown of thorns. Since it was also the initial for the family name, the Tau cross was considered significant to the Treshams as a symbol of salvation.¹⁰ The final part of the Passion is exemplified through the seamless garment and three dice enclosed in a pattern of three helmets interspersed with three sets of gauntlets. This emblem is obviously also intended to stress the number three.

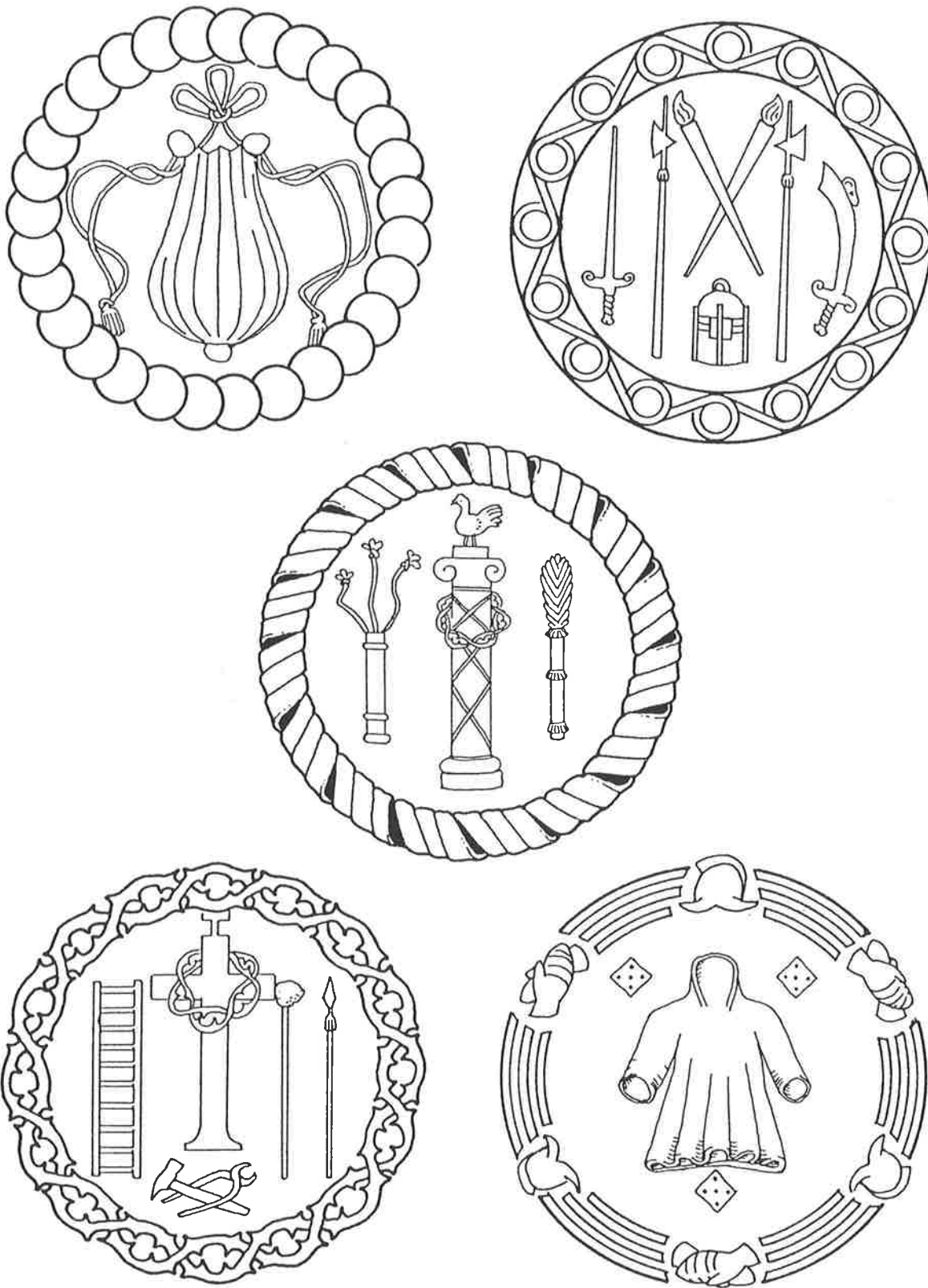


Illustration 4 . Emblems at Lyveden New Bield.

While departing from the direct theme of the Passion the remaining two emblems are no less interesting (see illustration 5):

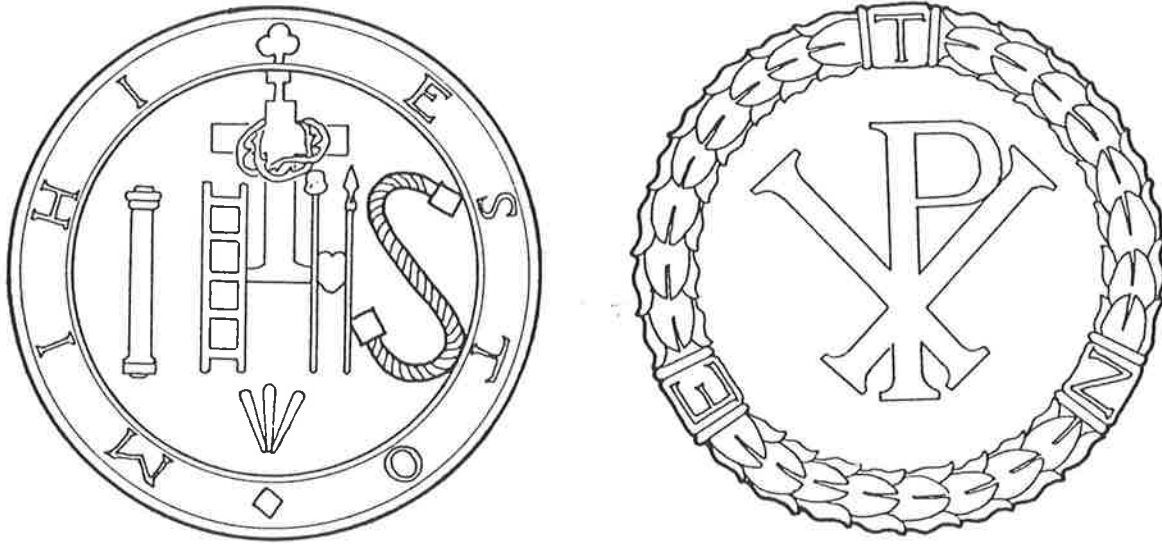


Illustration 5. Emblems at Lyveden New Bield.

The first of these consists of the monogram X.P. (the Greek form of Christ's name), surrounded by an olive wreath in which the letters E.T.N. are featured. Since the Greek abbreviation for the words 'all conquering'¹¹ appear in the wreath of victory, it is possible that the victory won in Christ's name is alluding to the band of missionaries commonly referred to as the Soldiers of Christ:

"that noble traine,
That fight with word and not with sword,
And Christ their capitaine"(sic).¹²

The final emblem seems to be a reference to Tresham's association with the Jesuits, and may also be an acknowledgement of his debt to them. The outer band contains the motto 'ESTO MIHI', the beginning of a Latin text which is both part of the Introit for Quinquagesima (the last Sunday before Lent), and the second verse of psalm 30, the English translation of which reads as follows: *Be thou [to me a God, a protector and a house of refuge to save me]*. Although the psalmist was referring

to God as the Protector and refuge, the way in which the text is used to circle the Jesuit monogram implies a connection between them. In this time of persecution some English Catholics looked to the Jesuits as intermediaries in their desire for spiritual salvation and eternal refuge. Note that the monogram in this emblem has been ingeniously contrived from the symbols of the Passion. The letters I.H.S. being the first letters of the name 'Jesus' in Greek, are often used as a Christian symbol. Ignatius adopted the symbol as his seal, and later Generals adapted it slightly for their own use adding the three nails of the cross to represent obedience, poverty and chastity¹³(see illustrations 6 and 7). Here then, is a combined reference to the Society of Jesus and the Passion. In addition, this emblem not only incorporates symbols of the Society and the Passion, it also includes reference to Tresham himself through the use of the Tau cross and the trefoil above the cross. As has already been mentioned, the former can be read as the initial 'T', and the trefoil was a feature in his coat of arms. Thus, he created a skilful integration of symbols which appears to link the Passion of Christ, the Jesuits and the family name of Tresham.

Triangular Lodge

Triangular Lodge is perhaps more impressive than Lyveden New Bield since all Tresham's ideas were carried to fruition in its completion. As the title suggests it is a completely triangular building giving expression to his other theological preoccupation, the Trinity. Similar to the beliefs demonstrated at Lyveden New Bield, the doctrine of the Trinity expounded in Triangular Lodge was not confined to Catholics alone but was proclaimed by all Christians. However, Tresham's treatment of it suggests a distinctive Catholic outlook. The overall effect of Triangular Lodge has an immediate and profound impact due to its unusual appearance (see illustration 8). It is this building particularly which demonstrates the connection Tresham sought between the Trinity and his name. Above the

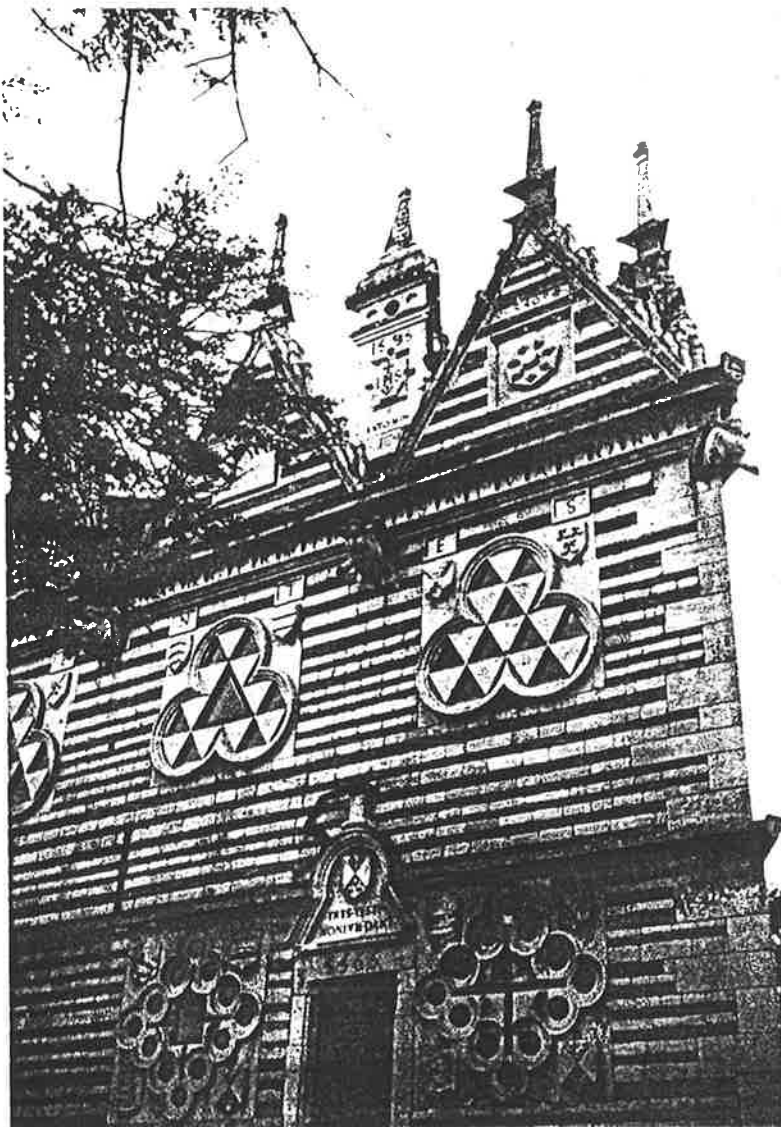
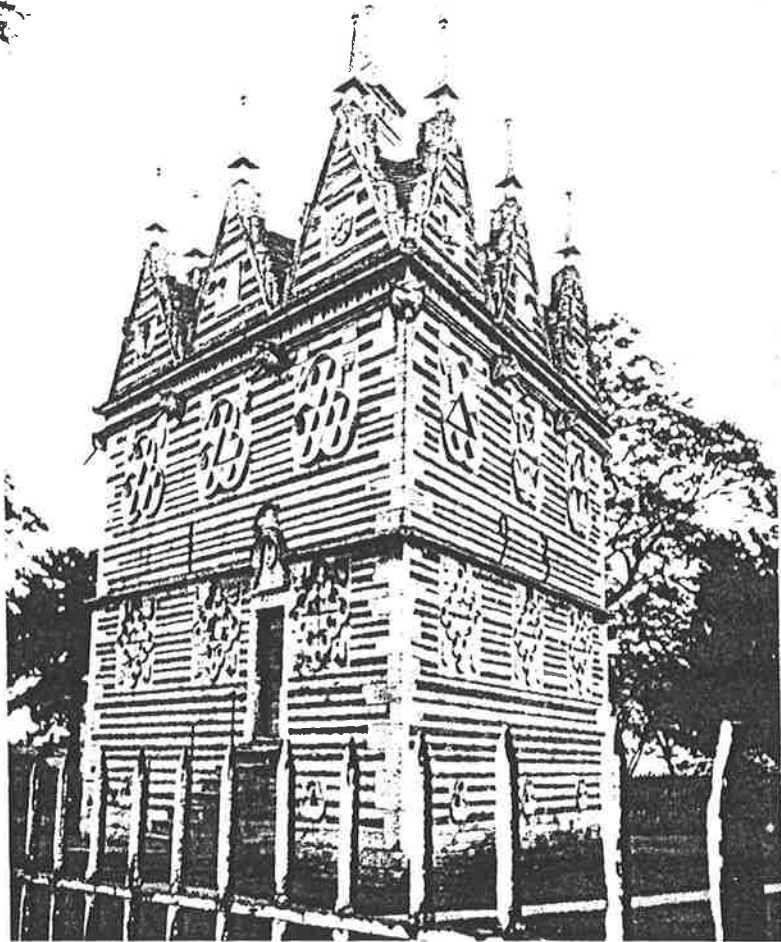


Illustration 6. The Seal of Ignatius Loyola



Illustration 7. Henry Garnet's Letter to Anne Vaux Written in the Tower.

Illustration 8. Triangular Lodge.



doorway on the south-east side of the building the following inscription states: 'TRES TESTIMONIUM DANT'. Since this aspect of a building was that specifically used to declare its purpose and dedication,¹⁴ the integration of meanings is significant. Taken from 1 John 5:7 the entire verse reads as follows: [*For there are] three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one],*¹⁵ an apt testimony for such a building. For Tresham who bore record on earth through his building Triangular Lodge, the dual interpretation is implied by his coat of arms placed immediately above the text. Note also the date 5555, which also occurs on the painting of Sir Thomas More and his descendants.

Once again there is evidence of Tresham's fascination with numbers as the number three has been used wherever possible to emphasize its significance. There are three windows adjoining each of the three sides of the structure on each of the three floors; moreover the windows are either triangles or trefoils. There are three triangular gables to each side, which are decorated with triangular shaped pinacles. Even the measurements of the building are in multiples of three. For example, each side measures 33 feet;¹⁶ a possible reference to the Passion? Furthermore, the texts inscribed on the walls are each formed of 33 letters.¹⁷

In addition to the stress given to triplicity, several devices have been chosen to unify this concept, thus elucidating the doctrinal teaching of the Trinity (Three in one and one in Three). In each of the two top corners of the highest windows are single letters which when connected together around the entire building, form the phrase, 'MENTES TUORUM VISITA', (Visit the minds [of thy people]).¹⁸ If the function of Triangular Lodge was understood in terms of an inspiration for meditation, Tresham could not have chosen a more pertinent text. Placed between these windows there are a series of gargoyles each of which carry a letter. Once again it is the cumulation of letters which throws light on the

meaning. A sixteenth-century observer familiar with Latin and the Mass text would have been able to deduce that the initials: 'S. S. S. D. D. S. Q. E. E. Q. E. Q. V. E.' represent: *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth Qui Erat Et Qui Est Qui Venturus Est*. Apart from the word Sabaoth (which replaces Omnipotens), this text comes from Revelation 4:6. Knowing the way in which Tresham took such care with details, the alteration can hardly have been an error. The phrase *Dominus Deus Sabaoth* is a very common Biblical phrase and was also found in the English Communion Service. However it is possible that it also alluded to the Mass, since the Sanctus of the Mass begins, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts*, whereas the words of the biblical verse are, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is and is to come*. The most obvious text which contributes to unity of design is that placed above each of the three sundials, the feature of the central gable on each side of the structure. Read in conjunction, the words, 'RESPICITE NON MIHI SOLI LABORAVI' appear to explain the purpose of the building. *Consider that I laboured not for myself only.*¹⁹ Triangular Lodge was not merely built to express Tresham's fervent faith and piety, but was a practical aid for the salvation of others. It was a sermon in stone, a means of directing, and inspiring meditation.

Observation reveals that the ornamentation of Triangular Lodge was also not only devised for aesthetic qualities, but for didactic purposes. On closer inspection for example, it becomes evident that each of the three sides have been designed to represent one of the persons of the Trinity. Both the text and emblems on the south-east wall personify God the Father (see illustration 9).

Along the frieze above the highest windows the text comprising thirty three letters declares: 'APERIATUR TERRA ET GEMINET SALVATORUM'. Taken from Isaiah 45:8, the part chosen by Tresham is perhaps the essence of the need uppermost in the minds of English Catholics; whereas the entire verse appears to

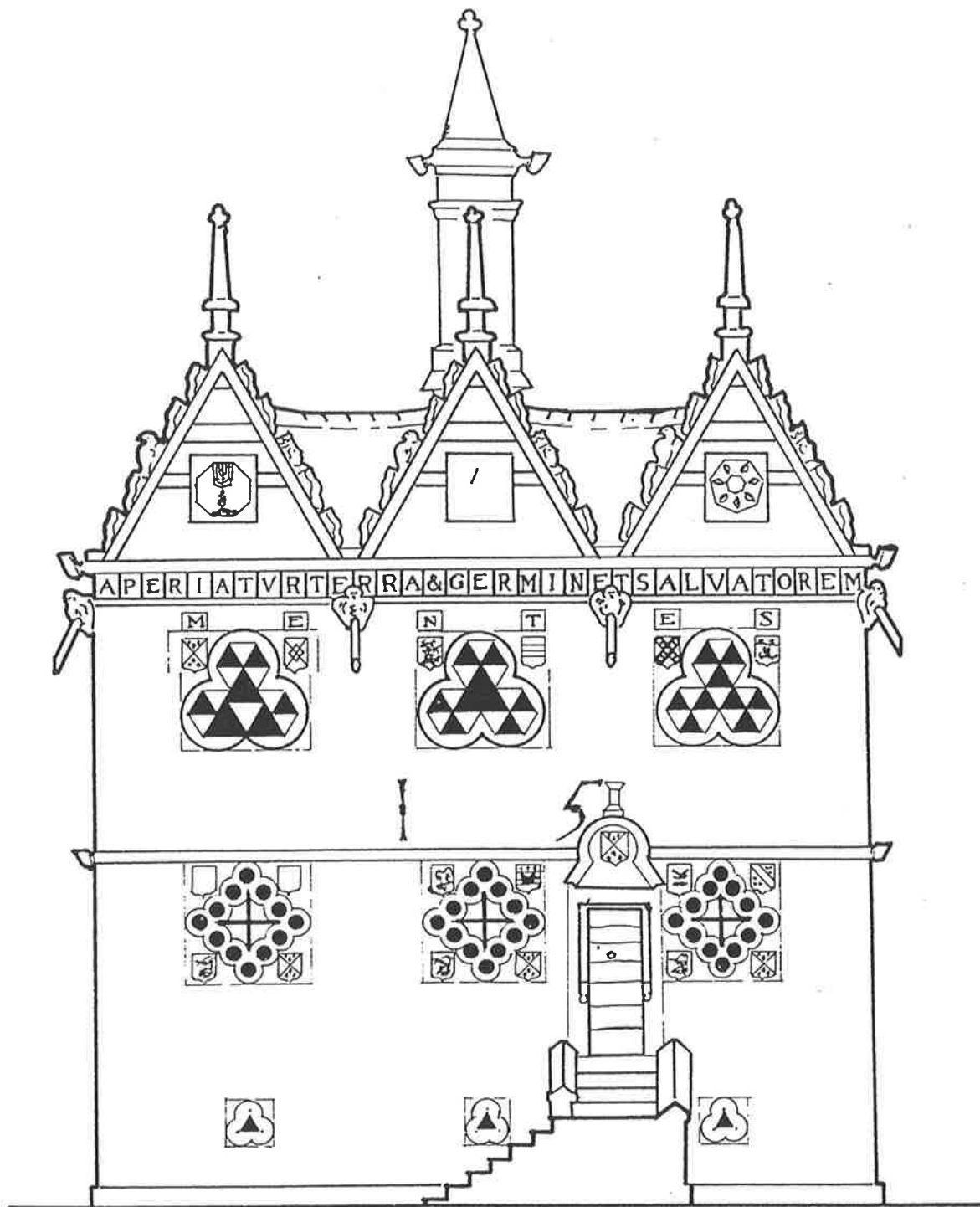


Illustration 9. South East Face of Triangular Lodge.

extend this in a plea for recognition and acceptance of the 'rightful' faith in a country where it was persecuted. [*Drop down ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness:] let the earth be opened and bud forth a saviour, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord your God have created it*]. This allusion to the power of the omnipotent God of the Old Testament would not go unnoticed by Tresham's contemporaries. The concept of God the Father is also reflected in the choice of emblems featured on the gables either side of the sundials. Both pictures incorporate the number seven, the number which has already been associated with the Godhead. The two emblems depict the seven branched candlestick and the seven eyes of God²⁰ (see illustration 10):

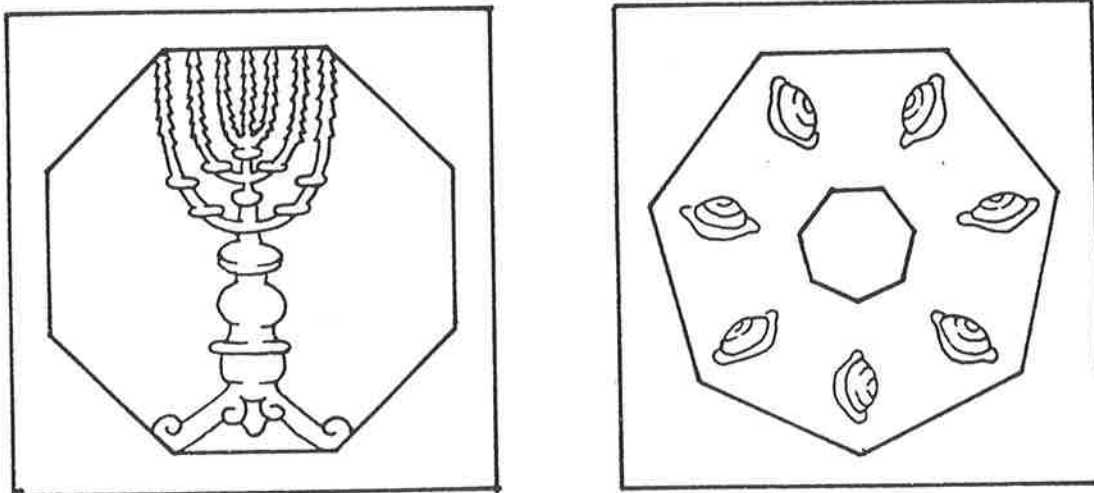


Illustration 10. Emblems on the South East Face of
Triangular Lodge.

The north face of Triangular Lodge was designed to symbolise God the Son (see illustration 11). The text 'QUI SEPARBIT NOS A CHARITATE CHRISTI' conveys this while concurrently inferring to the specific plight of the Catholics.

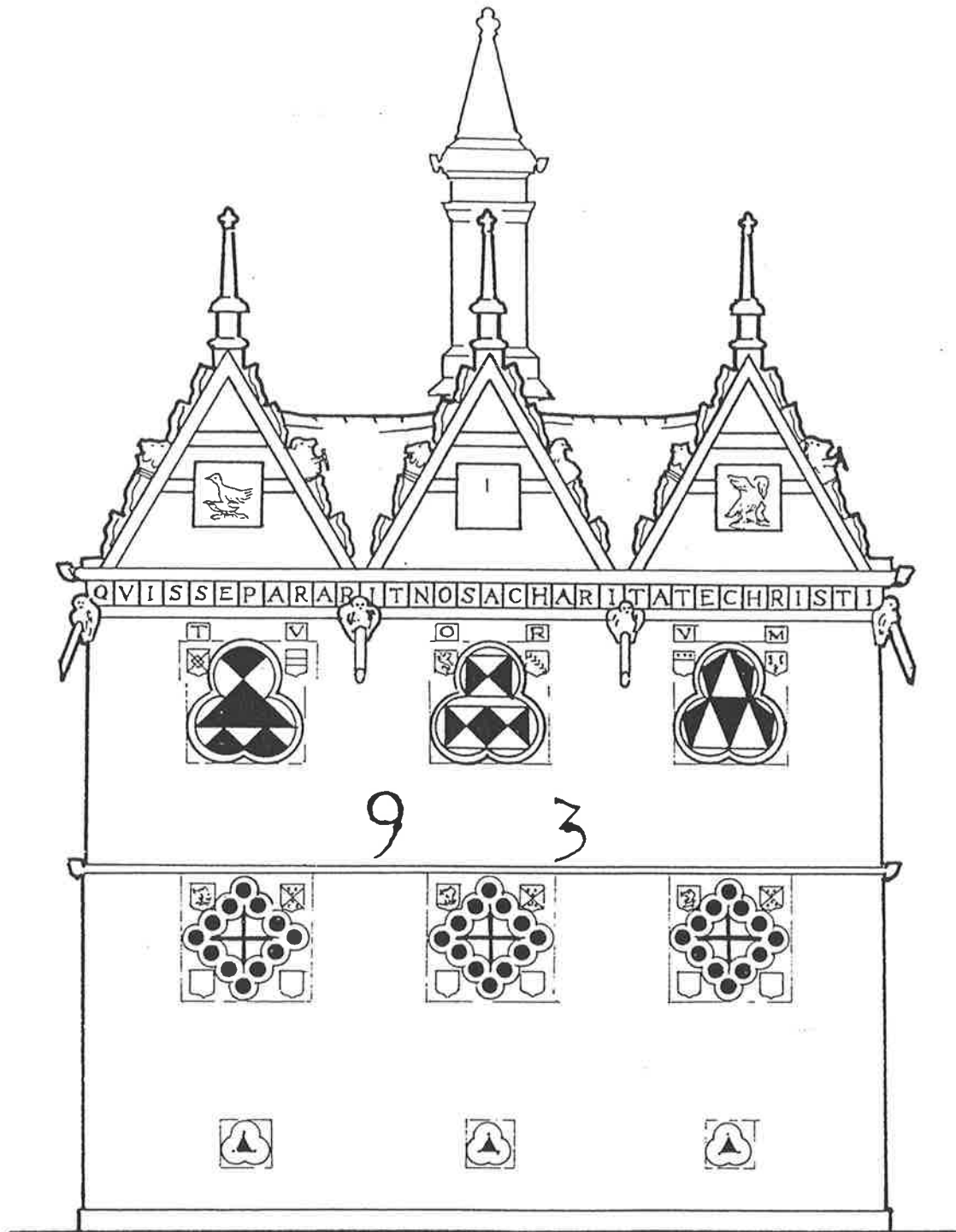


Illustration 11. North Face of Triangular Lodge.

Although Tresham only employed the prerequisite number of letters, the entire passage from Romans 8 was relevant, and probably implied:

35. *Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation: or distress,? or famine? or nakedness, or danger? or persecution or ? or the sword?*
36. *(As it is written: For thy sake we are put to death all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter).*
37. *But in all these things we overcome because of him that hath loved us.*
38. *For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might,*
39. *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

This text also seems to express the essence of the situation experienced by a persecuted recusant.

The emblems on this face of the building are particularly interesting as they convey the dual roles of Christ the Shepherd, and Christ the Living Sacrifice (see illustration 12):

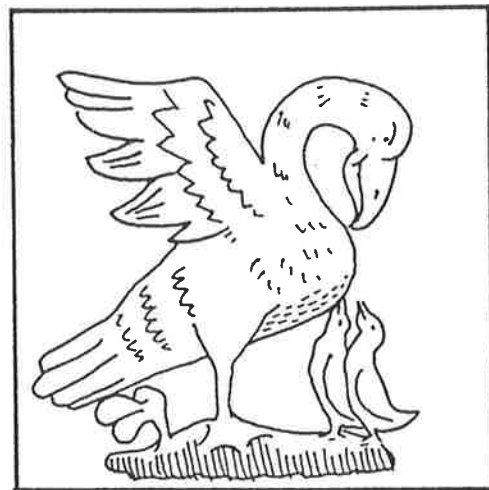
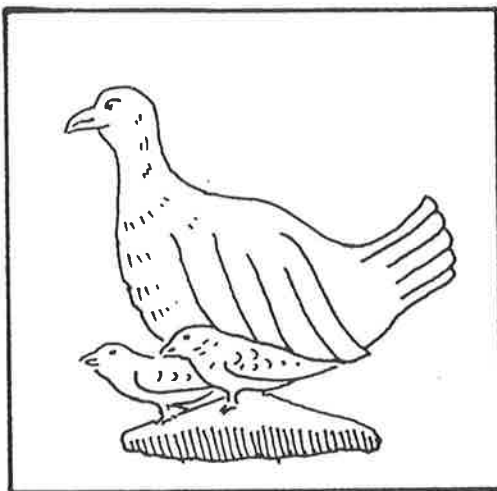


Illustration 12. Emblems on the North Face of Triangular Lodge.

On the left-hand gable is a hen and her chickens, a symbol frequently associated with Christ and his flock,²¹ since Luke 13:34, states: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.* The allegory is also not inappropriate to the perceived mission of the Jesuits.

The right-hand emblem depicts the pelican in her piety, a symbol similarly linked to Christ, but in his role as Saviour. It was thought that the pelican fed her young by shedding her own blood. As an old Christian idea it can be traced back at least as far as Augustine,²² but by the sixteenth century its use was widespread in both a sacred and secular context. Shakespeare, for example, used the concept in *Hamlet*. In Act IV Scene 5, Laertes seeking revenge for his father's murder, also demonstrates gratitude towards those that loved him:

"To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms
And like the life-rending pelican
Repast them with my blood."

George Wither likewise included the concept in his book of emblems of 1635²³ (see illustration 13 'Pelican in Her Piety'). However, although common to all, the 'pelican in her piety' appears to have had particular meaning for recusants. There is evidence that Lord Lumley owned a marble version of this sacrificial bird which was originally displayed on a tall column at Nonesuch Palace.²⁴ Furthermore, Robert Southwell used it to great effect in his poem *Christ's Bloody Sweat* as he compared the apparent incongruities of fire and blood as agents of salvation:

"He Pelicans, He Phenix fate doth prove,
Whom flames consume, whom streames enforce to die,
How burneth bloud, how bleedeth burning love?
Can one in flame and streame both bathe and frie?
How could he joine a Phenix Fiery paines
In fainting Pelicans still bleeding vaines?"²⁵

Our Pelican, by bleeding, thus,
Fulfill'd the Law, and cured Vs.



ILLVSTR. XX.

Book. 3

Looke here, and marke (her sickly birds to feed)
How freely this kinde *Pelican* doth bleed.
See, how (when other *Salves* could not be found)
To cure their sorrowes, she, her selfe doth wound;
And, when this holy *Emblem*, thou shalt see,
Lift up thy soule to him, who dy'd for thee.
For, this our *Hieroglyphick* would expresse
That *Pelican*, which in the *Wildernesse*
Of this vast *World*, was left (as all alone)
Our miserable *Nature* to bemone;
And, in whose eyes, the teares of pittie flood,
When he beheld his owne unthankfull *Brood*
His *Favours*, and his *Mercies*, then, contemne,
When with his wings he would have brooded them:

Illustration 13. 'Pelican in Her Piety'

John Gerard conveyed the significance of both the hen and pelican symbols in his description of the altar vestments at Harrowden Hall, a neighbouring recusant household which Tresham is known to have visited²⁶: "... for the great feasts we had a golden crucifix a foot high. It had a pelican carved on the top, and on the right arm an eagle with outstretched wings carrying on its back its little ones, who were learning to fly, and on the left arm a phoenix expiring in flames so that it might leave behind an offspring; and at the foot was a hen gathering her chickens under her wings."²⁷

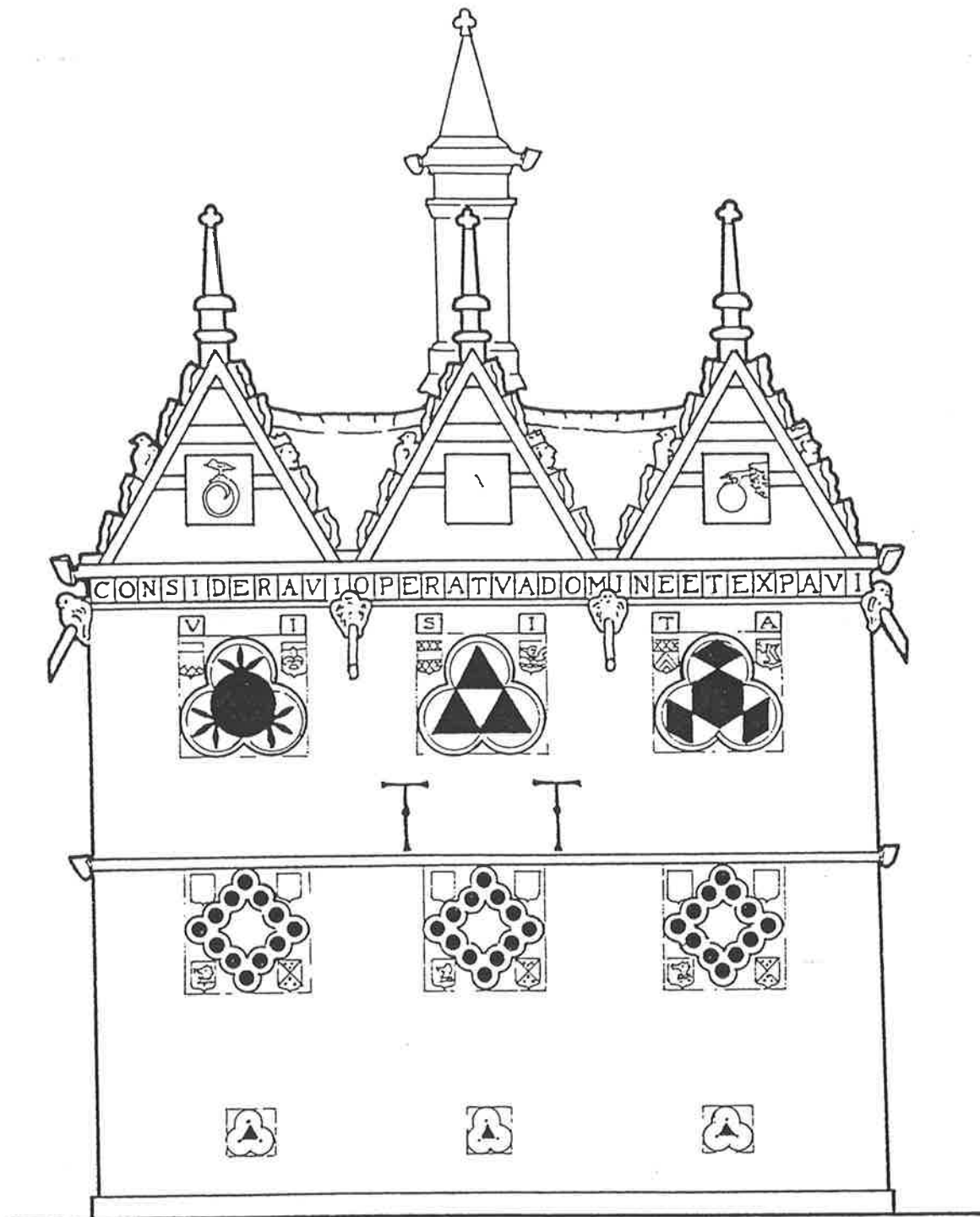


Illustration 14. South-West Face of Triangular Lodge.

The third wall of Triangular Lodge which faces south-west signifies God the Holy Spirit. (see illustration 14) The text 'CONSIDERAVI OPERA TUA DOMINE ET EXPAVI' (*I have considered thy works O' Lord and have been afraid*), is taken from the Missa Praesantificatorum, the Mass for Good Friday.²⁸ The emblems also allude to manifestations of God, not an easy subject to represent (see illustration 15).

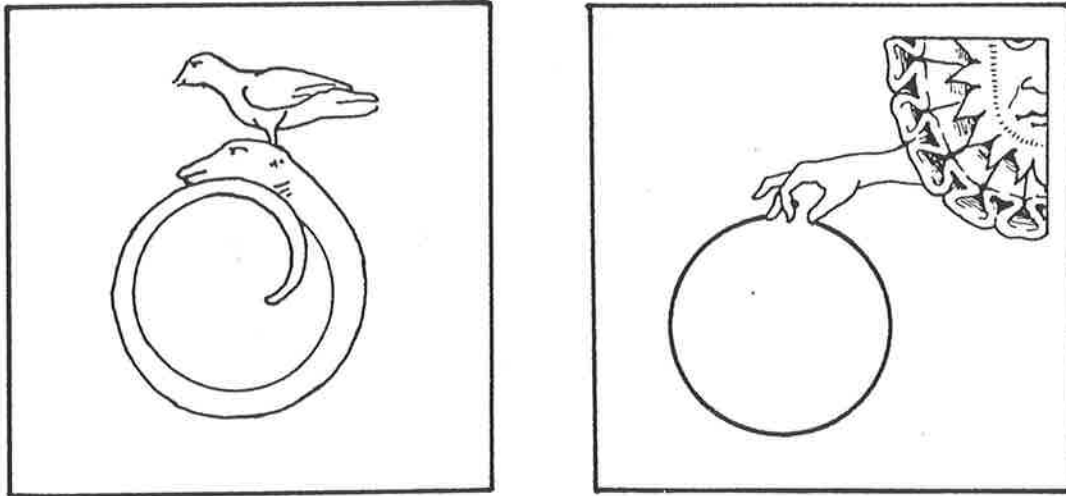


Illustration 15. Emblems on the South West Face of Triangular Lodge.

Tresham chose the dove and serpent encircling the globe, and the sun or pentecostal fire holding on to the globe. Both pictures imply the action of the Holy Spirit on the world. Since the dove symbolises the Holy Spirit and peace, and the joined serpent, eternity, the accumulated meanings need no further explanation. Similarly, the pentecostal fire holding the globe is self-explanatory.

The dates inscribed on Triangular Lodge have caused much speculation as some are explicit, while others obscure. Prominently displayed around the entire building between the two floors is the date 1593 and the letters T.T.; an obvious reference to Sir Thomas and the date on which the project was begun. The date on the chimney is similarly perspicuous, since 1595 was the date that the chimney

was erected and the building completed.²⁹ The remaining dates, however, appear largely abstruse, especially since some of them apparently refer to dates in the future. A date which has already been considered however, is that which appears not only above the doorway of Triangular Lodge but also on Roland Lockey's painting of the More family: 5555. Since it is known that both these works were conceived in the year 1595 there is apparently a connection between the painting and building. If the latter date is subtracted from the first, the answer 3962 BC, is the year in which the Creation was believed to have occurred.³⁰ Was it coincidence that both these Catholics chose to express their faith, albeit by different means, in the year 1593 or, 5555? What is also thought provoking is that 1593 to 1595 has been identified as the period when Byrd published his three settings of the Mass.³¹

Several theories have been suggested to explain the four dates inscribed above the emblems,³² but the most plausible is that offered by M.Jordain.³³ Knowing Tresham's interest in numbers and their potential for manipulation, she recognised a like-mind in the person of a certain John Securis. His calendar printed in the year Anno Domino 5538, suggested a theory which involves subtraction of the date 1593, the year of Triangular Lodge's inception, from the given dates. This theory seems the more persuasive since the resulting dates substantiate the character of each emblem, and the particular aspect of the Trinity expounded on that wall. Thus:

SOUTH-EAST SIDE (God the Father)

<i>Given Date</i>		<i>Date of Inception</i>	=	<i>Result</i>	<i>Emblem</i>
3898	minus	1593	=	2305 BC date of the flood	Seven- branched candle-stick
3509	minus	1593	=	1916 BC date of Abraham's call	Seven eyes of God

NORTH SIDE (God the Son)

<i>Given Date</i>		<i>Date of Inception</i>	=	<i>Result</i>	<i>Emblem</i>
1641	minus	1593	=	48 AD Death of the B.V.Mary	Hen and Chickens
1626	minus	1593	=	33 AD Date of the Passion	'Pelican in her piety'

The following dates need no interpretation and are of a more personal nature:

SOUTH-WEST SIDE (God the Holy Spirit)

<i>Given Date</i>		<i>Emblem</i>
1595	The completion of Triangular Lodge	Serpent, Dove, Globe
1580	Reconciliation to the faith, ³⁴ and the beginning of the Jesuit mission	Pentecostal Fire and Globe

Assuming this scheme is in fact behind Tresham's reasoning, it is possible that his own religious experiences and the Jesuit mission were interpreted and recorded as manifestations of the Holy Spirit. This particular form of reasoning may also explain why Byrd ended his dedication of the *Gradualia* Book II (to Sir John Petre), with the words, "The third day of April in the year of man's salvation restored 1607."

If the construction of Triangular Lodge was understood as an expression of the work of the Holy Spirit then the conception of its chimney was true inspiration,

since it is the most profound feature of the building. In accord with the rest of the structure the chimney is also triangular, but in contrast it is also a symbol of, and a meditation on, the Mass. (see illustration 16) For this reason the emblems and their mottos are perhaps the most significant to Tresham and his fellow Catholics *in captivitate*. Displayed on the north face is the symbol of the Lamb of God set in a square frame. The four sides of the square possibly represent the evangelists as the number four is also reflected in the four lettered motto 'ECCE'. The relevance of the word ECCE was a direct reference to the Mass, since the priest spoke these words when giving communion. *Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollis peccata mundi*. (Behold the Lamb of God, behold he: who takest away the sins of the world). It is worth remembering that the Lamb of God represents the sacrificial significance of Christ; and it was the sacrificial aspect of the Mass that was the most hotly disputed doctrine during the Reformation, and was rejected by Protestants. Seen in this context, open display of such a symbol was clearly a defiant stand for the Roman faith.³⁵

The emblem on the south-west side is a Tau cross in a chalice contained within a pentagon, the numerical concept is augmented by the five lettered motto: 'SALUS' (Salvation) The number five was associated with Salvation,³⁶ and the word Salus occurred in the Mass text as the priest prepared to drink from the chalice. *I will take the chalice of Salvation*. The Tau cross was understood by Tresham to be a "Salvation-bearing symbol" in addition to its ancient meaning of eternal life.³⁷ The Greek 'T' can also be perceived as Tresham representing himself as he seeks personal salvation in the eternal life.

The final side of the chimney faces south-east, the side on which one expects to find the dedication of a building,³⁸ as was demonstrated in the testimony above the door. It is here that a reference has possibly been made to the

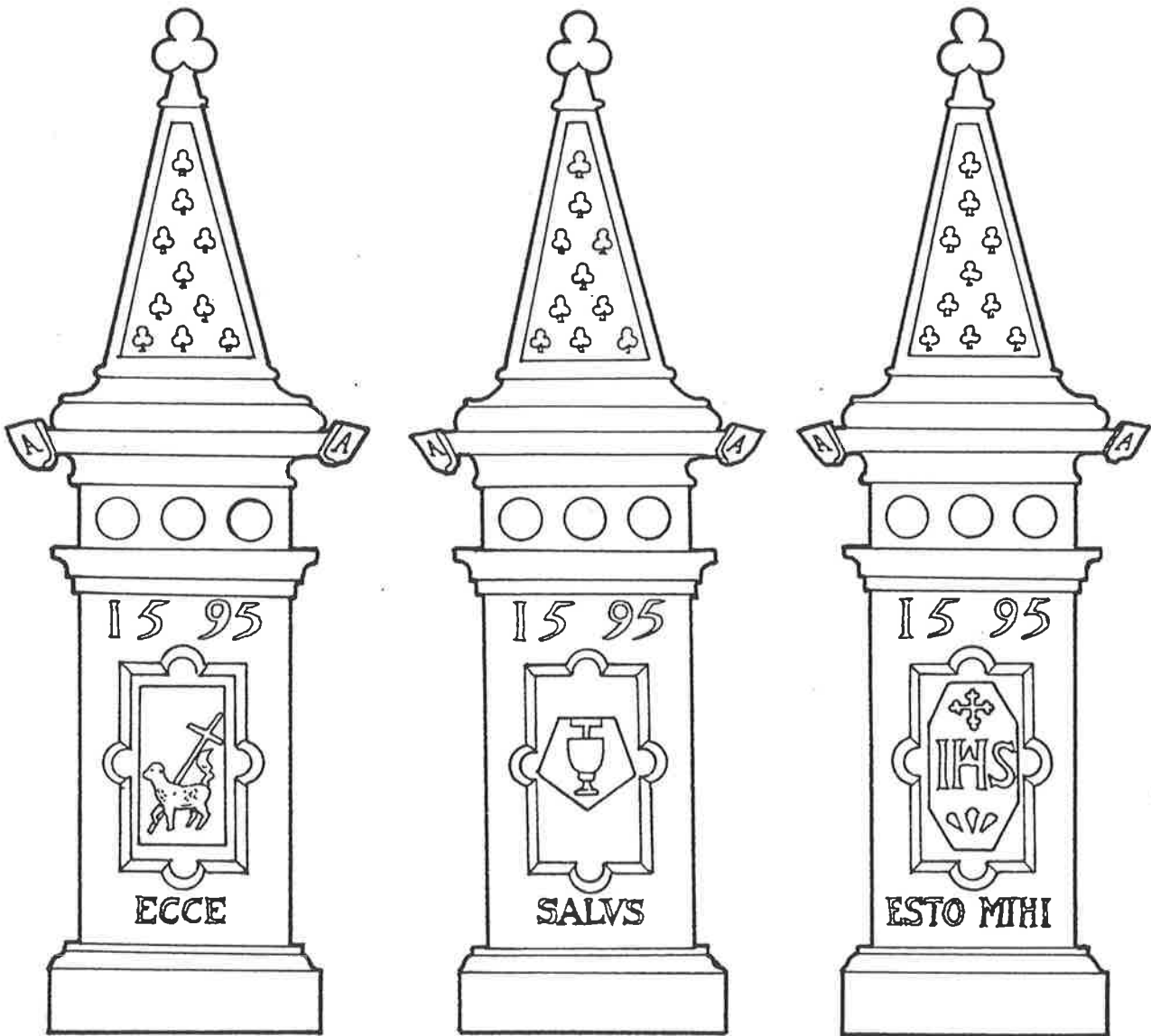


Illustration 16. The Three Faces of the Chimney at Triangular Lodge.

Jesuit mission since the monogram of the Society is displayed in an octagon. The octagon is the symbol of regeneration (baptismal fonts are always octagonal for that reason), and has been reinforced with an eight lettered motto, 'ESTO MIHI', (Be thou/you [to me a God, a protector and a house of refuge to same me]). This text is already familiar since it was featured at Lyveden New Bield and similarly linked to the Jesuit monogram. Whether the idea behind this motto had similar implications cannot be proved, but it is interesting to consider the significance of the octagon with which it is framed and recall that Tresham was reconciled to the faith through the Jesuits. In this emblem it appears that Tresham has integrated a dedication to the Jesuits for their roles of regeneration and succour especially in relation to himself.

Central as the theology of the Mass was to the Catholic faith especially in terms of the mission, and central as Tresham's analogy of it is to the Triangular Lodge, there is one more point which encapsulates the essence of the doctrine. Inside the building there is no visible means of support for the chimney. It appears a mystery. The fact is no mere accident but was especially contrived by Tresham. On the 28th June 1595 according to his papers, a wooden cross beam was constructed specifically to support the chimney in order to create the desired effect,³⁹ an illustration of the mystery of transubstantiation. The mystery of the Mass itself, *mysterium fidei*.

While there is no conclusive evidence demonstrating that Tresham was specifically influenced by Jesuits, it does appear plausible that he intended Catholic observers to gain inspiration from his buildings. Similarly, despite the fact that when considered in isolation, the details may not be decisive, (the cumulative effect) taken as a whole, together with the use of Latin, convincingly suggests their Catholic origin and intention.

NOTES

- ¹Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *op.cit.* p.28
- ² M. Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings" in (ed.) Alice Dryden *Memorials of Old Northamptonshire* (London, 1903) p.142
- ³Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *op.cit.* p.28
- ⁴Alfred Gotch, *The Buildings Erected in Northamptonshire*, *op.cit.* p.38
- ⁵Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* (New Haven & London, 1962) p.96.
- ⁶L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, *op.cit.*p.96. The first English translation appeared in 1599. See J.M.Blom. "The Post Tridentine English Primer" in *C.R.S. Monograph Series* Vol.3 (1982) p.2
- ⁷Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings"*op.cit.*. p.29
- ⁸Cited in Anstruther, *Vaux of Harroden*, *op.cit.* p.226
- ⁹The Tau Cross is a cross shaped like the nineteenth letter of the Greek alphabet, Tau. It is also known as Saint Anthony's Cross, and a symbol of eternal life.
- ¹⁰In the oratory at Rushton Hall, the Tresham's main residence, there is a poem which includes the statement: *Ecce Salutiferum Signum Than Nobile Lignum* (Behold the salvation-bearing symbol Than, the noble tree of life). See Sir Gyles Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *op.cit.* p.19
- ¹¹M. Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings", *op.cit.* p.143
- ¹²"The Complaint of a Catholic for the death of M.Edmund Campion", cited in Alison Plowden, *Danger to Elizabeth* (London, 1973) p.164
- ¹³Karl Rahner, *Ignatius of Loyola* (London, 1979)
- ¹⁴M. Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings", *op.cit.* p.136
- ¹⁵ Although the phrase 'Tres . . . testimonium dant' occurs in both verses 7 and 8, it is in verse 7 that the Trinity is emphasised.
- ¹⁶Gotch, *The Buildings Erected in Northamptonshire*, *op.cit.* p.25
- ¹⁷*Ibid.*
- ¹⁸Jourdain has identified the text as being the second line of the Veni Creator Spiritus, the Latin hymn to the Holy Ghost, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings" *op.cit.* p.136.

- ¹⁹ Ecclesiasticus, 33:17 *Remember that I did not toil for myself alone, but for all who seek learning.* There are possible Catholic implications, since it comes from the Deuterocanonical books (Apocrypha according to the Church of England) which was not included in the Protestant version of the Bible.
- ²⁰ Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings" *op.cit.* p.142
- ²¹ See for example Matthew, 23:37 "... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings"
- ²² Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings", *op.cit.* p.138
- ²³ Rosemary Freeman, *English Emblem Books*, *op.cit.* p.24
- ²⁴ Christopher Syman Sykes, *The World of Interiors* (London, 1985) p.142
- ²⁵ James H. McDonald and Nancy Pollard Brown, (eds.) *The Poems of Robert Southwell, S.J.* (Oxford, 1967) p.18
- ²⁶ Anstruther, *Vaux of Harroden*, *op.cit.* p.64
- ²⁷ Gerard, *Autobiography*, *op. cit.* p.195
- ²⁸ Gotch, *The Buildings Erected in Northampton*, *op.cit.* p.25
- ²⁹ Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *op.cit.* p.17
- ³⁰ Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Symbolic Buildings" *op.cit.* p.139
- ³¹ P.Clulow, "Publication dates for Byrd's Latin Masses" *Music and Letters* Vol.67 No.1 (January,1966) p.1
- ³² See for example Mrs S.C.Lomas' introduction to "The Manuscripts of T.B.Clarke-Thornhill" *op.cit.* p.xliii
- ³³ Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham" *op.cit.* p. 140
- ³⁴ Anstruther, *Vaux of Harrowden*, *op.cit.* p.113
- ³⁵ Agnus Dei's were also discs of wax impressed with the lamb and cross which were blessed by the Pope. They were usually worn around the neck for protection from evil influences in the same way as the blood of the paschal lamb had protected the households of the Jews from the destroying Angel at the time of the first Passover. P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, *op.cit.* p.21.
- ³⁶ Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham" *op.cit.* p.142
- ³⁷ Jourdain, "Sir Thomas Tresham" *op.cit.* p.137

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹Isham, "Sir Thomas Tresham and his Buildings" *op.cit.* p.19

CHAPTER 3.vi LITERATURE

The foregoing examples of painting and architecture demonstrate expressions of faith which may not have been typical of the English Catholic community as a whole, but which appear to demonstrate manifestations of Catholic ideology, if not Jesuit. The Society was aware of the value of such practices in their missionary work, reasoning that the arts could be transferred from the secular to the sacred in order to be used didactically.¹ Given that the aim 'reconciliation of man with God', permitted appropriation of all available methods, it is possible that the works of art inspired by Thomas More II and Sir Thomas Tresham, were instigated by such a sentiment. Nevertheless, the most valued skill in this period was the ability to manipulate words in a highly sophisticated manner. It is therefore not surprising that the art of literature was also incorporated into the process of educating and re-awakening a relationship with God. Because of its significance to the English Catholics and its relevance to later chapters, this particular art form will be treated in some detail.

Taking the European Renaissance as a whole, it would appear that this remarkable period of development largely stemmed from an intellectual 'revolution'. Permeating this revolution was a growing desire for communication, a need which was expressed in a number of ways. The early part of this period, for example, saw the origins of the diplomatic service and the invention of the printing press. Perhaps even more significant was a gradual rejection of Latin in favour of the vernacular. Although only affecting the literate, this was a radical change indeed, as it not only emphasised the importance placed on the intellect and understanding, but also demonstrated the increasing dispersal of reading matter. Behind this widening perspective there is evidence of a distinct preoccupation with words, their use and their meaning. An intense concern with the word of God in particular was demonstrated. The Reformation both resulted from,

and instigated, detailed analysis of the Bible. The ensuing controversies were in fact largely a response to disparity of interpretation. Thus there was a reciprocal stimulus: a reappraisal of the word of God brought about through the ascendancy of words as such, which further developed the need for refining the means of communication.

The fascination and delight in words prevalent in Europe in the sixteenth century was strongly linked to the concept of wit in England. This dialectic tool, or weapon, was much preferred by the culturally literate to the less sophisticated methods of force. In comparing the Middle Ages with her own reign, Queen Elizabeth declared that, "In those days force and arms did prevail, but now the wit of the fox is everywhere on foot."² As has already been observed in the case of Sir Thomas Tresham, Elizabethans took great pleasure in symbols and allegory. The emblem was identified as a popular medium for communicating ideas skilfully and succinctly, in a similar way to the poem shaped according to its theme and content (see illustration 17):

☞ Easter wings.

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and flore,
 Though foolishly he lost the fame,
 Decaying more and more,
 Till he became
 Most poore:
 With thee
 O let me rife
 As larks, harmoniously,
 And sing this day thy victories:
 Then shall the fall further the flight in me

☞ Easter wings.

My tender age in sorrow did beginne:
 And fill with sicknesses and paine
 Thou didst so punish sinne,
 That I became
 Most thinne.
 With thee
 Let me combine,
 And feel this day thy victorie:
 For, if I imp my wing on thine,
 Affliction shall advance the flight in me,

Illustration 17. George Herbert's poem "Easter Wings".

Evidence suggests that language, and the manipulation of words, were considered important in terms of cunning and invention as it sought to edify and delight. Although a good literary style today will be absorbed largely unconsciously rather than obtrude, in sixteenth-century England technical devices were deliberately employed to concentrate the attention of the reader or audience.³ From the large number of treatises written on rhetoric in the period, and the priority given it in the education curriculum, it is apparent that this art was significant to all aspects of literature, and indeed, of music. Today the lists of rhetorical figures and terms appear complex and confusing but not only were they accepted, learnt and applied by the educated Elizabethan, they were considered essential. An indication of the vital role that rhetoric played in that society was presented as an allegory by Richard Sherry. The disadvantage to those lacking the knowledge was not just superficially detrimental, they were devoid of a purpose to their actions: "...to him which goeth into a goodlye garden wyth dyvers kynes of herbs and flowers, and that there doeth no more but beholde them, of whom it may be sayde that he wente in for nothyng but that he should come out"(sic).⁴ Whereas the benefits were considerable to those that were aware, "...hym which besyde the corporall eie (of) pleasure, knoweth of everi one the name and propertye"(sic).⁵ It is apparent that rhetoric was a practice so familiar to the people of sixteenth century England, that knowledge of it was frequently assumed. A mode of thought which was analytical and logical, but also enjoyed subtle manipulation of words therefore used rhetoric as the principal method of literary composition. For, as Sir Francis Bacon wrote, "The duty and office of rhetoric is to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will."⁶ It was the specific way in which reason and imagination were combined for the purpose of moving the will in religious literature which is the subject of the following section.

NOTES

¹Pierre Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation* (New York, 1949) p.367

²Cited in J. Buxton, *Elizabethan Taste* (London, 1963) p.31

³J. Buxton, *Elizabethan Taste*, *op.cit.* p.64

⁴Richard Sherry, *Schemes and Tropes* (1550)

⁵*Ibid*

⁶Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* (1605)

CHAPTER 3.vii LITERATURE: Jesuit Aesthetics and the Arts

The Jesuits, including Ignatius himself, were not unaware of the significance of rhetoric as is evident both from the structure and method of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and his instructions concerning education. Ignatius stipulated that Jesuit schools and colleges should include the classical curriculum. The course for those intending to become Jesuits comprised, in addition to the expected subjects of philosophy, theology and canon law, both literature and rhetoric.¹ Most English Jesuits of this period would have begun their education in England, and probably had already studied classical and contemporary treatises on rhetoric before continuing on the Continent. Following the policy of utilising all available resources for the mission, a student skilled in this area was trained even more extensively in analysing and imitating the classical authors and rhetoricians.² Catholic educators also realised that an accomplished command of the vernacular language was essential for the cause.

In this spirit, pagan or secular elements of the arts were transformed to the sacred. The purpose of art was to edify, not amuse. Continental artists of the period illustrated this shift in attitude as members of the Holy Family, saints and other venerable people were depicted in ascetic, pious, or contemplative poses. Rowland Lockey's painting of the More family affords evidence of this altered sentiment, where the later generation appear more devout and austere in their intent than the former.³ The essence of the Jesuit aesthetic was the creation of balance and ultimately fusion between the intellect and affection (emotion), between contemplation and activity in God's name.⁴ (This process seems not unrelated to the rhetorical principle of combining reason and imagination.) Hence we find that the techniques employed in any form of creativity were manipulated specifically in order to direct the senses to the appropriate affection for a correct relationship between man and God. It is these techniques, combined with Jesuit

ideology, which are evident in the artistic expressions of faith considered in this thesis.

NOTES

¹John X. Evans, "The Art of Rhetoric and the Art of Dying in Tudor Recusant Prose"
Recusant History Vol.10 No.5 (April 1970) p.249

²*Ibid.* p.250

³L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, *op.cit.* p.114

⁴A. Raspa, *The Emotive Image*, *op.cit.* p.51

CHAPTER 3.viii LITERATURE: Books of Devotion

In spite of the severe censorship of books "contayning sundry matters repugnaunt to the truth"(sic),¹ large numbers were circulated having been either printed abroad or secretly at home.² The type of literature written and published by English Catholics covered a broad spectrum, but to a great extent fit into three distinct categories. Firstly, works were written that challenged the new 'heretical' doctrine promulgated by the State. Secondly, an attempt was made to meet the acute need for traditional liturgical books; and lastly, a great deal of literature in a variety of forms was written to instruct and comfort the 'besieged' members of the Roman Church. If the vast numbers and frequent reprints are anything to go by, the need for such material was apparently insatiable. Both Catholics and Protestants demonstrated the need for literature to stimulate their spiritual lives. The particular need for Catholics was in maintaining the faith; while for Protestants, devotional literature filled a void created by the removal of mystery and sacrament from the Anglican services.³ In addition, there was perhaps a more comprehensive reason: the Renaissance ideal which stressed the significance of the individual. In the Reformation this sentiment was expressed in Luther's doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers, as a more personal relationship with God was sought, and reiterated by Rome in Trent's emphasis on private devotion. Both parties therefore had specific needs, and both parties turned to devotional books as a means of fulfilling those needs.

For the recusant who was frequently isolated from Priest, sacraments, and the liturgy, these books were vital, and probably contributed greatly to the survival of English Catholicism. They gave reality to a religious commitment in nebulous circumstances. For the most part, books of devotion which were often translated from popular Continental works, were a compilation of instructions, prayers and devotions for the laymen.⁴ A comprehensive manual usually consisted

of a calendar of moveable feasts, instruction on doctrine, methods of preparation for sacraments such as Confession and Communion, and prayers and meditations for all occasions. Sometimes a Jesus Psalter was attached, and in certain later publications the prayers of Sir Thomas More were included.⁵ The objective of devotional books was the creation of an ordered life for those leading a worldly existence, those who particularly required the help of structured spiritual guidance. Gasper Loarte S.J. explained the reasons why he considered it necessary to compile a book: "Concerning the necessity of many men, who having a good will, have not for all that the capacity or means, to seeke out and reade such bookes, as intreat of the Exercises, wherein every good Christian ought to occupy himselfe, I have for this cause thought good to gather together in this short Treatise, the principall exercises which everie Christian man is bound to use: that spending his time laudably therein he may have hope to obtaine the grace of God Almighty, and by meanes thereof, come afterwarde to enioy eternal felicity, which is the end whereunto wee are created"(sic).⁶

Although all sections of devotional books were important, an increasing emphasis was placed on prayers and meditations: "Amongst all the exercises of a spirituall life, there is none more difficult, nor more necessarie, than the exercise of prayer and meditation the which many holie personages have witnessed, and reason and experience do sufficientlie shew us"(sic).⁷ There is evidence that before long "certaine verie devout Exercises & Praiers added therunto more than were in the first Edition"(sic),⁸ was becoming a prevalent practice, and books were printed that were entirely dedicated to the topic.

What is particularly interesting about the books of devotion that were in circulation, is the fact that they were closely modelled on the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. In structure, method and content these books were based on the principles of Ignatian meditation, an occurrence which had profound and unexpected

repercussions. This particular method of dissemination meant that not only did the essence of the Spiritual Exercises reach a far greater number of English Catholics, it also penetrated areas of society which rejected the doctrine behind them. Some of the books were deliberately adapted for Protestant use, eradicating the 'erroneous' material. Robert Southwell's *Short Rules of a Good Life* for example, was published in two distinct forms, the original version and an edition modified for the Protestant reader.⁹ In 1584 a Puritan Minister named Edmund Bunny expurgated Robert Persons' *First Book of the Christian Exercise, Appertayning to Resolution* (sic) for the general public. Concerning his attitude to the alterations, he wrote: "I perceived that the booke insuing was willingly read by divers, for the persuasion that it hath to godliness of life, which notwithstanding in manie points was corruptly set downe: I thought good in the end to get the same published againe in a better manner ..." (sic).¹⁰

The extent of the Jesuit influence was considerable, and in fact all the popular books of devotion were affected to some degree,¹¹ for Jesuit characteristics were unwittingly absorbed or incorporated. The typical Protestant devotional book was more varied in content, and less mystical in approach than its Catholic counterpart.¹² It did not prescribe a structured method of prayer and meditation, yet there is an obvious use of this technique as well as other Ignatian methods in the Protestant book *The Arte of Divine Meditation* by Joseph Hall.¹³ While not an exact imitation, Hall divided the process of meditation into three sections. Comparison of the two structures shows a definite correlation:

The Arte of Divine Meditation	The Spiritual Exercises
(Protestant)	(Jesuit)
Entrance: preparatory prayer	Prayer Prelude(s)
Proceedings: the meditation	Points of Meditation
Consideration: of the fruits of meditation and its effect. ¹⁴	Colloquy

The method of meditation similarly bears a resemblance. The participant was instructed to begin the procedure "with the understanding and end with the affections, begin with the braine and descend to the heart, begin on earth and ascend to heaven"(sic).¹⁵ Furthermore, the affections themselves were incited to function in a similar manner to that expounded in the Spiritual Exercises, "Let the heart therefore conceive and feele in itself the sweetnesse or bitternesse of the matter meditated"(sic).¹⁶

The popularity of books of devotion at this time was remarkable. Their significance was demonstrated in the list of Sir Thomas Tresham's collection. What is particularly interesting is not only the range of types and the languages in which they were read, but the range of sizes that were printed. From large volumes presumably used as a source of authority, these books were published in ever decreasing sizes to those small enough to fit in a pocket. The latter version would have been particularly useful for recusants since they were transportable and therefore readily available, and yet easily concealed.¹⁷

Of all the Jesuit books of devotion in circulation, probably the most popular and influential was that of Luis de la Puente.¹⁸ Puente's *Meditations upon the Mysteries of our Holie Faith, With the Practise of Mental Prayer Touching the Same* (sic) encapsulated the essence of Jesuit meditation and spirituality¹⁹ (see illustration 18). It is probably more intellectual than other books of its kind and

MEDITATIONS
 VPON THE MYSTERIES
 OF OUR HOLIE FAITH,
 WITH THE PRACTISE OF MENTAL PRAYER
 TOUCHING THE SAME.

COMPOSED

In Spanish, by the Reuerend Father, Lewis of Puente,
 of the Societie of IESVS, natiue of Valladolid. And
 translated out of Spanish into English,
 by JOHN HEIGHAM.

THE SECOND TOME:
 THE WHOLE DISCOURSE VERY
*profitable for Preachers, and for all such as are
 Masters of perfection.*



AT S. OMERS,
 ANNO DOMINI 1619.
With Permission of Superiors.

Illustration 18. The Title Page of Luis de la Puente's Book *Meditations upon the
 Mysteries of our Holie Faith.*

conveys a sense of emotional turbulence in comparison to the more tranquil aspirations of non-Jesuits. In addition, Puente sought to stimulate a balance between love and fear of God, and he placed particular emphasis on the Incarnation and Passion.²⁰ By and large these characteristics, along with others that were distinctly Jesuit, pervaded books that were more directly concerned with spiritual matters, as well as those in other areas of literature.

NOTES

- ¹From a "Proclamation for Bringing into the Realme of Unlawful and Seditious Books" (1568) cited in Helen White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Wisconsin, 1963) p.201
- ²For details of the Catholic books that have survived from this period see: A.F. Allison and D.M. Rogers, *A Catalogue of Catholic Books in English, Printed Abroad and Secretly in England* (London, 1956), and A.C. Southern, *Elizabethan Recusant Prose* (London, 1950)
- ³L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, op. cit.* p.7
- ⁴Between 1580 and 1640 nearly every important devotional book written in Europe was translated into English either abroad or secretly in England. Pierre Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation, op. cit.* p. 326
- ⁵J.M. Blom, "The Post Tridentine Primers" *C.R.S. Monograph Series Vol.3* (1982) p.114
- ⁶Gaspar Loarte, *The Exercise of a Christian Life* (Paris, 1579) p.3 The name of this author is sometimes spelt Jasper. For the sake of consistency the former will be used throughout this thesis.
- ⁷F. Ignatius Balsamo, *An Introduction How to Pray and Meditate Well* Translated out of French into English by John Heigham (St.Omers,1622) p.11
- ⁸Gaspar Loate, *The Exercises of a Christian Life* revised by R.Persons 1584
- ⁹Helen White *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs, op.cit.* p.258
- ¹⁰Cited in A.C. Southern, *Elizabethan Recusant Prose,1559-1582, op.cit.* p.185
- ¹¹L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, op.cit.* p.7
- ¹²Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England from Cranmer to Hooker 1534-1603* (Princeton, 1970) p.425
- ¹³Joseph Hall, *The Arte of Divine Meditation* (London, 1607)
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*
- ¹⁵*Ibid.* p.85
- ¹⁶*Ibid.* p.152
- ¹⁷The smallest book of this type that I came across measured 2"x 3 7/8" and was 1 7/8" thick. This was a compilation of *A Short Rule of Good Life, An Epistle of a Religious Priest unto His Father, An Instruction How to Pray and Meditate Well*, and *The Flowers of Devotion* (S.Omers,1622).
- ¹⁸L.L. Martz, *Poetry of Meditation, op.cit.* p.146

¹⁹Luis de la Puente, *Mysteries of our Holie Faith, with the Practise of Mental Prayer Touching the Same* translated out of Spanish into English by John Heigham (S.Omers, 1619)

²⁰L.L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*, *op.cit.*

CHAPTER 3.ix LITERATURE: Poetry

The most distinct area of English literature influenced by Jesuit techniques and aesthetics was poetry of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-centuries. Many of the poets of the period manifest a tenuous inclination to such practices,¹ although it must be stated that such influences were probably not deliberately chosen but absorbed in ignorance of their origin. On the other hand, there is evidence that a few individuals purposely associated themselves with the Society of Jesus and its aims, and expressed their attitude in a poetic form.

Aspects of this poetry which particularly testify to a Jesuit influence are not only the piety and intensity with which the poets wrote about religious subjects and experiences, but the way in which the meditative process of the Spiritual Exercises was often employed to serve the same ends.² The poet sought to manipulate his reader in the same way that the Ignatian meditations created a spiritual impact through a cumulative effect. It is these characteristics, along with the distinctive application of the sensory imagination, so typical of Jesuit meditative techniques, which can frequently be identified in English poetry between 1580 and 1650.³

Probably the most obvious manifestations of Jesuit influence occurred in the works of Jasper Heywood, Robert Southwell, William Alabaster, John Donne, Edward Revett, Richard Crashaw, and Henry Vaughan;⁴ all of whom had a connection with Catholicism at some time in their lives in one way or another.⁵ Jasper Heywood who introduced Jesuit verse into England⁶ took his final vows in Rome as a Jesuit in 1570 and was sent as Superior of the English mission in 1581.⁷ Richard Crashaw similarly entered the Roman Church towards the end of his life although not as a member of the Society.⁸ William Alabaster was an interesting, if unusual, victim of the religious controversy. However, although he vacillated

wildly between a belief in the Anglican Church and the Catholic faith, he perpetuated Jesuit aesthetics and techniques in the poetry written during his periods of Catholicism.⁹ In Alabaster's religious sonnets there is a distinct expression of penitence and contrition, an attitude particularly associated with the Ignatian Exercises. The connection is not entirely unexpected since it has already been mentioned that Alabaster was given the Spiritual Exercises by John Gerard.¹⁰

Within the same category is one of the major literary figures of the age, John Donne. As a poet and an Anglican cleric, he was affected by the religious dispute and, possibly unwittingly, contributed to the spread of Jesuit influence. Brought up in a highly motivated Catholic family, in which two of his uncles became Jesuits, Donne eventually embraced the Anglican Church and repudiated not only Catholicism, but specifically the Society of Jesus.¹¹ Nevertheless it is apparent that the "men of suppressed and afflicted religion, accustomed to the despite of death and hungry of an imagined martyrdom" (his description of Jesuits), with whom he had his "first breeding and conversation",¹² were to have a lasting impact. In spite of Donne's public rejection of popery, many critics consider that he remained Catholic in taste and feeling.¹³ What is evident in his poetry is that he used select techniques from the Spiritual Exercises.¹⁴ The sense of activity combined with a vivid use of the imagination suggests a definite connection with the Jesuit meditative tradition.¹⁵ Influence of this sort undoubtedly filtered into English literature, poetry and thinking, but the most explicit was through the works of the leading Catholic writer of the Elizabethan age, Robert Southwell.

NOTES

¹Anthony Raspa, *The Emotive Image, op.cit.* p.55

²*Ibid.* p.39

³*Ibid.* p.55

⁴*Ibid.* p.3

⁵Although George Herbert and his associates Protestant, they also demonstrated a mystical element in their poetry which bears a resemblance to that manifested as the spirit of the Counter Reformation. Pierre Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation, op.cit.* p.328

⁶*Ibid*

⁷L.I. Guiney, *Recusant Poets* (New York, 1939) pp.153-4

⁸Helen Gardner, *The Metaphysical Poets* (Harmondsworth, 1972) p.308

⁹L.I. Guiney, *Recusant Poets, op.cit.* p.335

¹⁰See Chapter 2, Section iii.

¹¹Donne's mother, also a great niece of Sir Thomas More, and grandfather John Heywood, were staunch Catholics. His mother's two brothers, Jasper and Ellis, both became Jesuits, Jasper being Superior of the English mission as has already been mentioned. Jasper Heywood's interest in Jesuit poetry along with his relationship to Donne cannot be disregarded. For bibliographical notes see Helen Gardner, *The Metaphysical Poets, op.cit.* p.309. The poem *Ignatius His Conclave* is an anti-Jesuit satire. See A.Raspa "Donne as Mediator - A Note on Some Recent Publications" *Recusant History* Vol.10 No.4 (January, 1970) p.243

¹²Donne cited by John Haywood in his introduction to *John Donne A Selection of his Poetry* (Harmondsworth, 1979) p.6

¹³See for example Helen Gardner, *The Metaphysical Poets, op.cit.* p.95

¹⁴A. Raspa, "Donne as Mediator" *op. cit.* p.243

¹⁵The divine sonnet *Batter my heart three person'd God* for example, bears a strong resemblance to the experience of the Spiritual Exercises. Note also the similarity to Southwell's metaphor of God as the "heavenly smith" who puts people through the "forge of trial and kindled the coals of persecution to prove whether we be pure gold and fit to be laid up in the treasury" *Epistle of Comfort* p.115. See John X.Evans, "The Art of Rhetoric and the Art of Dying in Tudor Recusant Prose" *op.cit.* p.262. While the 'trial by fire' metaphor is common in both the Old and New Testaments, the passion with which Donne sought salvation through rigorous penance had been stimulated by the presence of the Jesuits, especially their martyrdom.

CHAPTER 3.x LITERATURE: Robert Southwell

When Robert Southwell returned to England in 1586, he had not only been sent in the traditional capacity of a priest, he had also been given special permission to utilise his literary talent as part of the missionary work.¹ It was a seemingly unusual authorisation until one remembers the Jesuit precept of adapting all available resources for the religious revival. And although most of Southwell's works cannot be dated exactly, it appears that he fulfilled his literary obligation more than adequately in the six years of freedom before his arrest. Of his prose works, *An Epistle of Comfort* and *The Triumphs Over Death* were probably written for the spiritual inspiration of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, imprisoned in the Tower,² and *Short Rules of a Good Life* for Arundel's wife; while *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty* was written in response to the proclamation issued against priests in 1591.³ In addition to prose, Southwell wrote a large number of poems.

In a society which denied legal adherence to the Roman Church, Southwell's guidance in prose form would have served a practical function for those lacking regular access to a priest, but the purpose of his poetry is less evident. Southwell, however, was in no doubt that this art was equally significant and similarly expedient. In fact, as far as he was concerned poetry used for anything other than religious purposes was erroneous and degrading: "Poets by abusing their talent, and making the follies and fayninges of love, the customary subject of their base endeavours, have so discredited this facultie, that a Poet, a Lover and a Liar, are by many reckoned but three wordes of one signification. But the vanity of men, cannot counterpoyse the authority of God, who delivering many partes of Scripture in verse, and by his Apostle willing us to exercise our devotion in Himnes and Spirituall Sonnets, warranteth the Arte to bee good, and the use allowable"(sic).⁴

Southwell's solution to the situation therefore was to set an example by using secular poetic techniques for devotional ends: "And because the best course to let them see the error of their workes, is to weave a new webbe in their owne loome; I have heere layd a few course threds together, to invite some skillfuller wits to go forward in the same, or to begin some finer peece, wherein it may be sene, how well verse and vertue sute together"(sic).⁵

The idea that poetry was more than merely a secular form of expression was not restricted to sixteenth-century Jesuits. Tasso, the leading Italian poet of the period, stated that, "Poetry is the first philosophy, from which our tender years, instructs us to good manners and right living. A good poet must be a righteous man."⁶ In addition, Father Bencius the most renowned theorist of Jesuit poetry advocated it as a means of conveying advice and its efficacy in soothing the passions.⁷ Southwell must have been exposed to such views and probably influenced by them, since for the entire duration of his life in Rome, Bencius was professor of classics and rhetoric.

To ensure that literature should serve God in the religious cause, education focused on the technique of rhetoric which was considered fundamental to the art in the sixteenth-century.⁸ The skills of communication were an important component of Jesuit training, in fact the highest class in a Jesuit school was called Rhetoric, the class to which Southwell was rapidly promoted.⁸

If Southwell's purpose in writing was to instruct and guide those who sought a virtuous life but had infrequent contact with a priest, what would he have considered essential in terms of instruction? First, and foremost of course, Catholic doctrine should be communicated, especially that recently redefined at Trent; and secondly, since Southwell was a Jesuit he could hardly have avoided the specific attitude of Ignatius. The subjects of Southwell's poems range from Christ and the

Virgin Mary with particular emphasis on the Incarnation and Passion, to guidance for a devout life, and clarification of doctrine. Furthermore, because the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist were highly controversial topics at the time, Southwell stressed their significance.

In many of the poems, especially *St. Peter's Complaint*, penance was elucidated and explained in terms of its special function for English Catholics.⁹ It solved a particular need of recusants, especially when the Council of Trent allowed the possibility of an individual's reconciliation to God through perfect contrition in the absence of a priest.¹⁰ As a priest aware of the vacuum and the realisation that he could never fill it on a personal basis, Southwell not only proclaimed the message, he specifically wrote in order to evoke the state of contrition in the reader: "Because to have contrition for our sinnes is the key and foundation of all other parts of Penance, and of all our profit in the Spiritual life"(sic).¹¹

What is the underlying influence that motivated Southwell to write in the specific and distinct way that invites the reader's participation and evokes a powerful response? The answer is to be found in the *Spiritual Exercises*. As a member of the Society of Jesus it was only natural that Southwell should choose to incorporate devotional techniques that were familiar to him, and that he considered would be most beneficial to the reader. It has already been indicated that they were a powerful tool which contributed greatly to the impact of the mission, but there were many people who, for one reason or another, were unable to make the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*.¹²

To imitate the character and style of the *Spiritual Exercises* in prose is understandable, and Southwell contributed to the large numbers of devotional books in circulation, but to incorporate them in poetry demonstrates a greater degree of subtlety. Several writers have identified not only general characteristics of the

Exercises in Southwell's poetry, but also specific techniques and themes.¹³ What is particularly interesting is the way in which he combined rhetorical devices and aspects of the Spiritual Exercises in order to create the desired effect. This is apparent in the analysis of the following poem (see illustration 19):

A childe my Choyce

Structure of the Spiritual Exercises		Rhetorical Structure
Prelude	<p>Let folly praise that fancie loves, I praise and love that child, Whose hart, no thought: whose tong, no word: whose hand no deed defiled. I praise him most, I love him best, all praise and love is his: While him I love, in him I live, and cannot live amisse.</p>	Exordium
Application and Analysis	<p>Loves sweetest mark, Lawdes highest theme, mans most desired light: To love him, life: to leave him, death: to live in him, delight. He mine, by gift: I his, by debt: thus each, to other due: First friend he was: best friend he is: all times will try him true.</p> <p>Though young, yet wise; though smal, yet strong: though man, yet God he is: As wise, he knowes: as strong, he can: as God he loves to blisse. His knowledge rules: his strength, defends: his love, doth cherish all: His birth, our Joye: his life, our light: his death, our end of thrall.</p>	Conformation
Affection or contrition Colloquy	<p>Alas, he weepes, he sighes, he pants, yeat doo his Angels sing: Out of his teares, his sighes and throbs, doth bud a joyfull spring. Almightie babe, whose tender armes can force all foes to flie: Correct my faultes, protect my life, direct me when I die.</p>	Peroratio

Illustration 19.

It is not necessary to identify all of the rhetorical devices in the poem *A childe my Choyce* since they are so numerous, and to do so would be tedious. What should be evident from the comparison between the use of rhetorical techniques and those employed in the Spiritual Exercises, is that although similar, the latter stressed 'feeling', while the former tended to be more intellectual and 'dry'.

Compare the way in which the rhetorical techniques have been manipulated within the traditional structure to create a similar experience to that elicited in the Spiritual Exercises. The divisions within the poem include a prelude, application and analysis in which the points of meditation are considered, while the first two lines of the final stanza create the desired 'affect' of sorrow or contrition and the remaining two, form the colloquy. Within this structure there is a definite cumulative effect, similar to that found in the Spiritual Exercises. What is also interesting is that the three powers of the soul, *memory*, *understanding* and *will*, were applicable to both the structures of rhetoric and the Spiritual Exercises.¹⁴ Thomas de Villa-castin, S.J. made the connection between the three powers of the soul and meditation quite clear in his *Manuall of Devout Meditations and Exercises*: "Mental prayer ... is the work of the three Powers of the Soule: to wit, of the Memory, Understanding, and Will"(sic) and all three should be exercised in prayer. Memory is used to remember God and place the points of meditation. Understanding is employed to consider the points which may best move the will, and the will is applied to "draw out affections some to God - some to self". For example, affections such as "Love of God ... and thanks for benefits and favours received ..." or "detestation of ourselves in regard to our offences against God, sorrow for our sinnes"(sic).¹⁵ Comparison of all three methods shows exactly how they conform, and how an awareness of the interrelationship contributes to a greater understanding, especially regarding the operation of the Spiritual Exercises:

Structure of the Spiritual Exercises	The threepowers of the Soul	Rhetorical Structure
1. Prelude or composition	Memory	Exordium
2. Analysis, points of meditation	Understanding	Conformation
3. Colloquy	Will (affections)	Peroratio

While the connection between rhetoric and the Spiritual Exercises has been established in the poem *A childe my Choyce*, there is one technique advocated by Ignatius which was not illustrated although Southwell used it considerably. Since the technique, composition of place, with its application of the senses is fundamental to the Spiritual Exercises, an example will be given in one of Southwell's best-known poems, *The burning Babe*. (see illustration 20)

One only has to recall the instructions given by Ignatius regarding the senses, and the role they played in channelling the exercitant to a right relationship with God, to realise the significance of Southwell's imagery. In *The burning Babe* the first senses to be brought into play are the feelings, as the reader is manipulated to feel the excessive contrasts of heat and cold. The faculty of sight is introduced in the second stanza as the reader is invited to see the burning Babe, and in the following stanza when he speaks we are encouraged to use our ears and listen. At the fifth stanza the sense of smell is evoked through the accumulated descriptions of a 'furnace', 'fire', 'smoake'(sic) and 'ashes'. Interestingly, this section is reminiscent of the third point in the fifth exercise occurring in the first week of the Spiritual Exercises. "To smell the smoke, the brimstone, the corruption and rottenness."¹⁶ As in the Spiritual Exercises, Southwell created tangible scenes which particularly elicit the use of the senses while extracting spiritual analogies from them. One more connection between Southwell's poems and the Ignatian Exercises is the practice known as 'examination of conscience.' The process which involved critical self-analysis was transferred to poetry by Southwell, developing an approach unprecedented in England.¹⁷

The burning Babe

As I in hoarie Winters night
 Stoode shivering in the snow,
 Surpris'd I was with sodaine heate,
 Which made my hart to glow;

And lifting up a fearefull eye,
 To view what fire was neare,
 A pretty Babe all burning bright
 Did in the ayre appeare;

Who scorched with exessive heate,
 Such floods of teares did shed,
 As though his floods should quench his flames,
 Which with his teares were fed:

Alas (quoth he) but newly borne,
 In fierie heates I frie,
 Yet none approach to warme their harts,
 Or feele my fire, but I;

My faultlesse breast the furnace is,
 The fuell wounding thornes:
 Love is the fire, and sighs the smoake,
 The ashes, shame and scornes;

The fewell Justice layeth on,
 And Mercie blowes the coales,
 The metall in this furnace wrought,
 Are mens defiled soules:

For which, as now on fire I am
 To worke them to their good,
 So will I melt into a bath,
 To wash them in my blood.

With this he vanisht out of sight,
 And swiftly shrunk away,
 And straight I called unto minde,
 That it was Christmasse day.

Robert Southwell arrived in England illegally and died the death of a traitor, yet in the ensuing years he not only commanded the love and respect of members of the Catholic network but also those who refuted his beliefs. It would appear that copies of Southwell's works became valued in much the same way as the books of meditation and devotion that were in circulation. For his literature to have been appreciated among the Catholic population was to be expected, given the circumstances.¹⁸ What is surprising is the way it was acknowledged by Protestants. Until the year of his execution Southwell's works existed almost entirely in manuscript form.¹⁹ However, possibly in order to exploit the sensationalism of Southwell's death, or perhaps because of the favourable response demonstrated towards him²⁰ at that time, there was a sudden run of publications in the year of 1595. John Wolfe commissioned the first edition in the form of *Saint Peter's Complaint, With Other Poems*, which was reprinted almost immediately.²¹ Subsequently a separate edition was printed by Gabriel Cawood, while John Busby secured the rights to publish *The Triumphs over Death* and three editions of a collection of Southwell's poems entitled *Maeoniae*.²² The selection of poems for *Maeoniae* was particularly compiled for Protestants in order to avoid dispersal of Catholic doctrine.²³ What was possibly begun as a financial scheme developed into an effective means of filling a spiritual void for people of various beliefs for the following forty years.²⁴

The popularity of Southwell's literature suggests that his particular style and its content must have had an impact on a reasonable percentage of the English population, both Catholic and Protestant,²⁵ and which included such people as John Donne and George Herbert.²⁶ Southwell's message was direct, yet he was innovative in his approach, at least as far as English readers were concerned. He introduced the literature of 'tears' from the Continent,²⁷ a concept which allowed him to convey the significance, and process of the sacrament of penance. He pioneered the notion of poetic introspection and critical self-analysis derived from

the practice of examination of conscience; but probably most significant was his ability to combine the techniques of secular poetry with those of the Spiritual Exercises in order to elicit a similar spiritual response in the reader.

Through the medium of literature Southwell was able to reach a far wider audience than would have been possible in the course of his duties as a clandestine priest. It was also part of Byrd's creativity to convey his religious beliefs through his music. The meeting of Byrd and Southwell, which is known to have taken place, therefore brings together two notable exponents of art in the context of the Jesuit mission.

NOTES

- ¹Brian Oxley, "The Relationship Between Robert Southwell's Neo-Latin and English Poetry" *Recusant History* Vol.17 No.3 (May,1985) p.202
- ²*An Epistle of Comfort* began as a letter to Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, and was later extended for all Catholics. N. Pollard Brown (ed.) *Two Letters and Short Rules of a Good Life, op.cit.*
- ³Robert Southwell, *Two Letters and Short Rules of a Good Life* (ed.) Nancy Pollard Brown, *op.cit.*
- ⁴Southwell, "The Author to his Loving Cosen" cited in *The Poems of Robert Southwell S.J.* edited by James H.McDonald and Nancy Pollard Brown (Oxford, 1967) p.1.
- ⁵*Ibid.*
- ⁶Cited in Janelle, *The Catholic Reformation, op.cit.* p.174
- ⁷Janelle, *Robert Southwell the Writer, op.cit.* p.123
- ⁸A.C. Southern, *Elizabethan Recusant Prose, op.cit.* p.6
- ⁹See Nancy Pollard Brown "The Structure of Southwell's *St. Peter's Complaint* " *The Modern Language Review* Vol.61 (1966) p.3.
- ¹⁰That is without the actual sacrament of penance, but with the desire for it. See *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* edited and translated by H.J. Schroeder O.P. (St.Louis, Missouri and London, 1941) pp. 91-92
- ¹¹Luis de Granada, *A Memorial of a Christian Life* translated by Richard Hopkins (Imprinted at Rouen by George Loyselett, Anno Domini 1599).
- ¹²See Nancy Pollard Brown's introduction to *Two Letters and Short Rules of a Good Life* p.vii, who states that at that time women were not given the Spiritual Exercises.
- ¹³See for example L. Martz, *The Meditative Poem, op.cit.*; A.Raspa, *The Emotive Image, op.cit.*; and J. Macdonald and N. Pollard Brown edition *The Poems of Robert Southwell S.J., op.cit.*
- ¹⁴L. Martz, *The Meditative Poem, op.cit.* p.xxii
- ¹⁵Thomas de Villa-castin, *A Manuall of Devout Meditations and Exercises* (1619) p.37.
- ¹⁶*The Spiritual Exercises, op.cit.* p.59
- ¹⁷L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, op.cit.* p.183

- ¹⁸The earliest official record of *St. Peter's Complaint* occurred at John Bolt's examination who confessed that he had borrowed a manuscript version from William Wiseman. Both these men have already been encountered in the section on the Catholic network. J.H. McDonald and N. Pollard Brown (ed.) *The Poems of Robert Southwell, op.cit.* p.Lxxxviii
- ¹⁹One exception being Gabriel Cawood's 1591 edition of *Marie Magdalen's Funerall Teares.*
- ²⁰J. McDonald and N. Pollard Brown (ed.) *The Poems of Robert Southwell, op.cit.* p.Lv.
- ²¹*Ibid.* p.Lvi
- ²²Richard Loomis, "The Barrett Version of Robert Southwell's *Short Rule of Good Life*" *Recusant History* Vol.7 No.4 (January, 1964) p.240.
- ²³J. McDonald and N. Pollard Brown (ed.) *The Poems of Robert Southwell, op.cit.* p.Lxix.
- ²⁴Nancy Pollard Brown, "The Structure of Southwell's *Saint Peter's Complaint*" *op.cit.* p.3. Pollard Brown infers that this was not a status gained by deception but that both the publishers and readers were aware of Southwell's identity. McDonald and Pollard Brown (ed.) *The Poems of Robert Southwell, op.cit.* p.Lvi.
- ²⁵For example, Thomas Morley set three verses of the poem, *Sith my life from life is parted(sic)*, beginning with the verse, "With my life was love nestled".
- ²⁶L.Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, op.cit.* p.183.
- ²⁷*Ibid.* p.184

CHAPTER 4

No picture can be drawn of the brightest colours nor a harmony consorted only of trebles; shadows are needful in expressing of proportions, and the bass is a principal part in perfect music; the condition of our exile here alloweth no unmeddled joy, our whole life is temperate between sweet and sour and we must all look for a mixture of both: the wise so wish.

*Robert Southwell
'The Triumphs Over Death'*

CHAPTER 4.i WILLIAM BYRD AND THE CATHOLIC NETWORK

The preceding evidence suggests that Jesuit missionaries influenced English Catholics to some extent, and with what appears to be a resulting expression of faith. This expression was often defiant, acknowledging the risks involved and yet impelled with great fervour to convey the significance of the revived faith. Since William Byrd was a Catholic at this time the question arises as to how much he was involved with, and influenced by the prevailing circumstances. In theory his adherence to Catholicism has never been in doubt, but in reality it seems that the concept has been difficult to come to terms with especially when assessed against a religious background of such complexity. Questions relating to this aspect of Byrd's life have never been satisfactorily answered, partly due to lack of information and partly because the right questions have never been asked.¹ Yet in the case of an individual such as Byrd, attempting to understand his religious attitude in context seems fundamental to gaining a better understanding of Byrd the composer.

It is convenient, and less disconcerting, to interpret the fact that Byrd wrote music for both the Protestant and Catholic churches as a form of ecumenicism. Sometimes the problem is dismissed altogether. Furthermore, it is difficult in the twentieth-century to grasp the significance of doctrinal differences in the sixteenth-century and to comprehend that these differences justified inflicting, or conversely, accepting, suffering as a result of the stance taken. Therefore, since the religious climate hindered attitudes of toleration, Byrd's unusual circumstances should be re-examined and evaluated in terms of sixteenth-century values, rather than those currently accepted today. Admittedly it is dangerous to assume an understanding based on scanty details and circumstantial evidence. However, when Byrd's presence at a specific place in the company of certain people make it highly probable that he was involved in certain events and imbibed particular attitudes, some conclusions may surely be drawn.

It is known for example that Byrd was involved with some of those elite members of the Catholic network outlined in Chapter 1.² That *stiff papist and good subject* Edward Somerset, Earl of Worcester, was possibly a good friend, as well as the patron to whom he dedicated the *Liber Primus Cantionum* of 1589. The fact that Byrd had lodgings and goods "in the Earle of wosters howse in the straund"(sic) as stipulated in his will,³ suggests that the relationship was on more personal terms than the traditional one of patron and dependant. This theory is corroborated by the knowledge that both Byrd and the Earl of Worcester were guests of the Petre family.⁴ In addition, Sir John Petre's son, William, who was also a personal friend of Byrd, married the Earl's daughter.⁵

It was to a similarly renowned papist, Lord Lumley, that Byrd chose to dedicate his *Liber secundus sacrarum cantionum* of 1591. John Lumley, like his father-in-law Henry FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, was both a patron and a collector of music. What is interesting, but not surprising, is that Lord Lumley had several of Byrd's works in his collection including the Kyrie's of the three-, four- and five-part Masses,⁶ the first volume of the *Gradualia* and copies of both the first and second books of *Cantiones Sacrae*.⁷

Of all the many members of the Howard family who remained constant to Catholicism in one form or another, Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, was the patron chosen as the recipient of the first volume of the *Gradualia*. The type of relationship that existed between Byrd and the Earl of Northampton is not known, although a degree of familiarity is possibly implied in the dedication itself. The early part of Northampton's life was greatly marred because of his religious views, but by the time of the *Gradualia's* publication in 1605 he had been restored to favour and invested with positions of rank and authority.⁸

Another of Byrd's Catholic acquaintances from the upper echelons of society was the eighth Earl of Northumberland. In 1579 he petitioned Lord Burghley on Byrd's behalf in the capacity of "frend and cheffly that he is schollemaster to my daughter"(sic).⁹ Six years later after having been involved in several Catholic intrigues, and been imprisoned as a result, Northumberland died in the Tower.¹⁰

Byrd's Catholic friends and acquaintances were not restricted to the nobility. Of lesser status but no less significant, Edward Paston, a Norfolk gentleman, was unacceptable at court because of his religion.¹¹ Among Paston's vast music collection, the works of Byrd are the most numerous; a collection which demonstrates a decidedly 'Roman' Catholic taste. Paston possessed an unusually large amount of Byrd's music, some of it unpublished, a fact which suggests a close connection between the two men.¹² In addition it has been mooted that Paston and Byrd collaborated in the writing of songs,¹³ many of which are of a topical nature and include people and events associated with the Paston circle.¹⁴ The evidence which probably argues most convincingly in favour of a relationship between Byrd and Paston is a manuscript part-book.¹⁵ Since the book is marked as belonging to Sir John Petre, and yet is written in a hand recognised as having been frequently employed on Paston's behalf, a connection between the two families is indicated which would in all probability have included a mutual acquaintance with Byrd.¹⁶ Whether the same scribe was employed by both gentlemen or the book was part of a gift given by one to the other, communication between individuals of similar religious sympathies seems extremely likely especially when the content is taken into account.¹⁷

Of all Byrd's Catholic acquaintances, the name most closely associated with him is that of Sir John Petre, (see illustration 21) who was extremely cautious in religious matters and never actually professed to the faith.¹⁸ It is through Sir



Illustration 21. Sir John and Lady Petre.

John's household affairs that it is possible to learn most about the composer, especially during the most controversial period of his life. The account books kept fastidiously by the trusted family servant, John Bentley,¹⁹ give rare glimpses into Byrd's life. John Bentley incidentally was educated at Sir William Petre's expense (Sir John's father), probably as one of the children of the Chapel Royal.²⁰ It is disappointing and tantalizing, that out of a possible run of twenty-seven books kept between the years 1567 to c.1597, only six mutilated ones remain. One wonders what other events involving Byrd would have been revealed if more of the books had survived, especially when one considers the circles within which John Petre moved. As it is we do know that Byrd was a frequent visitor to the Petre's two country homes long before he moved into the vicinity in 1593. The earliest visit recorded in the extant account books occurred in 1586 when a servant and horse were sent to London to fetch and later return him.²¹

Between 1586 and 1587 Byrd was a guest at Thorndon Hall three times, and twice at Ingatestone²² (see illustration 22). By 1608 there is evidence to suggest that Byrd's relationship with the Petre family had consolidated further when *Mr Birdes chamber* was listed in an inventory of beds and bedlinen at Thorndon Hall²³ (see illustration 23). At this time he was living only seven miles away from Thorndon and had far less need of lodgings in the house than when he was living in London or Harlington. A particular point of interest is that Byrd's name appears directly under *my Lords chamber* and *my Ladyes chamber*, and not at the bottom of the list with the servants. The relationship was apparently enduring since as late as 1618 it was recorded that Byrd attended dinner at Thorndon Hall when Byrd was in his seventy-fifth year. By this time William Petre had succeeded as head of the family after the death of his father.²⁴

October 1586

Riding charge for one whole year

To John Reynolds charge going by to
 London with goods his wife riding
 a going to Windsor
 for his dytt at y^e returning downe of
 M^r Bynde

Allowed to Thomas Holmes for dytt
 at L^o Lyon in the month of
 at L^o Lyon for charge of a dytt at
 of M^r Thomas Dymocke & my M^r Bynde
 for L^o D^o Birell for dytt
 for L^o Bynde sup^r dytt
 horsemeate

To L^o D^o Bynde at L^o D^o Bynde in
 stable roome
 at D^o Bynde
 M^r Bynde
 M^r Bynde

M^r Bynde
 M^r Bynde

M^r Bynde
 M^r Bynde

M^r Bynde
 M^r Bynde

M^r Bynde
 M^r Bynde

Illustration 22. Riding Charges from the Petre Account Books, October 1586,

In the Redd Chamber 2 ——— one
 In the Muller Chamber 2 ——— one
 In the Yellow Chamber 2 ——— one
 In the Waedrober 2 ——— one

Patser Bedde 70

Baulstord
 75

2 In my Dords Chamber 2 ——— two
 3 In my Lady's Chamber 3 ——— three
 4 In the Birds Chamber 2 ——— one
 9 In the Westre Chamber 2 3 ——— three
 11 In the Green Chamber 2 ——— two
 12 In the Muller Chamber 2 ——— one
 13 In the Dulwin Chamber 2 ——— one
 14 In the Inner Bed Chamber 2 ——— one
 15 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 16 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 17 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 18 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 19 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 20 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 21 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 22 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 23 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 24 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 25 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 26 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 27 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 28 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one
 29 In the Inner Chamber 2 ——— one

Illustration 23. Inventory of Beds and Bed Linen of the Petre Household, 1608.

It is well known that William Byrd settled in the village of Stondon Massey in 1593 under the patronage of Sir John Petre.²⁵ It is also common knowledge that after a great deal of litigation Byrd was eventually able to buy the property known as Stondon Place with the help of Sir John.²⁶ What is interesting is the fact that Byrd chose to live in that particular property, and location. Perhaps it had something to do with the previous owner also being a member of the Catholic circle.²⁷ Perhaps proximity to Sir John's country houses was a determining factor, bearing in mind that Stondon Massey is seven miles from West Thorndon and only five from Ingatestone. Thorndon Hall was Sir John's principal seat, but Ingatestone being situated in a more secluded area was perhaps the more suitable of the two for clandestine activities.²⁸

The respect manifested towards Byrd by Sir John was not confined to the allocation of a superior bed chamber or a position of eminence within the household; it was also reflected in the prominence of Byrd's music in the Petre music collection. In 1608, Richard Micoe the resident musician, who also happened to be a recusant,²⁹ made an inventory of *Such singinge bookes and instruments with the keys belonging to them, as are delivered mee by my Lady to take charge of(sic).*³⁰ Included in the list of *singinge bookes and instruments* are:

"2 settes of Mr Birde's books intituled Gradualia, the First and Second Sett, one other sett of M Birde's bookes contayning Songs of 3, 4, 5, and 6 parts, one other sett of Mr Birde's bookes of 5 parts" (sic).

Although not named, other items on the list could have contained music written by Byrd, for example, "one other Sett of 3, 4, 5 and 6 parts which are thick bookes wth red covers not printed but prict"(sic)³¹ (see illustration 24):

A note of such Singinge booke, and Instrumente to
 be kept belonging to them, as are delivered mee by my lady
 to take charge of,

Inprimis the best of violls in Dar number 5 viz
 2 trebled 2 tenors, and the base, w^{ch} belongeth to the
 and my lord Lute w^{ch} is fast to it

Item 2 Setts of our Birds booke intituled
 Gradualia. the first and second Sett,
 Item one other Sett of our Birds booke containing
 Songs of 3. 4. 5. and 6 parts,
 Item one other Sett of our Birds booke of 5 parts,
 Item one other Sett of 3. 4. 5. and 6 parts w^{ch} are
 first booke w^{ch} are covered not printed but print
 Item the key of the said Instrument
 Item the key of the great virginals
 Item the key of my lord Lute.
 Item the key of the violl chest.

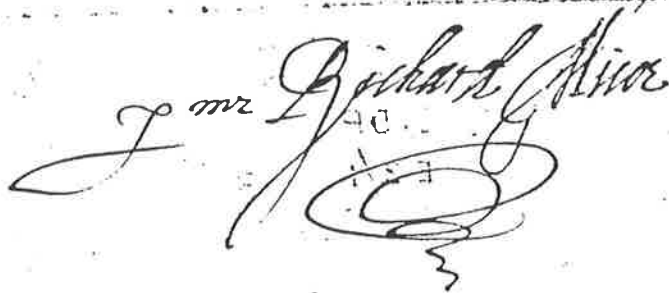
J^r Mr Richard Mow


Illustration 24. A note of such singing bookes and instruments with the keys
 belonging to them, as are delivered mee by My Lady to take charge of (sic). (1608)

When Richard Micoe handed over authority to his successor John Oker in 1615,³² Byrd's music had apparently maintained its status for among the other items are listed:

"2 setts of Mr Birds songs, intituled Gradualia: one other sett named Sacrum Cantionum of 5 pts. An other sett of prickt Bookes, of 3, 4, 5 and 6 parts. His last English sett,: His printed sett of 3, 4, 5 and 6 parts. An other sett of bookes of 5 and 6 parts dedicated to my Lord Lumley,"(sic)³³ and other books which may have contained Byrd's works but are not named (see illustration 25).

It would appear from these inventories that almost the only music performed at the homes of the Petre family was written by Byrd. Although Byrd's music was certainly the most abundant, this was far from the case. In the Essex Record Office there are two part-books belonging to Sir John Petre which give a very interesting insight into the musical tastes of that family. The books reveal decidedly Catholic inclinations. One of them consists mainly of sixteenth-century French and Netherlandish composers,³⁴ but an interesting inclusion is the Mass *Sponsus amat Sponsam* by Fairfax. Set according to the Sarum tradition without a Kyrie, it demonstrates the English model which Byrd chose to reject for his three Mass settings. The other book for bass voice already mentioned as that having been written by Edward Paston's scribe, is an anthology of Catholic sacred music by contemporary Continental composers and pre-Reformation English composers, but with a predominance of music by Byrd³⁵ (see illustration 26).

A note of such Musique bookes as are left by
 Rich: Mico, in the little cupboard in ye Drawing
 Roome

June: 2 sett of our Bidds songes, Intituled
 Gradualia: one other sett named Sacra cantiones,
 of 5 parts, two other sett of priest Bookes, of 3, 4, 5
 and 6 parts: This last English sett, : This printed sett
 of 3, 4, 5, and 6 parts; An other sett of bookes of 5 and
 6 parts, dedicated to my lord. Sundry other sett
 of 4, 5, and 6 parts. In one other sett of priest
 Bookes with Black leather Covers of 5 parts:

It was delivered into the charge of
 the Dean to receive the same. / not a part of the same

Illustration 25. A note of such musique bookes as are left by Richard Mico, in the
 little cupboard in the drawing rooms(sic). (1615)

Du felix ego Quia : bo ad quem profugiam quibus meis
 rebi tunc :// ad celum letant oculos non audeo ://
 :// non audeo :// quia ei grauium petraui ://
 grauium petra :// in terra refugium in petra :// quia
 ei scandalum fu :// ://

Illustration 26. William Byrd's Motet *Infelix ego*, Found in the Part-Book

Belonging to Sir John Petre.

Secunda pars

Desperabo absit absit absit // //

Solum igitur Deus refugium meum //

absit non desperiet opus suum opus suum absit non desperiet opus suum

um non repellet magnam suam non repellet magnam

sua suam //

verte folium pro tercia pte

Illustration 26. Continuation of William Byrd's Motet Infelix ego.

tercia pars

Ad te igitur piissime de no tristes ac merens penio penio tristes

ac merens penio ac merens penio quid autem dicam tibi tui oculos seruant no aude

tui oculos seruant seruant no audeo per bar dolens esundam // esunda misericordiam tua

plorabo miflora bo misericordiam tua miflora bo et di tam // et di tam // miflora mei //

deno secundum // magna misericordia tu am misericordi tuam misericordi

Finis qth ARDOR BURDET

Illustration 26. Continuation of William Byrd's Motet Infelix ego.

The significance of the Petre family and their circle in Byrd's life is evident. It is not unexpected, therefore, to find that Byrd acknowledged it in the dedication of the second volume of the *Gradualia*:

"In as much as these musical lucubrations, like fruits spring from a fertile soil, have mostly proceeded from your house (truly most friendly to me and mine), and from that tempering of the sky have brought forth more grateful and abundant fruits, receive, then Right Honourable Lord, these little flowers, plucked as it were from your gardens and most rightfully due to you as tithes"³⁶

Apart from the more obvious advantages of having Sir John's protection and support as patron, it had the effect of extending Byrd's opportunities for employment and allowing him greater contact with members of the Catholic community. Furthermore because of the pro-Catholic atmosphere that prevailed in the Petre household, fraternisation with eminent clerics is also a possibility. It is tantalising to consider the meetings that might have taken place. While much of the probable interaction that occurred is impossible to prove due to lack of records and the obvious need for secrecy, a few accounts have survived. It is known, for example, that Byrd was a visitor to Ingatestone at the same time as the Earl and Countess of Worcester for the Christmas festivities of 1589-90.³⁷ It is also possible that Byrd came into contact with other renowned Catholics who appear on the Petre guest list; people such as Sir William and Lady Jane Cornwallis, Sir Richard Weston, Sir Anthony Browne, Viscount Montague and his wife the Lady Magdalen who gained a reputation for her Mass Centres after she was widowed.³⁸ Similarly, the Kytsons of Hengrave could well have been acquainted with Byrd since they were friends of the Cornwallis family, recusants, and also known to be musical.³⁹ Gilbert and Mary Talbot, the Earl and Lady Shrewsbury, were another likely connection in the network. While the Earl openly denied Catholicism, his servants were arrested as recusants and his wife blatantly conformed to the old faith.⁴⁰

They too had musical interests, and since they were distantly related to the Petres, Byrd's involvement with them is a possibility.⁴¹

A more tenuous connection (but one which should not be ignored) between Sir John Petre, Byrd, and members of a Catholic network is evident in the collection of Byrd's keyboard works known as *My Ladye Nevell's Booke*. While the patron has never been positively identified there are at least two possible candidates. One such suggestion is that it was Grisold Hughes, wife of Francis Clifford (fourth Earl of Cumberland) who was Byrd's friend and patron. Before her marriage to Cumberland, Grisold was married to Edward Neville and it is possible that Byrd knew her when she was in fact Lady Neville. Other evidence seems to support the premise that it was Elizabeth Bacon whose second husband was Sir Henry Nevell, Constable of Windsor Castle.⁴² Unlike Cumberland who was a loyal member of the Church of England, Sir Henry was well known as a Catholic, and also a friend of Sir John Petre.⁴³ Furthermore, the inclusion of *The Tenth Pavian: Mr W. Petre*, a reference to Sir John's son William, adds weight to the connection. If the latter was the case the fact that Byrd was still living in Harlington, in close proximity to Windsor, until the completion of *My Ladye Nevell's Book* in 1592, implies a possible involvement with a circle of Catholics; a circle which it would appear also included his friend and patron Sir John Petre.

From most of the foregoing facts it would seem that Byrd's association with Catholics was enhanced by his relationship with Sir John Petre, but there are many instances of an independent approach. For example, another link between Byrd and a circle of Catholics has been proposed through the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*.⁴⁴ The collection of pieces appears to have been compiled almost entirely from the works of composers associated with Catholicism at one time or another. The compiler has been identified as Francis Tregian the younger, son of Francis Tregian who was imprisoned for many years for harbouring a priest. Francis the

younger was educated at Douai Seminary, and was apparently in touch with a large number of English Catholics both at home and abroad. Names of many people known to have been Catholics are included in the collection, either as composers or given as titles to pieces. For example, works were named Philippa and Sybil Tregian (sisters of Francis), as well as Lady Rich, Lord Lumley, Lord Monteaule and his father, Lord Morley. In such a specialised anthology, it comes as no surprise to discover that William Byrd's music is most abundant. The *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* was probably compiled entirely for Francis Tregian's entertainment in prison, and there is no reason to suppose that it implied a connection between those named. However, there is an obscure reference in the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* which suggests the opposite, and indicating the possibility that Byrd was personally involved with at least some of those people:

"... meeting with one Bird Brother to Bird of the Chappall I understand that M^{ris} Tregion M^{ris} Charnock and M^{ris} Sibile Tregion will be seen at the Court on this day"(sic).⁴⁵

While some of the evidence supporting the case for Byrd's participation in a Catholic community may not seem very substantial, a definite, and characteristic life style is evident. From the scanty information available, the inclination towards popery can be discerned through events in his life well before he moved to Stondon Massey. Byrd's servant John Reason, for example, was arrested on an errand to a Catholic house when he arrived inadvertently in the middle of a raid.⁴⁶ Reason was discovered to be conveying an "old prynted songe booke"(sic) to one member of the household and a letter from his master to another.⁴⁷ In addition, he was in possession of the "Officin beate marie"(sic), a popish item which he claimed was "hys owne prayer book"(sic).⁴⁸ It was typical for a Catholic household to either employ servants of the same religion or convert them to the faith. For example, it is noted that Reason's name or a variant of it appears

frequently on the Middlesex recusant roles in association with Byrd's first wife, Juliana.⁴⁹

Concern for others in a similar or worse situation, was a sentiment frequently expressed by those who were suffering for their beliefs. Although scarce, there are grounds which indicate that Byrd also manifested this attitude. In 1581 he intervened on behalf of a certain Dorothy Tempest and her five children who were in financial distress because of their faith. According to the certificate of appeal, Michael Tempest had been deprived of the means of supporting his wife and children since he was forced into exile after having been implicated in the Northern Uprising of Catholics in 1570.⁵⁰

Another instance in Byrd's life which implies both a religious motivation and a link with other Catholics, is evident in the indictment brought against him on 7th February 1600: " William Byrd of Stondon, gentleman, for enclosing with a great ditch and hedge the highway leading from Stondon to Kelvedon Hatch in Kelvedon, and the highway leading from Kelvedon to Stondon, which have been common highways for footmen and horsemen and carriages from time out of the mind of man."⁵¹

The fact that Byrd was involved in litigation in order to keep the public right-of-way exclusively for his own use suggests the need for unobtrusive access to the home of John Wright, possibly for private worship. Members of the Wright family of Kelvedon Hall were presented as recusants along with Byrd and his family on several occasions.⁵² In fact in 1605 Byrd and a man named Gabriel Colford were accused in the Ecclesiastical Court of having seduced "John Wright sonne and heire of John Wright of Kelvedon in Essex gent and of Anne Wright the daughter of the said John Wright thelder ..." (sic) to popery.⁵³ Sir John Petre was apparently aware of the collusion between them and its significance, for on the

19th August 1602 he wrote to Sir Thomas Mildmay⁵⁴ asking that the indictment against Byrd for having "stopped up the two highways" should "give order" at the next sessions and "that no further process issue nor proceedings be there for this matter till we have returned our answer to the said Sir John Fortescue, ... lest in the meantime Mr Birde should incur any disadvantage while the matter is retained in our hands"(sic).⁵⁵

Byrd demonstrated prevailing Catholic attitudes, especially in connection with others of the faith and conformed to practices significant to them. That his second son Thomas spent some time in Valladolid at the Jesuit College indicates adherence to the custom much encouraged by the clerics, of sending the sons of Catholic families abroad for their education.⁵⁶ However it was through his eldest son Christopher, that Byrd was irrevocably linked to the Catholic network, and at what was considered the highest possible level. Sometime before the 3rd July, 1595, Christopher married Catherine More, great granddaughter of the martyr Sir Thomas More.⁵⁷ This event united the family name of Byrd with the most illustrious Catholic family in sixteenth-century England. The significance of this alliance was acknowledged in the naming of the only child of the marriage. Under the circumstances, by what name other than Thomas could their son have been called? Whether Christopher had already met Catherine before the Byrd family moved to Stondon Massey is not known, but it is possible that the two families were already acquainted as a result of William's frequent visits to Essex. Thomas II and his family had moved to Essex only twelve years prior to Byrd, probably as the result of a similar motivation, to be near a community of Catholics.

Further proof which suggests that both Byrd and Thomas II were involved in the same circle of Catholics is the fact that the painting of Sir Thomas More and his descendants by Rowland Lockey came into the possession of one of Byrd's patrons, Lord Lumley.⁵⁸ William Byrd's daughter-in-law, Catherine, (married to

Christopher Byrd), belonged to the family group represented on the right hand-side of that painting. Recollect that two of Thomas II's sons were depicted as representing his family, but none of his daughters.

Some of the connections are obviously nebulous and difficult to establish definitely, especially under such circumstances and at this distance in time. However, from the tantalising glimpses available it appears that Byrd was involved in a circle or network of Catholic people frequently drawn from the upper echelons of society; and that they likewise were associated with an even greater intricacy of reticulation. What is evident is the fact that most of his patrons were Catholic in inclination, if not in practice. That these particular people played a significant role in his life is not in doubt, but what has never been addressed is the question of that role. Byrd's recusancy came relatively late in his life. It may have been the case that Catholic patrons converted, or restored, him to the Catholic faith over a period of time. On the other hand, if he was already a believer of the traditional religion, Catholic patrons would have been deliberately sought out.

While there seems little doubt that Byrd was a committed Catholic who by the end of his life sought to identify with those of similar faith, there is no reason to suppose that he was not loyal to crown and country. As was shown in Chapter I.ii (p. 10) many Catholics openly declared their loyalty; furthermore they did not reject their intrinsic 'Englishness'. It appears from Byrd's behaviour that in addition to a commitment to Catholicism, he also demonstrated a "... most sincere and naturall love unto [his] Cuntrie"(sic).⁵⁹

NOTES

- ¹J. Kerman and P. Brett have certainly spearheaded a more rational and probably a more accurate approach to the question. See for example:
 J. Kerman, "William Byrd and the Catholics" *New York Review of Books* Vol.26 No.8 (17th May 1979) p.32.
 "Byrd's Motets: Chronology and Canon" *J.A.M.S.* Vol.14 (1961) p.359
 "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary Mass" *J.A.M.S.* Vol.32 No.3 (1979) p.408
The Masses and Motets of William Byrd (London, 1981)
 P. Brett, "Homage to Taverner in Byrd's Masses"
- ²See Chapter 1, section ii
- ³E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd, op.cit.* p.247
- ⁴Petre Account Book 1589-90 E.R.O. D/DP A21
- ⁵A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.27
- ⁶It is possible that although the works were listed as Kyries, they did in fact refer to the entire Masses as was the case in the Playford catalogue of 1650 where the Masses were entitled *Kirries*. See Fellowes, *Ibid.* p.51
- ⁷C.W. Warren, "Music at Nonesuch" *Musical Quarterly* Vol.54 No.1 (1968) p. 47
- ⁸N. Williams, *All the Queen's Men, op.cit.* p.200
- ⁹D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge 1981) p.162. At this time, Byrd was involved in a law suit which had nothing to do with his religion.
- ¹⁰N. Williams, *All the Queen's Men, op.cit.* p.199
- ¹¹D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians, op.cit.* p.96
- ¹²P. Brett, "Edward Paston 1550-1630: A Norfolk Gentleman and his Musical Collection" *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* Vol.4 (1964) p.52; J. Kerman, "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary of the Mass" *op.cit.* p.412
- ¹³P. Brett, "Edward Paston" *op. cit.* p.64
- ¹⁴People mentioned in these songs include Lady Penelope Rich whose brother was the Earl of Essex. She is known to have had sympathy for the Catholic cause and was eventually reconciled on her deathbed according to John Gerard. See Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.*p.34-36. In addition, Lady Rich intervened on behalf of Richard Bolt, the musician, who was arrested on religious grounds. Another renowned Catholic who was mentioned in the songs was the Lady Magdalene Montague, who, it has already been mentioned, served the Catholic community especially after the death of her husband.

¹⁵E.R.O. D/DP Z6/1

¹⁶P. Brett, "Edward Paston" *op. cit.* p.58

¹⁷Although this book is described as a Continental anthology of Catholic sacred music, the most represented composer is William Byrd.

¹⁸A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.7

¹⁹*Ibid.* p.31

²⁰F.G. Emmison, *Tudor Secretary, op.cit.* p.213

²¹A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.73

²²E.R.O. D/DB A20

²³E.R.O. D/DP F218

²⁴E.R.O. D/DP A35

²⁵E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd, op.cit.* p.19

²⁶*Ibid.* p.26

²⁷The former owner of Stondon Place, William Shelley was imprisoned in the Fleet for having been implicated in a Jesuit plot in 1580. He was later imprisoned in the Tower and lost his property to the Crown after alleged involvement with the Earl of Northumberland and Charles Paget in a plot to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne. Fellowes, *op.cit.* p.19.

²⁸In the sixteenth century, Ingatestone Hall was approached by a lane off the London to Chelmsford Road, but because of its location the house was not visible until the gatehouse had been reached. F.G.Emmison, *Sir William Petre, Tudor Secretary* (London, 1961) p.28

²⁹A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.31

³⁰E.R.O. D/DP E2/1

³¹*Ibid.*

³²D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians, op.cit.* p.90

³³E.R.O. D/DP E2/8

³⁴E.R.O. D/DP Z6/2

³⁵E.R.O. D/DP Z6/1

³⁶Translation cited in O. Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History* (New York, 1950) p.330

- ³⁷E.R.O. D/DP A21
- ³⁸E.R.O. D/DP A21 Diets Charges; E.R.O. D/DP A25, A26 Provisions accounts 1604-1610. For more information on the friendship between the Cornwallis and Petre families, see C.U.L. Hengrave M.S.S. 88 Vol.1 No.162
- ³⁹D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, *op.cit.* p.80
- ⁴⁰*Ibid.* p.107
- ⁴¹Sir John Petre's sister married John Talbot of Grafton whose son succeeded to the Earldom. See A.C.Edwards, *John Petre*, *op.cit.* p.13.
- ⁴²A. Brown, *Keyboard Music of William Byrd* an unpublished dissertation (Cambridge, 1970) cited in D.C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, *op.cit.* p.162
- ⁴³*Ibid*
- ⁴⁴Elizabeth Cole, "Seven Problems of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book" *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* Vol.79 (1952-3) p.51
- ⁴⁵Calendar of State Papers Domestic CCXLviii 118 cited in E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.43
- ⁴⁶*Ibid.* p.40
- ⁴⁷The "letter sent unto Mr Fytton from one Mr Byrde of the Quenes Majesty Chapple ..." was to William Fitton of Bailes who with his family had been recently reconciled to the Catholic church. P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, *op.cit.* p.33.
- ⁴⁸27th January 1583 *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* Elizabeth CLxvii
- ⁴⁹E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.38
- ⁵⁰*Ibid.* p.39
- ⁵¹E.R.O. Q/SR 149/51,52. 7th February 1599-1600
- ⁵²See for example 23rd July 1601 Chelmsford Assizes, 35/43/2 No.3178; 4th March 1602 Assizes 35/44/1 No.3221
- ⁵³E.R.O. D/AEA 23. The Wright family were a wealthy branch of the Petre family. There were three main Catholic Centres in the area, within one and a half miles of each other: Navestock Hall, home of the Waldegrave family, Bellhouse, the Standford Rivers home of a wealthy branch of the Petres, and Kelvedon Hall, home of the Wright family.
- ⁵⁴Sir Thomas Mildmay was the most important Magistrate in Essex and a colleague of Sir John. A.C. Edwards, *John Petre*, *op.cit.* p.22; N.C. Elliot, *The Roman Catholic Community in Essex 1625-1701* (Oxford, 1979) p.22.
- ⁵⁵E.R.O. Q/SR 155/17

⁵⁶C.R.S. Valladolid Register

⁵⁷Byrd and his family including "his son and his wife" were first presented in Essex as recusants on 3rd July 1595. E.R.O. Q.S.R.vi 130/23.

⁵⁸Roy Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, *op.cit.* p.349

⁵⁹Robert Southwell, *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty*, *op.cit.*

CHAPTER 4.ii WILLIAM BYRD: The Cost of Faith

A moot point relating to the irregularity of Byrd's faith is that concerned with the penalty. Was he inconvenienced by his disobedience in matters of religion or, as one writer suggests, did he only experience minor irritation?¹ Is it in fact something which should be taken into account when assessing the complex circumstances of Byrd's life? His position in the Chapel Royal probably offered him some protection as is apparent in the petition addressed "To the most honourable Lorde the earle of Salisburie, cheefe secretarie to his Matie.

"The humble petition of William Byrd one of the gent of his Maties Chapple. That beinge to crave the Counsailes letter to Mr Attorney General to like effect and favour for his recussancye as the late gracious Q. and her Counsaile gave him he most humble beseacheth yor Honors good favor therein"(sic).² Furthermore, it was permissible for people to hold public office while remaining Catholic provided there was no doubt about their loyalty to the crown.

However, the manner in which one interprets 'permission' and the concept of protection is obviously a determining factor in Byrd's position. While it is true to say that he never experienced the full vengeance of the anti-Catholic laws, for he was not subversive even if disobedient in matters of faith, it cannot be claimed that he led a life free from tribulation. If the events of adversity are amassed, their implication and significance may contribute to a greater understanding of the situation.

In spite of royal protection, Byrd was kept under surveillance for at least a decade before he withdrew to Essex. In 1581 a list was compiled of "The places were certaine recusantes remove in and about the city of London or are to be com by uppon warning"(sic), which included, "Wylliam Byrde of the Chappell At his house in the parish of Harlington in com Midd"(sic).³ Furthermore, he was also

known to the government as one of the "great frends and ayders of those beyond the seas"(sic), those who were, "relievers of papistes and conveyers of money and other things unto them beyondes the Seas"(sic).⁴ Observation of him continued and on 16th May 1585 Sir Thomas Wylkes, who was the chief examiner of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel,⁵ wrote himself a reminder "too send for byrd of the Chapell, and that his house be diligentllye searched"(sic).⁶ Whether the memorandum was ever implemented is not recorded, but the following year Byrd's name appeared again on a list of people whose homes were to be searched.⁷ If at this time he was a protected member of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, why did the government persist in their surveillance and harassment of him?⁸ Did they suspect him of associating with Jesuits or of being involved in a plot to overthrow the monarchy? One assumes that in making raids on his house the searchers expected to find illegal items in his possession or evidence of Jesuits. The ostensible protection did not prevent the authorities from having Byrd, his family and members of his household charged with recusancy at frequent intervals.

Not long after Byrd and his family moved to Harlington, (c. 1577),his wife was first presented as a recusant, a recurrent event which often included the family servant John Reason.⁹ In 1585 Byrd himself was cited for the first time, and two years later was bound over for recusancy.¹⁰ These were the beginnings of many similar incidents which escalated considerably when the Byrd family moved to Stondon Massey.

The information that Byrd was a recusant is easily established through the numerous entries of his name (and the members of his family), in the local Quarter Session Roles, the returns of the Assizes and the Ecclesiastical Court records. Since these names are recorded in lists, historians tend to interpret the information in a similar inert fashion, giving the impression that from time to time these names were merely itemized. What is never acknowledged is the fact that

when the name of William Byrd, or anyone else for that matter, was recorded as a recusant the individual was usually confronted by church officials who challenged their absence from parish church services. This form of harassment was experienced quite regularly by the Byrd family. Between the 1st July 1602 and the 5th or 6th May 1603, a space of ten months, Byrd and his family were pressured to conform four times. The Essex Quarter Sessions held in Chelmsford on 1st July 1602 recorded that,

"Bird, Master William Burde and his wife and son Christopher, and his sons wife have not come to church for a long time, dwelling in Stondon"(sic).¹¹

Three months later on the 30th September 1602 the Byrd family were again cited:

"Bird, Master William Burd and his wife, Christopher and his wife of Stondon not to come to church since the last sessions"(sic).¹²

At the following sessions held over the period 13th to the 15th January 1602-3, Byrd alone was certified a recusant:

"Mr Burd of Stondon hath not come to our church never to our knowledge"(sic).¹³

Only two months later, on the 13th March 1602-3 almost the entire extended family were reported:

"Byrd, William gent of Stondon and his wife the like (for recusancy) for 16 Sundays and 5 holidays beginning the 16th January 1602-3
Byrd, Christopher gent and his wife.
Jackson, Elizabeth (Byrd's eldest daughter, whose husband was also often mentioned).
Byrd, Mary Spinster (Byrd's youngest daughter)
Hook, Rachel, Spinster wife of (blank) Hooke gent, (Byrd's second daughter)
all of Stondon"(sic).¹⁴

After a break of a further two months the family were presented yet again at the sessions held on the 5th and 6th May 1603:

"Birde, Mr William and his wife
 Birde, Christopher and his wife
 Jackson, Elizabeth
 Birde, Mary
 Hooke, Rachel wife of Mr Hooke of Stondon for not coming to church"(sic).¹⁵

For government officials to be in possession of such knowledge regarding the extended Byrd family indicates that they were closely watched and probably frequently interrogated. The results of surveillance were not restricted to the activities of the Quarter Sessions. The Assizes and Ecclesiastical Courts also dealt with that form of behaviour. An account of Byrd's case presented to the Archdeacon on the 11th May 1605 is not only evidence of Byrd's recusancy, it reveals the family situation with its unified, Catholic-centred life,¹⁶ while demonstrating the manner in which officials harassed them (see illustration 27). The fact that Byrd and his family were apparently more closely watched in Stondon Massey suggests that, rather than moving there to avoid confrontation (as is usually proposed), he chose to expose his faith more prominently:

"Stondon Massie William Bird et Elena eius ux
 Presentat for Popishe Recusants/ he is a gentleman of the Kings/ Maties Chapell, and as the minister/ and churchwardens doe heare the/ said William Birde with the assistance/ of one Gabriel Colford¹⁷ who is nowe/ at Antwerp hath byn the Chiefe and/ princypall seducer of John Wright sonne/ and heire of John Wright of Kelvedon/ in Essex gent and of Anne Wright the/ daughter of the said John Wright the elder./ And the said Elen Birde as it is reported/ and as her servants have confessed have/ appointed busines on the Saboth daye for/ her servants of purpose to keepe them/ from Church, and hath also done her best/ indeavour to seduce Thoda Pigbone her/ nowe mayde servant to drawe her to poperie/ as the mayde hath confessed. And besides hath/drawne her mayde servants from tyme to/ tyme these 7 yeres from cominge to Church/ and the said Ellen refuseth conference/ and the minister and Churchwardens/ have not as yet spoke with the said W^m/ Birde because he is from home - and/ they have byn excommunicated these 7 yeres"(sic).¹⁸

The entry was continued on the following page (see illustration 28 p. 176):

London, Masse William Byrd et al. presentat for, Proposito Veritas
 Etiam dicitur: Et est a gentleman of the Kinge
 ma ties of the, and his wife
 and his wife and his wife
 said said Byrd wife of the
 of one Gabriel Colford, resident
 at Dunrope, late by the office and
 principal partner of John Kinge, some
 and wife of John Kinge of London
 in England and of Anne Kinge
 daughter of the said John Kinge
 and the said said Byrd as it is reported
 and as her servant gave confessed gave
 appointed business on the said days for
 her servant of purpose to be taken
 from the said, and also done for best
 endeavours to seduce good highland
 man may be servant to France for 10 years
 as he may be confessed and besides
 drawn for may be servant from France
 by the said 7 years from France to France
 and the said said Byrd wife of the
 and the minister and his wife
 gave not as yet spoke of the said
 Byrd because he is from France and
 he gave by a committee of 7 years

Illustration 27. The Official Record of Byrd and his Family Presented as Recusants

Before the Archdeacon on 11th. May 1605.

Sander
Massie

Edward Child & Present for a year
Edgar in enispe, and accept of use
and for sale of...
of 7 years, and for...
may be...
of the said...
10th 1660

Handwritten mark

Eden Child Present for a year
of 7 years
and is...
of the said...
of the said...
Child

Handwritten mark

Eden Maran Child of...
Child

Handwritten mark

Handwritten mark

Eden Elizabeth Jackson
Child

Handwritten mark

Eden Elizabeth Jackson
Child

Handwritten mark

Illustration 28. Continuation of the Byrd Family Presentment on 11th. May 1605

"Stondon Massie Xpofer Birde et Catherine euis ux
 Psentat for popishe Recusants they/ doe utterlye refuse conference/ and
 they have stood excommunicate/ these 7 yeares/ and they are/ maynteyned as the
 minister and Churchwardens doe thinke by the said/ W^m Birde.

eadem (in the same way) Thomas Birde

Prsentat for a popishe Recusant, he/ hath stooode excommunicate these 7
 yeares/ and is manteyned as the minister and/ churchwarden's doe thinke at the
 charges/ of the said W^m Birde, he doth resorte/ often tymes to the house of the
 said William / Birde.

eadem Mariam Birde similar

eadem Elizabeth Jackson similar vidua (widow)

eadem Stanford Ryvers Catherin Hooke /

ux Johnis Hooke similar"(sic).¹⁹

Exaction of the penalties incurred for recusancy was not consistent, being largely determined by the presiding magistrate, who might vary in his attitude to Catholics from being sympathetic to them to abhorrent and vindictive.²⁰ It is not known whether Byrd ever paid his fines, but according to the law, the official debt liable for following his own conscience at twenty pounds per month would have accumulated to approximately £6480 by the end of his life. Since Sir John Petre as a Justice of the Peace was frequently in attendance at the Essex Quarter Sessions,²¹ one wonders whether his personal inclination in matters of religion influenced the treatment of offenders. There was, however, no guarantee that recusants would be presented before Sir John rather than one of the other magistrates. Nevertheless, with almost fixed regularity, persistent intimidation was imposed on a number of people whose names appear repeatedly in the same records; names of people who were probably known to each other and shared their adversity. For example, one finds that "Anne White Spinster and Edward White gent of Kelvedon,"²² who, it was alleged, were seduced to popery by Byrd and Gabriel Colford, were presented before J. Francis Gawdy and Sergeant William Daniel on the 23rd July 1601, in the same batch of offenders as members of the Byrd family.²³ The next time their names appeared together was on the 4th March 1602,²⁴ an incident which recurred from time to time until on the 12th March 1621, Edward and Mary's children were also cited as recusants.²⁵

It has already been established that Byrd's daughter-in-law, Catherine More, was listed in the recusant rolls as a member of his family. What is also notable is the fact that her natural family were similarly cited for their faith, and often on the same occasions as the Byrds. In fact, through the recusant rolls, one encounters all the contemporary individuals featured in Rowland Lockey's painting of Sir Thomas More and his descendants, as well as family members not depicted.²⁶ Thomas II, who probably commissioned the painting, was frequently presented for recusancy, as was his youngest son Christopher Cresacre (usually mentioned as Cresacre). On the 6th March 1600 for example, John More the eldest son portrayed in the painting, was charged as a recusant along with his father and three sisters.²⁷ On the 23rd July of the following year: "Thomas Moore yeoman, Mary More his wife, Griseacres Moore yeoman, Mary Moore Spinster, Grace More Spinster (and) Anne Moore Spinster"(sic), were all presented on the same day as William Byrd and his family.²⁸ One instance when both families were presented at the same Ecclesiastical Court is given in illustration 29.²⁹

A connection between the two families was apparently maintained since it would seem that soon after Byrd died, his daughter-in-law, who had been a widow for some time, invited her sisters to share her home. On the 12th January 1625-26 at the presentment to the Grand Jury, "Catherine Bird, gentlewoman and widow" was cited along with Ann More and her servant Ann Garfoot, "all of Stondon Massey for being recusants."³⁰ On this occasion "Mr John Wright of Kelvedon gent" was also listed, suggesting that the bond between the Byrd household at Stondon and the Wright family at Kelvedon Hall was still in existence.³¹ One name which may or may not be relevant, and appears on the recusant rolls together with Byrd, his family, friends and acquaintances, is "Anastasia Campion wife of Thomas Campion."³² It is possible that this is a reference to the renowned musician and composer. His marital status seems uncertain, but it appears that he may have had Catholic sympathies.³³

Leyton

Murrain More (present for a recusant) by a recusant before his entry
 by some More coming into England, for in
 the order of others, the names of
 the son of J. More and present in
 recusant, for of the above
 quiet marriage, intended to be
 to himself, and for refusal
 reference and the self goods to go
 irregularly

X (20)

eadem Margaret More } present
 John More }
 More of (Lis) ent }
 eadem

X (20)

eadem Maria More } present
 eadem William More }

X (20)

eadem Anna More } present
 eadem

Illustration 29. The Official Record of the More Family Presented as Recusants Before the Archdeacon on 11th. May 1605.

Byrd's recurrent presentments for defiance of the law regarding public worship were not the only legal demonstration of his adamant stand for the Catholic faith. Parishioners of Stondon Massey were expected to contribute financially to the maintenance of their parish church through land rates, and this Byrd refused to do. In 1612 he was cited "for that he will not paye to the rate for his land lying in the parish to the reparations of the Churche and bells which some is XXs"(sic).³⁴

From 1616 until his death in 1623, Byrd was frequently presented as a recusant along with his widowed daughter-in-law Catherine. Even in his 79th year, he was still being charged with recusancy, though at this advanced age he may have found it physically impossible to comply with the law. There is a further piece of evidence which suggests that Byrd and his family were not unaffected as a result of their religious stance. His personal testimony of 1605 alludes to the "distressed affairs of my family,"³⁵ indicating that whatever favour or protection Byrd may have enjoyed because of his musical fame and high-ranking patrons, the activities of the law took their toll, mentally and financially. What seems most evident, is the fact that Byrd was aware of this possibility when he moved away from court, and that he made a deliberate decision to demonstrate his faith more openly, and accept the consequences.

NOTES

- ¹Several writers have implied similar attitudes but the one specifically referred to is William Palmer, "Word Painting and Suggestion in Byrd" *Musical Review* Vol.13 (August, 1952) p.180.
- ²Hatford House, Cecil Papers, Petition 52.
- ³S.P.D. Eliz cli ii
- ⁴S.P.D. Eliz. cxlvii 137
- ⁵Chapter I, Section ii
- ⁶Cited in C.R.S. Vol.21 (London, 1919) pp.123
- ⁷S.P.D. Eliz. cxcii 48
- ⁸Byrd and his wife were presented for recusancy at least fourteen times at the Middlesex Quarter Sessions from the year in which Byrd's name was first listed until he moved to Stondon Massey in c1593. Juliana, his first wife, was mentioned as a recusant as early as 1577.
- ⁹S.P.D. Eliz. cxviii 73
- ¹⁰S.P.D. Eliz. cc 59
- ¹¹E.R.O. Quarter Session Rolls vi 158/27
- ¹²E.R.O. Quarter Session Rolls vi 159/19
- ¹³E.R.O. Quarter Session Rolls vi 160/32
- ¹⁴E.R.O. Quarter Session Rolls vi 161/
- ¹⁵E.R.O. Quarter Session Rolls vi 162/20
- ¹⁶It was important that the whole household, including the servants, acknowledged the same faith, not only for the sake of security but also so that all members could participate in religious observances such as fasting, prayers, the liturgy etc. Bossy, *op.cit.* p.112. In fact many priests considered it their duty to assist conformity in Catholic households. See for example John Gerard's *Autobiography, op.cit.* pp.33,145f.,150.
- ¹⁷Gabriel Colford played an important part in smuggling Catholic books of devotion into England. See J.G. O'Leary, "Gabriel Colford Smuggler of Books" *Essex Recusant* Vol.8 No.2 (August, 1966) p.77
- ¹⁸E.R.O. D/AEA 23 137a. Due to the limitations of technology it is impossible to reproduce the transcript exactly.

¹⁹*Ibid.* second page

²⁰A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation, op.cit.* p.423

²¹A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.22

²²This entry is incorrect and should in fact read Anne and John Wright, the couple who are mentioned in the presentation to the Archdeacon on 11th May 1605. In addition, it was the road to the home of this family (Kelvedon Hall), that Byrd attempted to keep exclusively for his own use.

²³E.R.O. Assizes 35/43/2 31

²⁴E.R.O. Assizes 35/44/1 3221

²⁵E.R.O. Assizes 35/63/1 1593

²⁶Chapter 3, Section ii

²⁷E.R.O. Assizes 35/42/1 2999

²⁸E.R.O. Assizes 35/43/2 3178

²⁹E.R.O. D/AEA 23

³⁰E.R.O. Presentment to Grand Jury 12th January 1625/26 253/25. The largest concentration of Catholics in Essex in the seventeenth century occurred in Stondon Massey according to recusant rolls. In January 1625-26 eleven people were presented together including Catherine Byrd and her son Thomas, their servants Helen and Charles Hills, and George Hall gent, the women of the More family and their servants Ann Garfoot, Henry Monke and a labourer; in addition to Barbara Wiseman. N.C. Elliot *The Roman Catholic Community in Essex 1625-1701* (Oxford, 1979) p.22.

³¹Catholicism in this area was centred around three houses all within one and a half miles of each other. Behind this stronghold can be detected the influence of the Petre family. Bellhouse in Stanford Rivers belonged to a wealthy branch of the Petres, Navestock Hall which was the home of the Waldgrave family and Kelvedon Hall, home of the Wright family. N.C. Elliot, *The Roman Catholic Community, op.cit.*p.21.

³²See for example E.R.O. Quarter Session for 3rd July 1606, and 2nd October 1606 181/70

³³Diana Poulton, "Thomas Campion" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol. 3 (London, 1980) p. 656; Walter R. Davis, (ed.) *The Works of Thomas Campion* (New York, 1970)

³⁴Cited in E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd, op, cit.* p.45

³⁵E.R.O. Presentment to Grand Jury 225/55,56

CHAPTER 4.iii BYRD AND THE JESUITS

There is no doubt that Byrd was associated to some degree with the Jesuits and associating with Jesuits could be considered as conspiring against the state. What is uncertain is the extent of the interaction and the effect it had on his life. To ascertain the facts is difficult because of the secrecy necessitated by circumstances. The correspondence of Jesuits, which is a primary source of information, is a case in point. In a letter dated the 20th February 1587, Claude Aquaviva, the General in Rome, advised Southwell, "Do not say much in plain and open terms The subjects you discuss should to some extent be veiled in allegory, especially if they are important. When individuals are in question, no more than an indirect allusion should be made to them."¹ Consequently, there is not only little concrete evidence, but it is difficult to hazard the degree and significance of Byrd's relationship with the Jesuits, or even when he first came into contact with them.

It is possible that there is a connection between the Jesuits and the fact that Byrd was first recorded as being under government surveillance in 1581. That was the year in which Edmund Campion was martyred, bringing the Society and their mission to the attention of the public. Many people were influenced by Campion's death and it appears that Byrd may have been similarly affected because he chose to compose a musical setting for one of the verses of the poem commemorating the martyr's death. Henry Walpole, who wrote *An Epitaph of the Life and Death of the Famous Clerk and Virtuous Priest Edmund Campion*, was not a Jesuit at the time: "he was a courtier before Campion's execution and while he was still a layman wrote some beautiful English verses in his honour, telling how the martyr's blood had brought warmth into his life and many others' too, inspiring them to follow the more perfect way of Christ's counsels."²

Byrd may not have been inspired to follow "Christ's counsels" in the same manner as Walpole was by becoming a Jesuit (and later also being executed for it), but it could well have initiated the desire for a more committed life as a member of the Catholic Church. The very fact that he made the decision to compose the song, *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen*, in the precarious circumstances tends to indicate the significance of his choice. Soon after Walpole's poem was secretly published in 1582, the press was seized and the printer, Stephen Vallenger, after first having his ears cut off, was imprisoned in the Tower until his death.³ Twelve years later a copy of the poem was still considered seditious material, as is corroborated by the arrest and examination of John Bolt on March 20th.⁴ Listed among the offensive items found in his possession were copies of *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen*, and Southwell's poem *St. Peter's Complaint*. Incidentally, Bolt was arrested in a house in London that was also used by the Jesuit, Garnet.⁵ The particular choice of poem set to music at a time when Byrd was first cited for recusancy suggests a strengthening of Catholic ties, if not the beginnings of association with the Jesuits.

A proposition made by Joseph Kerman supports the possibility of an association in that two motets written about the same time could in fact be veiled references to the Jesuits.⁶ As has been indicated in the case of Sir Thomas Tresham, biblical texts were chosen for their cryptic content without appearing to be offensive to Protestants, or illegal.⁷ Kerman has suggested that although Byrd's motet *Deus venerunt gentes* is based on the first four verses of Psalm 78 it could be interpreted as a description of the execution of Campion and his fellow priests within the general context of Catholic persecution.⁸

1. O God, the heathens have come into your inheritance, they have polluted your temple, they have placed Jerusalem in ruins.
2. The dead bodies of your servants have been thrown as carrion to the birds of heaven, your saints as meat bait to the beasts of the earth.

3. They have poured their blood like water around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them.
4. We have been made a scandal to our neighbours, a mockery and derision to them that are round about us.

Bearing in mind the manner in which Jesuits were executed as traitors, and the method of selecting Biblical texts for their implicit meaning that Tresham employed, it is possible to read a topical interpretation into the psalm.

A more general allusion to the Jesuits and their significance to English Catholics has been discerned in Byrd's setting of *Circumspice Hierusalem*.⁹ The text of this motet in translation states: "Jerusalem, look eastwards and see the joy that is coming to you from God. They come, the sons from whom you were parted, they come gathered together at the word of the Holy One from east to west, rejoicing in the glory of God."

These last verses of the fourth chapter of Baruch would appear, especially to those involved, to be a reference to the practice of the sons of Catholic families who travelled in an easterly direction to Rome where they were trained and later returned as members of the English mission. Furthermore, the fact that the text was taken from the Deuterocanonical books (known to Protestants as the Apocrypha) increased the Roman implications, since they were excluded from Protestant versions of the Bible. Sir Thomas Tresham also included texts from the same source possibly for similar reasons. If, as seems to be the case, Byrd was also implying a non-biblical meaning when he set that text, it suggests that he acknowledged the role that the Jesuits and the secular priests served for the English Catholics.

In addition to cryptic and elusive indications of an association between Byrd and the Jesuits, there are two conclusive accounts. The first recorded event was narrated by William Weston S.J. It describes the introduction of his colleagues, Henry Garnet S.J. and Robert Southwell S.J., to a gathering of friends

soon after their arrival from Rome. The year was 1586. "On reaching this gentleman's house,¹⁰ we were received ... with every attention that kindness and courtesy could suggest. We met also some gentlewomen who had come there to hide; and altogether we were eight days at the house. We were very happy, and our friends made it apparent how pleased they were to have us. Indeed, the place was most suited to our work and ministrations, not merely for the reason that it was remote and had a congenial household and company, but also because it possessed a chapel, set aside for the celebration of the Church's offices. The gentleman was also a skilled musician, and had an organ and other musical instruments, and choristers, male and female, members of his household. During those days, it was just as if we were celebrating an uninterrupted octave of some great feast. Mr Bird, the very famous English musician and organist, was among the company. Earlier he had been attached to the Queen's chapel, where he had gained a great reputation. But he had sacrificed everything for the faith - his position, the court, and all those aspirations common to men who seek preferment in royal circles as a means of improving their fortune.¹¹

Father Garnet sometimes sang Mass, and we took it in turns to preach and hear confessions, which were numerous."¹²

The impression given in this account is that Weston was already familiar with William Byrd, but that it was the first meeting between Byrd, Garnet and Southwell. It is frequently stated that this event initiated a life long friendship between Byrd and Garnet.¹³ Although this is possible due to their mutual interests in music, there is no extant evidence to support this claim.¹⁴ Sadly there is no record of this occasion from Byrd's viewpoint; an occasion which apparently had a definite impact on all three Jesuits since they all described it with positive and pleasurable recollections. Robert Southwell, for example, observed that at that gathering in 1586 Mass was celebrated "with wonderful harmony, instruments and voices". Furthermore, he explained that "if all had fallen out as we had wished,

we should have sung Mass with all solemnity, accompanied by picked instrumental and vocal music on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen (22nd July). This however was put off to the next day, but as I was called away, I could not spend it there."¹⁵

As Byrd had been present at that meeting there is a possibility that he was not only influenced by the stimulus of concentrated Catholic practices, but also by the distinct and charismatic characters of the Jesuits themselves. How often Byrd was able to participate in such intense religious experiences is unfortunately not known. The only other confirmation of a possible collaboration with members of the Society of Jesus was supplied by Charles de Ligny some nineteen years later in c.1605. It was during this time that Byrd demonstrated his willingness to identify with the Roman Catholic faith. The time lapse in itself is revealing. Of the three Jesuits in the initial account, only Garnet was still at large and his days were numbered by this time. Weston was in exile after having spent seventeen years in prison, and Southwell had been executed ten years previously.

It appears that the writer of the latter event was no admirer of Jesuits although he served them for a while in the capacity of translator. While in their employ he fell ill and was cared for by them. Due to his condition he was taken to several houses that were used by Catholics including, "... a place of Garnet's five miles from London which served as a stopping place for Jesuits and priests, where they said their Masses." Later, "they carried him to another house some distance from London, where he found Garnet in company with several Jesuits and gentlemen, who were playing music; among them Mr William Byrd who played the organs and many other instruments."¹⁶ The house which has been identified as 'White Webbs' (situated on Enfield Chase about ten miles north-east of London),¹⁷ was that rented by the Vaux sisters explicitly for Garnet's use. It was described by him in a letter to Anne Vaux (4th April 1606), as "a house of common repair of the Society."¹⁸ It was "to that house came chiefly on solemn days observed by the

Papists, many of the nobility, and many ladies by coach or otherwise."¹⁹ If Byrd was engaged to play 'the organs and many other instruments' (or alternatively volunteered his services), it is likely that he was present at other similar events. When 'White Webbs' was no longer considered safe, a manor house at Erith in Kent was leased as a base for Garnet.²⁰ With this change of abode, and thus centre of activity, one assumes that many friends and supporters followed him since it was observed that on certain Sundays large numbers of people arrived at the house by road and river, and left the same day.²¹ Although it is not known as fact it is quite possible that Byrd also made that journey. Another celebration in which he could have participated, since it took place in Essex at the home of Sir John Tyrell and featured music, was described by Garnet: "We kept Corpus Christi day with great solemnity and music, and the day of the Octave made solemn procession about a great garden." Unbeknown to the assembled company they were being watched, but this "we knew not till the next day when we departed, twenty five in the sight of all, in several parties, leaving half a dozen servants behind; and all is well ..."²²

The sense of relief conveyed at the end of the description is unmistakable. Risk of discovery was inevitably stressful for those taking part in clandestine meetings. Security was a major preoccupation, and the venues for Catholic activities were chosen with diligence and frequently changed, especially when many people were involved. For example the house where Byrd first met Southwell and Garnet was strategically situated on the Buckinghamshire bank of the Thames. Since the opposite bank was in Berkshire, safety could be reached by crossing the river where the local pursuivants had no authority.²³ Erith Manor house was similarly located, being on the Kentish side of the Thames while 'White Webbs' had the advantage of being situated on the edge of Epping Forest. Despite the precautions, fear of raids was probably a constant companion. Not only did the impending danger threaten personal liberty, it could also hamper the faithful from fully participating in the religious experience.

One wonders what would have happened to Byrd if he had been caught in the act of taking part in a Mass, or discovered in the company of Jesuits. Whatever the outcome, the deliberate choice to become involved in such events, and with such people, would not have been entered into lightly. Decisions of that nature suggest an overriding impulse or influence, which raises the questions: how much were the Jesuits responsible for Byrd's attitude to his religion, and how much influence did they have on his life and work?

NOTES

- ¹Claude Aquaviva to Robert Southwell, 20th February 1587. C.R.S. Vol.5 p.319. As a result of this advice a form of code was created. Numbers were substituted for vowels and words, and code words were chosen to represent significant people and places. For example, credit houses meant prisons, customer stood for the archpriest Blackwell, workmen signified the seminary priests, and journeymen translated as Jesuits. See P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* pp.187 and 288
- ²John Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.105
- ³H. Foley, *Records* Vol.3 p.139
- ⁴S.P.D. Eliz. 1591-4 p.467 March 20th and 21st 37,38,39
- ⁵On 15th March 1594 Topcliffe organised a massive raid on all known or suspected Catholic houses in London. On this occasion both Garnet and Gerard narrowly missed being captured. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.187ff.
- ⁶Joseph Kerman, "William Byrd and the Catholics" *New York Review of Books* Vol.26 No.8 (17th May, 1979) p.32
- ⁷See Chapter 3, Section iii.
- ⁸J. Kerman, "William Byrd and the Catholics" *op.cit.* Kerman's premiss is that taken individually the texts may not have an improper meaning, but when considered as a group the sub-textual references become blatant. For further information on the seditious use of texts in musical settings, see: J. Kerman, "The Elizabethan Motet: A Study of Texts for Music" *Studies in the Renaissance* Vol.9 (1962) p.273, and L.Ruff and D. Arnold Wilson, "The Madrigal, the Lute Song and Elizabethan Politics" *Past and Present* Vol.44 (1969) p.13
- ⁹J. Kerman, "William Byrd and the Catholics" *op.cit.* p.33
- ¹⁰Richard Bolt, has been identified as the gentleman alluded to whose house, Harlesford, or Hurleyford, was on the borders of Buckinghamshire and Berkshire and was some thirty miles distance from London. Caraman, *William Weston, op.cit.* notes p.76
- ¹¹This point is an enigma and will be considered in the following chapter.
- ¹²William Weston, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.72. The occasion described by Weston probably took place between the 15th and the 23rd July, 1586
- ¹³See for example P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.33; William Weston, *Autobiography* Notes p.77; and C. Devlin, *Robert Southwell, op.cit.* p.115
- ¹⁴There is no mention of Byrd, at least in comprehensible form, in the surviving writings of Garnet or any other Jesuit of that period, apart from that of Weston.

- ¹⁵Robert Southwell to Claude Aquaviva, 25th July 1586 cited in C.R.S. Vol.5. p.307
- ¹⁶Charles de Ligny's relation to His Majesty's Ambassador in France. *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield* Vol.17 p.611
- ¹⁷P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.264
- ¹⁸S.P.D. James I Vol.20 No.11 cited in Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.423
- ¹⁹Charles de Ligny, *Calendar of Manuscripts at Hatfield, op.cit.*
- ²⁰P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.319
- ²¹Statement of James Cornforth, S.P.D. James I Vol.216 No.184
- ²²Henry Garnet to Elizabeth Shirley (a Nun and friend of his sister at Louvain) June 24th 1605. *Foley, Records* Vol.3 p.139
- ²³P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.33

CHAPTER 5

*It is the sweetest note that man can sing,
When grace in vertures key, tunes nature's string.*

*Robert Southwell
'To the Reader'*

CHAPTER 5.i THE DILEMMA OF ELIZABETHAN MUSICIANS

Among musicians and composers of the period, Byrd seems to have been unique in his resolute adherence to the old faith, while remaining resident in England. Of his contemporaries many were attracted to Catholicism at some time in their lives, but either relinquished their beliefs or fled into exile. John Dowland was refused a position in the Chapel Royal due to his religion, a situation which was rectified by his conforming to the prescribed form of worship.¹ Similarly, Thomas Morley apparently did not have the courage of his Catholic convictions. Since for him worldly affairs appeared to outweigh spiritual considerations.² Conversely, John Bolt renounced his connections with the Court against the Queen's wishes, but was forced to retire to the Continent where he eventually became a priest.³

Despite the fact that John Bull fled from England in 1613 amid much rumour, his claim that he was compelled to leave on religious grounds may not have been taken seriously at the time but evidence suggests it could have been of consequence.⁴ One of his principal patrons before he left was the Catholic, Lord Lumley, and he spent his remaining life serving the Catholic church as organist at Antwerp Cathedral. Bull's acquaintance (if not friend) Peter Philips, was forced to retire to the Continent in 1582 where his first appointment included the position of organist at the English Jesuit College in Rome. Whether or not Philips became a priest after the death of his wife, he undoubtedly held positions as chaplain and canon, and his extant compositions consist mainly of Latin sacred music.⁵ Furthermore, he was never able to return to England unlike Richard Dering who returned to serve Henrietta Maria, the Catholic wife of Charles I. Until then, Dering, like many others, had chosen to follow his religious convictions and its almost inevitable accompaniment, exile.⁶

Of the composers who remained in England and upheld the Catholic religion, Thomas Tallis is not known to have publicly displayed his beliefs, and Sebastian Westcote was protected by royal patronage in spite of his contumacy.⁷ Moreover, both Tallis and Westcote, who had official positions under Queen Mary, died before the missionary influence had reached the height of its impact, and the government had enforced the worst of the oppression.⁸

What is apparent is that if these men were serious in their intent, they were compelled to make a choice. They could not just be committed Christians, but were forced to decide between allegiance to their sovereign and country, or fidelity to their conscience, since for some Catholics the two were considered incompatible. Byrd no doubt fully appreciated the dilemma and dealt with it in his own individual manner.

NOTES

- ¹Diana Poulton, "John Dowland" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.5 (London) p.593
- ²David Brown, "Thomas Morley and the Catholics: Some Speculations" *Monthly Musical Record* Vol.89 No.991 (March-April 1959) p.53; Thurston Dart, "Morley and the Catholics: Some Further Speculations" *Monthly Musical Record* Vol.89 No.993 (May-June 1959) p.89
- ³J. Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.49, and notes. p.227
- ⁴S. Jeans, "John Bull" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.3 (1980) p.441; Leigh Henry, *Dr. John Bull 1562-1628* (New York, 1968). The rumour based on accusations of sexual misdemeanors may be founded on truth, and the Catholicism a cover. However, Bull's fidelity to the Catholic Church in exile seemed sincere.
- ⁵A.G.Petti, "Peter Philips, Composer and Organist 1561-1628" *Recusant History* Vol.4 (1957-8) p.48; John Steele, "Peter Philips" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.14 (London, 1980) p.655
- ⁶Peter Platt, "Richard Dering" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.5 (London, 1980) p.382
- ⁷David Scott, "Sebastian Westcote" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.20 (London, 1980) p.371
- ⁸Westcote died in 1582 and Tallis in 1585.

CHAPTER 5.ii REASONS FOR CHANGE

In spite of his recusancy Byrd was apparently able to blend his own beliefs with the reformed religion, to the extent of being regarded as ecumenical by many people today. In some ways the Church of England and the Church of Rome were not so distant. At that time the Church of England retained much of its heritage and therefore shared much more with the Catholic Church than the reformed continental churches. In addition it is acknowledged that Byrd had a long and fruitful association with the Chapel Royal, and it has been argued that he re-shaped some aspects of what has become traditional Church of England music. As has been stated earlier, Church and State in the late sixteenth-century were largely integrated and thus English loyalty and love of England was closely linked to the English Church. It appears that as an Englishman Byrd held a deep love for England and its language, an attitude expressed by many (both Catholic and Protestant), but none so aptly as Shakespeare:

"This royal throne of Kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise; ...
This precious stone set in the silver sea ...
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm this England..."
(Richard II (II.i))

Yet in spite of Byrd's patriotism he chose to make a public demonstration apparently rejecting it. William Weston, writing in 1611, reported that in 1586 Byrd "had been attached to the Queen's Chapel, where he had gained a great reputation. But he had sacrificed everything for the faith."¹ What was Weston referring to? In 1586 Byrd was still living at Harlington and was a practising member of the Chapel Royal. 1593 is the year usually agreed upon as the watershed in his life.² Maybe this was what Weston was alluding to, while recalling the date inaccurately. What is also unknown is the reason as to why Byrd moved to Stondon Massey, and why he chose that particular time.

From March 1590 persecution of Catholics was intensified under Topcliffe, and in 1593 the Act was introduced "for the better discovery of wicked and seditious persons traitorous subjects(sic)."³ This Act could have affected Byrd's position if he was associating with Jesuits. Maybe the move was a voluntarily imposed exile, or was it perhaps it was suggested as a wise manoeuvre to save his reputation already under suspicion.

The fact that 1593 was a bad plague year, as one writer argues,⁴ hardly explains the facts any more than the notion that Byrd moved to Stondon Massey to be under the protection of his patron Sir John Petre. Sir John was never a declared Catholic as several musicologists assume,⁵ (even though his household was undoubtedly so), and although in his position as Justice of the Peace he may have modified the extent of persecution for recusants on occasions, the outcome was not predictable. Moreover, if he was able to protect Byrd, he could have performed that function almost as easily in London since the Petre family spent a great deal of time in the Aldersgate Street house in the city away from their country properties.⁶ In 1581 Byrd mentioned in a letter that he visited "in aldersgate streete at S^r John Petres howse(sic)."⁷ Also, they were both in attendance at Court at Westminster and Greenwich. Besides Byrd would not need to seek protection from Sir John in Essex or anywhere else for that matter, if he was allegedly receiving it from his Sovereign.

The reason for Byrd's decision to take an apparently regressive step in terms of his career must have had a more profound means of instigation. It can hardly have been a form of old age retirement since he continued to write vast amounts of music. That it was a decisive resolution seems apparent, since he took his entire family with him to Stondon even though most of them were mature.⁸ Furthermore, during this time his eldest son, Christopher, married into the More family, who were esteemed members of the Essex Catholic community. Byrd and

his family thus strengthened their ties with the network as they separated from the rest of society. The fact that Stondon Massey is a great deal further from London than Harlington also suggests a meaningful break with life at Court. Records records show that Byrd's name is in only two of the Chapel Royal registers between 1592 and the time of his death in 1623, and is not mentioned in any of the lists of witnesses or petitioners.⁹ Byrd never did give up his connection with the Protestant Chapel Royal but whether two entries in over thirty years is an indication of continued loyalty or a form of appeasement remains unanswered. Contrary to popular belief that Stondon Massey offered sanctuary to Byrd,¹⁰ it was far more likely to have been the opposite. By moving to a place where he could not receive court protection in the same way that was possible in London, Byrd was making an open declaration of his faith. The recusant rolls show that he was persecuted much more frequently in Stondon Massey, than he was when he lived in Harlington and worked at court. From the time Byrd and his family moved to Essex a greater commitment to Catholicism is evident. He was not only presented for recusancy more often,¹¹ but almost all the music he composed from then until the end of life was Catholic and liturgical.

One factor which should not be overlooked in Byrd's decision-making was the increasing spiritual nourishment made available for Catholics. By 1589 there were more Roman Catholic priests at liberty than since the religious settlement of 1559. Nearly forty newly trained priests were at large, regenerating devotion to the Roman Catholic Church and its tradition, and of these six were Jesuits.¹² A little over a year later a few people were even allowed to join the Society without returning to Rome for the noviate and vows.¹³ We know that Byrd was involved to some degree in the movement of revival, and this participation may well have had an impact. Moreover since the particular Jesuits with whom Byrd was acquainted were men of distinction, it is possible that their guidance and teaching was respected by him.¹⁴ It is interesting that the closer to London, the less scope there

was for priests, and therefore less likelihood of their being in the vicinity. This may have been another reason why Byrd left London.

It is also possible that Byrd's refusal to attend his local Parish church was stimulated by the priests with whom he was in contact. Non-attendance at Protestant services was instigated by a decision made at the Council of Trent and constantly reiterated by the Jesuits, for whom the Counter Reformation ideal was important. "And what is our recusancy, or refusal to be present at the Protestant Service but a mere matter of conscience, for as there is none so known or usual a way to distinguish one religion from another as the external rites and sacraments peculiar to everyone, so can none more effectually deny his own than by making open profession of a contrary faith by his assistance and presence at the solemnities and service proper to it And seeing men best judges of our minds by our actions we cannot possibly give any greater proof unto them that we are not Catholics than if we join with Protestants in their Churches and services by which as by their most certain and special marks they themselves are known to be of that opinion."¹⁵ Robert Southwell's clarification is typical of the prevailing attitude, and explains why Byrd became an adamant recusant and encouraged the members of his family to do likewise. At that time church attendance was considered essential for any Christian, so to break with tradition was not undertaken lightly.

Recusancy may have been an act of disobedience according to the laws of the land, as were the other religious conventions that he practised, but in God's eyes it was fully justified according to Henry Garnet: "Thereupon it ensueth that no power on earth can forbid or punish any action which we are bound unto by the law of God, which is the true pattern of all justice. So that the laws against recusants, against the receiving of priests, against confession, against Mass, and other rites of the Catholic religion are to be esteemed as no laws by such as steadfastly believe these to be necessary observances of the true religion."¹⁶

Religious guidance may have taken many forms. As an educated man it is possible that Byrd was encouraged to study some of the numerous devotional books that were illegally available. It is quite possible that he made use of those discussed earlier,¹⁷ since the incorporated instructions offer a plausible motivation for Byrd's behaviour. In the introduction to *The First Book of Christian Exercise, Appertaining to Resolution (1582)*, for example, Robert Persons states that "three things are necessary to a man in his life for the attaining of salvation - that is, to resolve himself to serve God indeed; to begin aright, and to persevere unto the end." These principles may have been the incentive which provoked a new life at Stondon Massey. Robert Southwell's guidance gives more possible detailed reasons for Byrd's decision to dissociate from the distracting high society at Court. It was considered an obstacle "not to choose as one's companions in recreation those by whom one may be helped in spirit, or at least those by whom ones spiritual progress will not be hindered. For experience shows that the familiar companionship and bad example of the lukewarm and negligent make those with whom they associate like to themselves."¹⁸ For Southwell the priorities of life were obvious, "I ought to think the service of God and salvation of my Soul my principal business in this world, and to make it my ordinary study and chief occupation, and day and night to keep my mind so fixed upon it that in every action I still have it before mine eyes as the only mark I shoot at."¹⁹

Because it was essential for a committed Catholic to focus his entire life on the one end, Byrd apparently considered it important enough to move his family away from Harlington to be near companions who could encourage, and thus ensure their spiritual growth. Furthermore, he assisted his children to strengthen their resolve through marriages contracted within the local Catholic community, and by ensuring that they were also recusants.²⁰

The motive seems fairly evident, but why did the change in attitude occur at that particular time? Outer circumstances could have contributed to Byrd's decision, but there may have been more profound reasons. Late in the year of 1588 John Gerard returned to England as a Jesuit whose particular contribution to the mission was the promotion of the Spiritual Exercises. One of the people to whom Gerard gave the Exercises soon after his arrival was the musician John Bolt. Bolt was probably known to Byrd as he was not only once a member of the Chapel Royal, but after his resignation was employed by Sir John Petre and other Catholic households in Essex.²¹ Given that Byrd's reputation was "naturally disposed to Gravity and Piety,"²² and that 'exercises of piety' were a familiar practice within Byrd's circle, it is feasible to propose that he likewise made the Spiritual Exercises under the guidance of John Gerard. Although there is no evidence that this happened, for him to do so would not have been original or different.²³

In the second week of the Spiritual Exercises, the concepts of 'choice' and 'change' were seen as a crucial step in seeking the correct relationship with God. "In every good choice in so far as it depends upon us, the direction of our intention should be simple. I must look only to the end for which I am created, that is, for the praise of God our Lord and for the salvation of my Soul. Therefore, whatever I choose must have as its purpose to help me to this end."²⁴

The result was intended to initiate a more purposeful zeal, or if taken further, arouse an intention to join the Society. Because Byrd was a family man, it would have been irresponsible to choose the latter option, but it could well have inspired a greater commitment to his faith. Seen in this light, this choice may have necessitated a physical move away from the 'evils' of London society to an atmosphere conducive to spiritual development.²⁵

Might not this interpretation explain Weston's comments which asserted that Byrd had "sacrificed everything for the faith", even if in retrospect he had confused the dates? The time when Gerard was first in England propagating the faith through the Spiritual Exercises coincided with the period in which Byrd appeared to be completing 'unfinished business' before "resolv(ing) himself to serve God indeed; to begin aright, and to *persevere* unto the end."

In the duration of four years he took the unprecedented step of publishing four volumes of works: *Psalmes, Sonnets and Songs* (1588), *Songs of Sundrie Natures* (1589), and two books of *Sacrae Cantiones* (1589, 1591). Byrd's comment on the situation was as follows; "When some people, close to me and of solid reputation, realised very recently that certain songs of mine had, through the carelessness of scribes in making the copies, suffered some impairment, which had certainly not come from our Museolus in the autographs; they implored me and finally got me to submit the autographs to the press, though not before I had first polished and disciplined them further. But so great was their number and confusion that I thought it better to divide the collection (as my leisure permitted) into several books, and publish each at its time."²⁶

Evidence of a changed direction in his life is also supported by a comparison of Byrd's music written before and after 1593. It seems that many of the motets written prior to that time were created as a form of Catholic propaganda,²⁷ whereas the music composed afterwards was almost entirely for the furtherance of the Catholic liturgy, in "the praise of God our Lord". Byrd obviously believed what he stated in his will that, "I may live and dye a true and perfect member of his holy Catholycke Church wthout w^{ch} I beeleve their is noe Salvation for mee ... "(sic).²⁸

The turning point in his life appears to indicate a change from an outer expression of Catholicism to one that conveyed a deep conviction and understanding (possibly derived from the Spiritual Exercises); a change that involved detachment from the world of materialism (even though it incurred a greater cost) to the inner release necessary for spiritual growth. There is, however, one factor which confuses the issue. The last music printed by Byrd was written to English texts, and dedicated to a non-Catholic. *Psalmes, Songs and Sonnets* (1611) could have been published at that time for several reasons, none of which can be proved. One suggestion is that at Byrd's age, together with the number of years the missionary priests had been in England, he was despairing of their success in re-establishing Catholicism as the legitimate religion.

NOTES

- ¹William Weston, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.71
- ²J. Kerman, "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary of the Mass" *J.A.M.S.* Vol.32 No.3 (1979) p.410, and in other articles by Kerman. Even E.H. Fellowes noticed that Byrd seemed "more stubborn" when living at Stondon Massey. Fellowes, *William Byrd, op.cit.* p.44
- ³5 Eliz. Cap.2 cited in Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.106
- ⁴Imogen Holst, *Byrd* (London, 1972) p.63
- ⁵J. Kerman, "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary of the Mass" *op.cit.*
- ⁶A.C. Edwards, *John Petre, op.cit.* p.83
- ⁷Cited in E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd, op.cit.* p.39
- ⁸See recusant rolls.
- ⁹J. Kerman, "William Byrd" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol.2 (London, 1980) p.542
- ¹⁰J. Kerman, "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary of the Mass" *op.cit.* p.410
- ¹¹ See Chapter 4, Section ii
- ¹²P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.97
- ¹³*Ibid.* p.105
- ¹⁴William Weston, who described Byrd's encounter with Southwell and Garnet, was captured a few days after that meeting and was imprisoned for seventeen years, so that Byrd could not have been influenced by him subsequently. W.Weston, *Autobiography, op.cit.*
- ¹⁵Robert Southwell, *An Humble Supplication to Her Majesty in Answer to the Late Proclamation* c. 1595 (B.M. 3935) p.93-4
- ¹⁶C.S.P.D. James I *Gunpowder Plot Book 2* No.217 cited in P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.425
- ¹⁷See Chapter 3, section ix. Consider the library of spiritual books he could have owned. Recall for example the collection owned by Tresham.
- ¹⁸Robert Southwell, "Some Hindrances to Perfection" in *Spiritual Exercises and Devotions of Blessed Robert Southwell S.J.* (London, 1931) Edited and Introduced by J.M. de Buck S.J. trans. Mgr.P.E. Hallett. p.7

- ¹⁹Robert Southwell, *Short Rules of a Good Life, op.cit.* p.42
- ²⁰Not only did Byrd's son Christopher marry into the renowned More family, his three daughters Elizabeth, Rachel and Mary married Catholics, as is shown on the recusant rolls.
- ²¹See Chapter 2, Section iv. It is mentioned in the account books of Ingatestone Hall that John Bolt was employed there during the Christmas period of 1589-90 when it was recorded that Byrd was also present. F.G. Emmison, *Tudor Secretary, op.cit.* p.213
- ²²Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (fascimile ed.) (London, 1906) p.100
- ²³Many people made the Spiritual Exercises in part or complete, according to John Gerard.
- ²⁴*The Spiritual Exercises, op.cit.* p.82
- ²⁵John Gerard gave the example of Sir Oliver Manner, who was both Clerk of the Council and King James' Carver, as one who "decided to leave the Court and devote himself to the things that would make his life more pleasing in God's sight and more profitable in his neighbour's service" as a result of making the Spiritual Exercises. J. Gerard, *Autobiography, op.cit.* p.186-7
- ²⁶William Byrd, *Dedication of Cantiones Sacrae (1589)* cited in J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op. cit.* p. 124
- ²⁷J. Kerman, "The Elizabethan Motet: A Study of Texts for Music" *Studies in the Renaissance* Vol.9 (1962) p.273
- ²⁸This sentiment was also proclaimed almost word for word by Garnet on the scaffold. When being persuaded to recant, Garnet replied that he "ever meant to die a true and perfect Catholic", and in his final speech to the crowd: "He wished them to consider well the state of their Souls, assuring them upon his conscience and salvation, there was no other way to their eternal bliss but to live and die in the profession of the Catholic faith." John Gerard, *Narrative* p.294. cited in Caraman *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.437.

CHAPTER 5.iii JESUITS AND MUSIC

It is generally considered that the relationship between Jesuits and music is inconsequential, probably largely as a result of the legislation introduced by Ignatius in the *Constitutions* of the Society.¹ At about the time when the founder was considering these principles, music in the Roman Catholic Church was becoming a controversial issue. Opinion ranged from the desire for complete suppression of the art, to those seeking reform.² However, it was not until 1563 that the Council of Trent finally decided to allow the retention of polyphonic music, provided that the texts were audible and comprehensible.³ Approximately fifteen years earlier Ignatius had forbidden the use of vocal and instrumental music in Divine Service and in Jesuit residences. This was not because he considered music to be a distraction to worship, but "Because the occupations which are undertaken for the aid of our souls are of great importance, proper to our Institute, and very frequent; and because on the other hand our residence in one place or another is so highly uncertain, our members will not regularly hold choir for the canonical hours or sing Masses and offices. For one who experiences devotion in listening to those chanted services will suffer no lack of places where he can find his satisfaction; and it is expedient that our members should apply their efforts to the pursuits that are more proper to our vocation"⁴

This statement was obviously not written by a man who rejected music. Rather, it was a practical decision made for a practical Society which contrasted with the Orders whose lives revolved around the Divine offices. Personally, Ignatius found music both remedial and a facility to devotion. He was "very much encouraged in prayer by music and song about divine things, such as Vespers, Masses and other similar things, so, as he himself confessed to me, he managed to enter some Church when these sung offices were being celebrated. Then he seemed totally transported out of himself.

And not only did this do good to his soul, but even to his bodily health, and when he did not have it, or was very much out of sorts, he did not improve, except by hearing some brother sing something devotional" When Ignatius was in bed, feeling out of sorts, "Father Frusius was called from the German College to play the clavichord for him - without singing, since even this helped him, as well as a very simple and virtuous brother, who sang many devout hymns And all this was so rare that, in about the two and a half years I was in Rome, it did not happen more than five or six times."⁵

In spite of the efficacy of music, it was thought that the members of the Society were more usefully employed in other occupations. However, when Pope Paul IV was elected in 1555 he wanted the Jesuits to utilize music in their worship, and as a result Ignatius permitted Vespers to be sung on Sundays and feast days in Rome.⁶ Nevertheless the initial reaction after the founder's death a year later was a strict enforcement of his original principle; but before long, some members gradually replaced it with a more relaxed attitude to music.⁷ Definite changes were introduced with the appointment of Michael Lauretano as rector of the German College in 1573. Progressively greater emphasis was placed on the liturgy and the participation of the students,⁸ and the renowned composer Tomas Luis de Victoria was engaged as Chapelmaster.⁹ Motets of Palestrina, Lasso and Victoria were performed, with the increasing number of ceremonies being celebrated with music. The main feature of Corpus Christi was a musical procession through the city;¹⁰ an event which reminds one of a similar, but clandestine, celebration recorded by Garnet some thirty or so years later.¹¹

Although not undisputed, this trend continued to expand, and music was used increasingly for the liturgy, special ceremonies, and for its edifying qualities. For example, many hymns were written and edited by Jesuits partly in response to the outpouring of Protestant chorales and hymns.¹² In addition, Jesuits came to

recognise the apostolic importance of music in that it could also be utilised, like the other arts, to direct the senses to a correct relationship with God. For this reason it was understood by some to be particularly suitable for missionary work.¹³

Possibly due to Ignatius' dualistic attitude to music, the Society's attitude was not uniform after his death. Writing about the controversy at the College of Valladolid in 1600, Robert Persons reveals the prevailing uncertainty: "... The point of *music* , wherein you say that, if it be moderately used, it doth no hurt, but rather good: but how you may assure yourself of that moderation, especially where instruments be used, I know not. And divers good men do doubt and write against it: (And I pray you consider the matter seriously, and consult it with the Fathers there, and send your opinions): For I think that F. General inclineth to take it away forth of all seminaries - I mean the use of instruments. And sure I am that I found ill effects of it there; and since it hath been taken away here, and brought to a good moderation, more spirit has been seen in the house."¹⁴ Luckily for posterity, Person's conservative views were not accepted by all Jesuits, especially those away from the Seminaries on missions. The stance assumed in England demonstrates a more flexible approach; an attitude which had in fact been expressed by Ignatius. "In regard to singing, here there is a mixture of figured singing and that with the organ, and it seems edifying; but when they should sing there, without anyone's having determined why or how, the matter should be accommodated according to the disposition of the country."¹⁵

The efficacy of music was apparently considered significant in England, since according to reports it was encouraged as an aid to worship. It has been recorded that the Lady Magdalen Montague, and Mrs Lawson of Tyneside, incorporated music into the ceremonies held in their chapels. Other Catholics also used music in their domestic worship, however it is impossible to ascertain how widespread this was. Despite the fact that liturgical events involving music are

more in evidence after the arrival of Henry Garnet in 1586, a tradition of sorts had already been established. Garnet's first introduction as priest to members of the Catholic community took place at the home of Richard Bolt, (already mentioned), who was a "skilled musician", and had a choir made up of "male and female members of his household". Instances of his love of music in the service of the church have already been given and later evidence also suggests his reference for a musical liturgy. In 1593 he was invited to sing Mass, probably at great risk, when he visited the Catholic prisoners at Wisbech prison.¹⁶ Eight years later after a particularly harsh raid on Catholic homes in London, Garnet expressed the significance of a sung or chanted liturgy both to himself and others, "Not withstanding all our troubles we sing Mass."¹⁷

Although it was common to describe the usual chanting style of the Mass as singing, Garnet was renowned for his musical skills. From his school days it was noted that he was "... very skilful in music and playing upon instruments..."¹⁸ Even after his death the impact of his musical abilities left an impression of remarkable versatility and proficiency:

"This Reverent Father thus having ended his life with such humilitie pietie & zeale of religion as aforesaid, yt were not amisse among his such excellent giftes of nature learning & virtue to declare his exquisyte knowledge in the Arte of musike, being skillfull on dyvers Instruments especially the Lute, & his knowledg therin such as ex tempore he was able to sett any song of v parts or more to the same in most true concordance and musical harmony: & his voice so rare & delitefull that by reporte of such as knowe it, it was supposed to be more than the naturall voice of a man, so Angelically had he the gifte of delyverye"(sic)¹⁹ (see illustration 30):

This Reverent Father thus passing ended his life in the year 1611 in the
 of religion as aforesaid, yet could not amisse, among his several gifts of nature
 & wisdom to declare his exquisite knowledge in the Art of Musick, being skillfull on
 especially the Lute, & his knowledge therein such as ex tempore he was able to set any song of the
 more to the same in most true concordance & musick harmony: & his voice so clear & sweet
 that by reports of such as heard it, ~~his natural voice~~ was supposed to be more than
 natural voice of a man, so Angelically had he the gift of delivery.

Since this was a man with whom Byrd was acquainted, within a society which encouraged devotional music, it is not irrelevant to consider the ramifications of any interaction that might have occurred between them.

NOTES

- ¹Thomas D. Culley and Clement J. McNaspy. "Music and the Early Jesuits (1540-1565)" *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* Vol.40 No.80 (1971) p.213
- ²R.F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music* (Collegeville, Minnesota, 1979) p.29
- ³Howard Mayer Brown, *Music in the Renaissance* (New Jersey, 1976) p.278
- ⁴*The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* translated by George E. Ganss (St.Louis, Missouri, 1971) p.261
- ⁵Goncalves da Camera, written in his Memoriale on February 22nd 1555, cited in Culley and McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits" *op.cit.* p.218
- ⁶Thomas D. Culley, *Jesuits and Music* (St.Louis, Missouri, 1970) p.15
- ⁷T. Culley and C. McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits" *op.cit.* p.214
- ⁸T. Culley, *Jesuits and Music*, *op.cit.* p.25
- ⁹Howard Mayer Brown, *Music in the Renaissance*, *op.cit.* p.314
- ¹⁰T. Culley, *Jesuits and Music*, *op.cit.* p.83
- ¹¹See Chapter 4, Section iii
- ¹²T. Culley and C. McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits" *op.cit.* p.215
- ¹³*Ibid.* p.232
- ¹⁴Robert Persons to -- about Jesuit iniquities and factions in the College of Valladolid, June 26th 1600. M.A.Tierney, Stonyhurst Transcripts Anglia A I-V. 46/13-24 ii 61 p.185a lodged at the Archives of the English Province, Mount Street, London.
- ¹⁵Ignatius to Father Tablares, July 26th 1556. cited in T. Culley and C. McNaspy, "Music and the Early Jesuits" *op.cit.* p.232
- ¹⁶P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, *op.cit.* p.170
- ¹⁷Garnet to Thomas Strange, 30th June 1601, cited in Caraman, *Ibid.* p.288
- ¹⁸Fr. Thomas Stanney, cited in Caraman, *Ibid.* p.6
- ¹⁹Mss Eng. Th. b.2. p.136 Bodleian Library, Oxford.

CHAPTER 6

I know that no man can express a passion that he feeleth not, nor doth the pen deliver but what it copieth out of the mind.

Robert Southwell
'Mary Magdalen's Funeral Tears'

CHAPTER 6.i RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

Largely due to the secrecy involved, it is difficult to assess the impact that the missionary priests had in England during the sixteenth and early seventeenth-centuries. They may not have changed the prevailing disposition of English Catholicism,¹ but it appears that they had an effect on a small minority of the Catholic population. However small, it was significant, because within its ranks were individuals of superior intellectual and creative abilities, who contributed to the spread of the Counter Reformation spirit within a hostile environment. As has already been observed, the men and women who were involved in this movement were largely influenced by members of the Society of Jesus with its dynamic approach to reviving the old faith. This fact did not go unnoticed by the government, for at Garnet's trial in 1606, Sir Edward Coke, Attorney General, coined the term 'Jesuited Catholics' to describe these people; a phrase which soon became common usage.²

Although it cannot be proved that Byrd was a 'Jesuited Catholic', it is known that he was in contact with them and that his life took on a more definite commitment to Catholicism after the Jesuit mission began in England. At about the same time that Byrd made an outward religious resolution; his approach to composition showed a marked difference in attitude. Did this change occur in conjunction with his spiritual resolve, that is as an expression of it, or was it suggested to him as a practical step he could make in order to ensure the continuity of English Catholicism? It is possible that it could have been a proposal made by someone in authority, priest or patron, who now feared the destruction of the Roman faith in England.³ On the other hand was the change in genre a manifestation of Byrd's altered religious preference? Sixteenth and seventeenth-century devotional books suggest an answer to these questions as they reveal an insight into the day-to-day lives of committed Catholics.

Father Francis Borgia, the third General of the Society of Jesus, succinctly listed the means which, "greatly help us towards the more easy, and more assured attayning of our end. ...1) To exercise some things in the morning, when we rise, afterwards in the rest of the day following, and at night when we go to bed. 2) To examine our conscience every day. 3) To frequent the holy sacraments of confession and communion. 4) To heare Masse every day, or as often as we find the opportunity, but especially on Sundays and Holidaiies. 5) To frequent vocall, and mentall prayer. 6) To be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and the explication of the Christian doctrine. 7) To be frequent in reading of Spirituall books. 8) To give ourselves to the exercise of al vertue and good works etc."(sic).⁴

Advice became comprehensive and included all aspects of daily life. In his *Short Rules of a Good Life*, Robert Southwell's instructions ranged from such topics as, *My Duty to My Superiors*⁵ and *towards My Neighbour*,⁶ to *the Care of Servants*⁷ and *the Care of My Children*.⁸ Nothing was omitted. There was even a chapter dealing with *Rules of Sickness*.⁹ The most detailed chapter is *An Order How to Spend Every Day*.¹⁰ From the time of rising until the time of retiring, every minute of the individual's day was planned. The reasons were explained thus: On first rising "when I am ready, I must go to my prayers appointed It is good sometime to omit some vocal prayers and spend the time in meditation of some part of Christ's Passion or of his life, or of mine own sins as the book of meditation giveth notice.

After prayer, on working days, I must go presently about some work or exercise that may be of some profit, and of all other things take heed of idleness, the mother of all vices."¹¹

Southwell's concept of a foundation for a good life was: "Seeing I was made to serve God in this life and to enjoy him in the next, the service of God and the Salvation of mine own soul is the most weighty and important business and the most

necessary matter wherein I must employ my body, mind, time and labour; and all other affairs are so far forth to be esteemed of me weighty or light as they more or less tend to the furtherance of this principal and most earnest business. *For what availeth it a man to gain the whole world, and to lose his own soul?*"¹² The rule which followed this statement clarified the point: "First what diligence, labour, or cost I would employ in any other temporal matter of credit, living, or life, all that I am bound to employ in the service of God and the salvation of my soul, and so much more as the weight or worth of my soul passeth all other things."¹³ Here is a possible reason for Byrd to change his genre of composition to that mainly of a liturgical nature.

In addition to the insight into the lives of committed Catholics, and thus the motivation for their behaviour, the devotional books reveal characteristics that were moulded by Counter Reformation principles. The decisions made at Trent were transmitted to England by the Jesuits,¹⁴ and with them was conveyed the spirit of the Counter Reformation which stressed active spirituality. This concept was expressed in the architecture of Tresham, the poems of Southwell and others, and the painting commissioned by Thomas More II. Byrd, like his fellow believers, may also have been inspired by the Jesuits to a greater commitment of faith, and the expression of it in a way that would contribute to the mission.

It is known that Byrd was serious about his own salvation. He also demonstrated a reliance "upon the divine mercy," and expressed gratitude for God's blessings and a desire to give public testimony of it: "I consider that the benefits of the divine bounty have been directed towards me, indeed have been showered upon me, my mind is eager, remembering my faith, duty, and piety to God, to leave to posterity a public testimony, at least in some sort, of a heart grateful and referring all things, if this be counted a merit, to my Creator."¹⁵ This sentiment written in the dedication of *Gradualia* Book II implies a knowledge of

contemporary devotional books, as well as a need to ensure the continuity of English Catholicism.

The fact that Byrd wrote so much Latin music, much of which was liturgical, has frequently puzzled musicologists, since there appears no obvious congregation or even a specific reason for it. Because it was not performed publicly and there was little opportunity for it to be heard privately, it is assumed that the incentive for its creation must have either been a manifestation of a psychological need, or that Byrd had his eye on the Continental market.¹⁶

As early as 1588 Byrd made it quite clear that "the better the voyce is the meeter it is to honour and serve God there-with: and the voyce of man is chiefly to be imployed to that ende"(sic).¹⁷ He understood that the purpose of music was not only to serve God, but was itself a precious gift from God: "... give prayse unto GOD, from whome (as a most pure and plentiful fountaine) all good guifts of Scyence doe flow"(sic).¹⁸ Since the skill should be valued and respected as a blessing, every effort should be made to attain the highest quality of work especially when setting a sacred text. "... it is shameful in a craftsman to make a rude piece of work from some precious material, so indeed to sacred words in which the praise of God and of the Heavenly host, none but some celestial harmony (so far as our powers avail) will be proper." With this attitude Byrd admitted, "I have tried to ornament things divine with the highest art at my command."¹⁹ A conscientious approach to both religious matters and compositional methods was demonstrated throughout his life: "... even in my old yeares which are desirous of rest, I cannot containe my selfe from taking some paines therein"(sic).²⁰ As a committed Catholic with this particular attitude to his craft, it is not likely that Byrd composed his Latin liturgical music merely with a view to Continental sales (especially since there is no evidence to support this notion) or even to fulfil a psychological need.

NOTES

- ¹Christopher Haigh, "The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation" *Past and Present* Vol.93 (November 1981) p.37
- ²P. Caraman, *Henry Garnet, op.cit.* p.400
- ³Joseph Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op.cit.*p.22
- ⁴Father Francis Borgia, *The Practice of Christian Works, and How to Live Well* (1620) Written in Spanish and Englished by Thomas Everard.
- ⁵Robert Southwell, *Short Rules of a Good Life* , Nancy Pollard Brown,(ed.) *op.cit.* p.33
- ⁶*Ibid.* p.36
- ⁷*Ibid.* p.49
- ⁸*Ibid.* p.50
- ⁹*Ibid.* p.48
- ¹⁰*Ibid.* p.42
- ¹¹*Ibid.*
- ¹²*Ibid.* p.24
- ¹³*Ibid.*
- ¹⁴Nancy Pollard Brown, "The Structure of Southwell's St. Peter's Complaint" *op.cit.* p.4
- ¹⁵Dedication of *Gradualia* Book II, translated in O. Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History, op.cit.* p.330
- ¹⁶See G. Sharp, "Master of Music and Compromise" *op.cit.* p.5; Kerman mentions that the motets, *Tribulationes civitatum* and *Ne irascaris Domine* were widely circulated and were among the few to infiltrate the Anglican Church as anthems, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op.cit.* p.162. The theory that Byrd's liturgical music was intended for the Continent is no longer accepted since no copies of the works have been found there.
- ¹⁷William Byrd, "Reasons briefly set down by th auctor, to perswade every one to learne to sing"(sic) in *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs (1588)* E.H. Fellowes, (ed.) *The Collected Works of William Byrd* Vol.14 (London, 1937-50)
- ¹⁸William Byrd, "The Epistle to the Reader" *op.cit.*
- ¹⁹Dedication of *Gradualia* Book II. E.H. Fellowes, (ed.) *The Collected Works of William Byrd, op.cit.*

²⁰William Byrd, *Dedication of Psalmes, Songs and Sonnets (1611)* E.H. Fellowes, (ed.) *The Collected Works of William Byrd, op.cit.*

CHAPTER 6.ii BYRD AND THE POSSIBLE INFLUENCE OF THE JESUITS

Undoubtedly Byrd demonstrated his adherence to, and support of, the Catholic Church through the music he wrote before 1593, but after that time there was a marked difference in attitude. The change from employing music as a form of propaganda,¹ to applying it to serve the Catholic Church, may have been instigated by patrons or priests. To undertake such a task as to furnish an isolated congregation with liturgical settings was a daunting prospect; especially since there were of course no contemporary English models, and probably only limited examples from the Continent. Moreover, Byrd's contributions recognised the Roman rite as the universal liturgy of the Catholic Church, making it evident that he rejected the Sarum Use to which the English tradition belonged.

It is not known what the specific reasons for Byrd composing three settings of the Ordinary of the Mass were, but the explanation given for the creation of Book I of the *Gradualia* may be relevant to all his liturgical music. Firstly, Byrd claimed "... private reasons also impelled me to use my utmost industry in this matter," and later he expanded on his motives, "I indeed decided at the request of friends to work upon them ('things divine') and to spread them abroad."² Whether specific friends requested the work and who they were remains unknown, although speculation on the subject suggests several possibilities, both lay and cleric. It is in the dedication to the second volume of *Gradualia* that at least one of the 'friends' is referred to by name: Sir John Petre. Moreover, the significance of his association with Ingatestone and Thorndon Halls is implied³ although the country homes of Sir John Petre are not actually named. That Sir John was a close friend and mentor is indisputable. What is also evident, and yet inconclusive, is the allusion to spiritual sustenance received at the homes of his patron.

Although Byrd's lay friends were obviously instrumental in his production of liturgical music, it is possible that clerical acquaintances or friends may have been involved. A professional knowledge and understanding of the Catholic liturgy would have been an invaluable contribution to such a project. The fact that Henry Garnet demonstrated an inclination for music suggests a person with a particular interest in enhancing the Catholic services. If Byrd was influenced by even one member of the Society of Jesus, was there an impact from the Society as a whole? If the Jesuits in England were "the horns of the papal bull,"⁴ carrying the Vatican's decrees into their mission fields, is it possible that Byrd was influenced?

One of the decrees issued at Trent dispensed with all deviations from the Roman rite in an attempt to reunite Christendom. Sometime between 1581 and 1585 Father Heywood conveyed the official instructions to England. "It is wished wth one consent and greatly desired of worshipful men that all would follow the Romane use in their office and service, as a thing commended to all the world by the whole councell of Trent"(sic).⁵ These orders sought to correct the vestiges of the English tradition which, while limited, still largely maintained the Sarum rite. The last legal Catholic services took place during the reign of Mary Tudor who sought to eliminate disparity in the realm by promoting only the Sarum Rite. It is interesting to note therefore, that although Byrd received his fundamental musical training through the Sarum liturgy, and his only English models were by pre-Reformation composers, he specifically chose the Roman Use for many of his motets, the Masses and the *Gradualia*. In the few sections of the *Gradualia* where a Sarum chant is used as cantus firmus, its negligent application appears to demonstrate a lack of significance.⁶

The three settings of the Mass are markedly different from their English predecessors since they conform to the Roman tradition by including a Kyrie section. From the inception of the first polyphonic settings, the Kyrie had never been

included in the English Mass, as it was sung on festivals with a specifically prescribed trope, which rendered it a component of the Proper rather than the Ordinary.⁷ In writing Mass settings which contained Kyries, Byrd conformed with European practices, while breaking with English tradition. Similarly his vast collection entitled *Gradualia* reflects Jesuit influence through adherence to Rome in the subject matter.⁸ That the observance of the Roman Catholic liturgical year had a particular importance for Byrd is indicated by the rare feat of attempting to set such a great cycle of Propers in this way. The only comparable example (Isaac's *Choralis constantinus*) was a church commission and not a labour of love. Among the pieces are the Propers for *St. Peter and St Paul*, and *St Peter's Chains* which have been emphasised through the application of six voices. Since this is unprecedented in Byrd's liturgical works, it serves to denote a very special occasion.⁹ It is interesting to note that Byrd used a device similar in intent to that used by Tresham. Tresham connected his name to the Trinity, while Byrd linked the name of his patron, Sir John Petre, to Rome.¹⁰

Far from the regularity and security of the main body of the church, a cycle of the annual festivals set to music facilitated a sense of connection with the rest of the Roman Church in the process of educating English Catholics. While it is not denied that the tradition of Sarum and the Church of England in the sixteenth-century placed importance on the liturgical year, Henry Garnet as priest stressed its significance, "In religion you shall continually live and converse sometimes accompanying Him in the crib, sometimes flying with Him into Egypt, sometimes watching, praying and fasting with Him Finally you shall die with Him, be buried with Him, rise again with Him and ascend with Him into heaven."¹¹

If, as seems to be the case, Byrd was a Catholic with specifically Roman leanings, how could he possibly write music for the Protestant church? This enigma has been disconcerting for many. Geoffrey Sharp claimed that Byrd refused to

allow his private convictions to interfere with his work,¹² while Fellowes stated categorically that Byrd was above controversy: "For him the beauty of Christian worship as adorned with music, knew no limitations as defined by this or that phrase of doctrine."¹³ Knowing the prevailing religious circumstances, and the fact that Byrd stubbornly followed his conscience in adhering to a faith that was illegal, how could he have composed Protestant music? One possibility is that he became a committed Catholic towards the end of his life, while the majority of music written for the Church of England was composed before that time. It is apparent that he was both conscientious and inspired in his Protestant work, since the music demonstrates a sensitivity for, and love of, the English language and its function within the Church. Even after he had distanced himself from London, Byrd dedicated what he considered to be "my last labours for myne *Ultimum vale*"¹⁴ to the Protestant, Francis Clifford, fourth Earl of Cumberland. *Psalms, Songs and Sonnets* printed in 1611 contains a large proportion of psalm settings, and all of them have English texts.

Byrd produced music of great and lasting value to the Church of England and yet analysis appears to indicate instances where he was 'limited' in his approach to Christian worship. Kerman has indicated for example, that Byrd's setting of the motet *Ave Verum corpus* was a deliberate reference to transubstantiation, since the word 'verum' is emphasised by false relations, and not the expected word 'corpus'.¹⁵ This is notable when it is recalled that this aspect of the Eucharist was one of the fundamental theological points of dispute during the Reformation, and was redefined at Trent.

Another controversial doctrine which Byrd seems to have commented on was the attitude to, and definition of, the Holy Catholic Church. Father Gaspar Loarte of the Society of Jesus explained the significance of the church to its members in a fairly objective manner. "In the ninth - Article we confesse, that

there is a holye Catholicke Church, to wit, an universal congregation of faithful persons which have one self same faith, Doctrine and Sacraments. And this Church is *Holy*, because it is sanctified by Christ, the head thereof, and governed by the Holye Ghost, and is *Catholike*, that is to say, universal, for that it imbraceth al the faithful persons that in every place and time, have helde, and doe holde the very same faith of Christ"(sic).¹⁶

William Allen similarly clarified the position of the Catholic Church in his *Defence and Declaration of the Catholic Churche's Doctrine*, but more forcefully conveyed the sense of schism initiated by the Reformation. He also communicated the bias and intolerance endemic at that time: "This one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is it, whereunto we owe all our duty and obedience both by God's commandment and by the bond of our first faith and profession. There is no force of argument, no probability of reason, no subtlety of wit, no deep compass of worldly wisdom, no eloquence of man nor angel, nor any other motion which can be wrought in the world, that should make a man doubt of any article approved by her authority. And if thou yet fear to give over thy whole sense and thine own self to so careful a mother, in whom thou wast begotten in thy better birth, compare our Church with theirs, compare her authority with theirs, her majesty and theirs."¹⁷

The importance of the church's authority in an age of religious fragmentation is evident, and was expounded at all intellectual levels. Father Laurence Vaux, who wrote his catechism as a means of instruction for children and the less learned adult, illustrates a more fanatical approach to the doctrine. His reply to the question "Why is the Church called one?" expressed a marked sectarian attitude, "Because thereby are excluded all congregations of the malignant Church, which are devided into sundry schismes, sectes and opinions in doctrine, as the Lutherans Churche doth not agree with the Zuinglians, nor the Zuinglians with the Anabaptistes, etc. Therefore Christ his Church is called one,

being gather together in one spirit of Jesus Christ. In this Church is confessed and worshipped one God, one faith is confessed and taught, one baptisme and one uniforme order of Sacramentes are ministred without schism or division, havinge one Head in earth, Gods vicar in the Apostolike See, Successor to S.Peter"(sic).¹⁸

One wonders how Byrd came to terms with such a tenet in his position. Could he truthfully uphold this statement in both religions? Was it in fact an issue for him? While not producing conclusive evidence, comparison of Byrd's five different settings of text relevant to this sentiment, which occurs in the *Short* and *Great Services* and the three Latin Masses, could be interpreted as a personal response. The *Short Service* was probably written while Byrd was still at Lincoln, sometime before 1572.¹⁹ At that time limitation demanded that he set those words like the rest of the service, in a distinct, homophonic manner according to the requirements of the Reformed Church (see music example 1). Compare this with his later setting of the same text for the *Great Service*, (see music example 2) which was composed in all probability for a special occasion in the 1580s.²⁰ This service is similarly mainly homophonic, in spite of it being a more ornamental work. Note therefore the disconcerting way in which Byrd has broken up the word 'one.' This word occurs on three successive beats, and is first heard by five of the eight parts after a clear homophonic statement of, 'And I believe'. It is then sung separately by the sopranos, followed by the second altos in similar style. The effect is a broken declaration of the text in which the word 'one' emphasises the concept of fragmentation, not unity.

The effect in the Latin works is almost the reverse. When Byrd wrote his Masses in the 1590's he was faced with setting almost the same text, (the phrase appeared slightly different in the Catholic creed as "One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church"). If based on the same semantic considerations as the Anglican services, the solution is partly predictable. The phrase was obviously important

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spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

spake by the Pro - phets. And I be - lieve one Cath - o - lic

80

and A - pos - to - lic Church. I ac - know - ledge one

and A - pos - to - lic Church. I ac - know - ledge one

and A - pos - to - lic Church. I ac - know - ledge one

and A - pos - to - lic Church. I ac - know - ledge one

and A - pos - to - lic Church. I ac - know - ledge one

Music Example 1.

fied, Who spake by the Pro-phets, by the Pro-phets. And I believe

fied, Who spake by the Pro-phets, by the Pro-phets. And I believe

fied, Who spake by the Pro-phets, Pro-phets. And I believe one

Who spake by the Pro-phets. And I believe

Who spake by the Pro-phets, Pro-phets. And I believe one

Who spake by the Pro-phets, by the Pro-phets. And I believe one

fied, Who spake by the Pro-phets. And I believe one

Who spake by the Pro-phets, by the Pro-phets. And I believe one

one Ca-tho-lic and A-pos-to-lic Church. I ac-know-

Ca-tho-lic and A-pos-to-lic Church, and A-pos-to-lic Church. I ac-

one Ca-tho-lic and A-pos-to-lic Church, and A-pos-to-lic Church. I ac-know-

Ca-tho-lic and A-pos-to-lic Church, and A-pos-to-lic Church. I

Ca-tho-lic and A-pos-to-lic Church, and A-pos-to-lic Church. I ac-

Music Example 2.

and obviously important and definitely stressed, in a way which juxtaposes that section with the overall style of the Mass settings generally. However, there are differences between the three Mass settings in terms of compositional techniques which give the impression of an evolution of thought, from a premise to a more definite idea.

The Four-Part Mass, which was Byrd's first venture into Catholic liturgical music, is interesting in that a break is introduced prior to the phrase in question to allow for greater impact.²² This division incidently, does not occur in earlier English Masses. In contrast to the polyphonic elaboration of Byrd's Mass settings in general, this section is prominent due to the contrasting application of homophony. However, although the text is distinct in the Four-Part Mass, it is not completely unified, as first the cantus voice and later the basses are independent (see music example 3 below):

150

Et u - nam san - - ctam Ca - tho - li - cam, Ca -

Et u - nam san - - ctam Ca - tho - li - cam, Ca -

Et u - nam san - - ctam Ca - tho - li - cam, Ca -

Et u - nam san - - ctam Ca -

- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am.

- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si -

- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si -

- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am.

The Three-Part Mass reflects a fairly similar approach (which is more in the style of a consort song with one voice leading), but is more balanced as the outer voices are counterpoised with the inner, creating a greater sense of unity (see music example 4). It is only in the latest work, the Five-Part Mass, that Byrd conveyed the concept of an indisputable unified Catholic Church, as all voices combine homophonically. This device is particularly effective since it is inserted between reduced voice sections (see music example 5).

Although not completely unified, the Three and Four-Part Mass settings of the phrase 'one Holy Catholic Church' are certainly not lacking order, as seems to be the case in the *Great Service*, since they reflect a logical and patterned thought process. However, it was not until the composition of the Five-Part Mass in c.1595²³ that the doctrine as preached by the missionary priests was finally expressed musically. Was there a reason for this? Was Byrd perhaps instructed to set that particular tenet in an increasingly more prominent manner, or was he personally, gradually convinced of a greater significance of the statement? These questions cannot be answered, but musical features suggest that a change in attitude (instigated by either one of the two possibilities), was a probability. To convey beliefs or opinions in a concealed fashion was not uncommon to Elizabethans as has already been shown. Furthermore, it was also affirmed by Byrd himself: "Besides a song that is well and artificially made cannot be well perceived or understood at the first hearing ..."²⁴ Whatever his motive for the comments, it suggests a response to the meaning of words, especially in settings of important sacred texts, which may have been influenced by devotional literature or priests.

130

- cu - tus est per Pro - phe - - - - tas. Et
per Pro - phe - - - - - tas.
est per Pro - phe - tas, per Pro - phe - - - - - tas. Et

u - nam san - - - ctam Ca - tho - li - cam, Ca -
Et u - nam san - - - ctam Ca -
u - nam san - - - ctam Ca - tho - li - cam, Ca -

135

- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et
- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et A - po -
- tho - li - cam, et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec -

Music Example 4.

155

— lo - cu - tus est per Pro - phe - - - - - tas. Et u - - - - -

- cu - tus est per Pro - phe - - - - - tas. Et u - - - - -

Et u - - - - -

est per Pro - phe - - - - - tas. Et u - - - - -

Et u - - - - -

Music Example 5.

160

- nam san - - - ctam, Ca - tho - li - cam,

- nam san - - - ctam, Ca - tho - li - cam,

- nam san - - - ctam, Ca - tho - li - cam,

- nam san - - - ctam, Ca - tho - li - cam,

- nam san - - - ctam, Ca - tho - li - cam,

165

et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et A - po - sto - li -

et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et A - po - sto - li -

et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et A - po - sto - li -

et A - po - sto - li - cam Ec - cle - si - am, et A - po - sto - li -

et A - po - sto - li -

Music Example 5 continued.

NOTES

- ¹See Kerman's analysis and interpretation of the motets in his book, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*, *op.cit.* especially p.37ff and p.345.
- ²William Byrd, Dedication of *Gradualia* Book I. *The Collected Works of William Byrd* (ed.) E.H. Fellowes, *op.cit.*
- ³The text of this Dedication can be found in Chapter 4, Section i.
- ⁴Cited in Bassett, *The English Jesuits*, *op.cit.* p.113
- ⁵From the *Documentorum Ineditorum* in Appendix to the 1st and 2nd Diaries of the English College Douay, T.F. Knox pp.353-355. cited in *Essex Recusant* Vol.10. No.1 (April 1968) p.14
- ⁶P. Brett, "Review of Records" *Musical Quarterly* Vol.58 (1972) p.151. Kerman also points out that Byrd's hymns of the Blessed Virgin Mary have texts that were current in England and on the Continent before the Council of Trent. See *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.329.
- ⁷F.L. Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain* (London, 1958) p.251
- ⁸Bossy has observed that the special calendar of the Catholic liturgical year was promoted in order to sustain the Catholic community, *op.cit.*
- ⁹J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.305-306
- ¹⁰A.C. Edwards, *John Petre*, *op.cit.* p.9. A connection was actually made long before when Lord John's father, Sir William Petre, obtained Ingatstone Manor in 1593 and modified its original Latin name *Ginge ad Petram* (Ing at Stone) to *Ginge Petre* F.G. Emmison, *Tudor Secretary*, *op.cit.* p.24
- ¹¹Henry Garnet to Margaret Garnet, 1st October 1593, cited in Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, *op.cit.* p.174
- ¹²Geoffrey Sharp, "Master of Music and Compromise" *op.cit.* p.6
- ¹³E.H. Fellowes, *William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.46
- ¹⁴William Byrd, Dedication of *Psalmes, Songs and Sonnets (1611)* E.H. Fellowes edition, *op.cit.*
- ¹⁵J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*, *op.cit.* p.288
- ¹⁶Father Gaspar Loarte, *The Exercise of a Christian Life* (Paris, 1579) p.296-297
- ¹⁷William Allen, *A Defence and Declaration of the Catholic Church's Doctrine (1565)* p.285 cited in P. Caraman, *The Other Face*, *op.cit.* p.147-8

¹⁸Father Laurence Vaux, *Catechism (1583)* p.10

¹⁹Kerman, "William Byrd" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *op.cit.*
p.538

²⁰*Ibid.* p.542

²¹All musical examples in this thesis have been reproduced from William Byrd,
The Byrd Edition General editor, Phillip Brett, Vols 4, 10A (Stainer and
Bell Ltd, London, 1981)

²²P. Clulow, "Publication Dates for Byrd's Latin Masses" *Music and Letters* Vol.47
(1966) p.1

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴William Byrd, "To All True Lovers of Musicke" in *Psalmes, Songs and Sonnets*
(1611) E.H. Fellowes edition, *op.cit.*

CHAPTER 6.iii THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND TEXT

To set texts in a manner that expressed an opinion implies a rhetorical method of composition. However, until fairly recently it was generally considered that Byrd was not interested in the relationship of music and text. Indeed it has been claimed that he had a purely abstract approach to his art.¹ There is some justification for this view if considering his high regard for the sober and formalistic style of the English consort song. While his treatment of the Latin liturgical texts may occasionally incorporate these techniques, Byrd in fact employed the whole range of his compositional skills in their most mature form. It is reassuring therefore, that later research has redressed this misconception, largely through the work of Kerman and Brett.² Byrd is now recognised as having a significant role in introducing devices of word illustration and interpretation into England.³ Furthermore, a concern for words is also evident in his connection with the modern poets in the 1570s and 80s.⁴

In the late Renaissance it was shown that the Greek theories of rhetoric as applied to literature, influenced other art forms. The popular method of oratory which occurs for example in Southwell's poetry, reveals an analytical and logical attitude to language; an attitude which enjoyed subtle manipulation of words. Maybe because of the prevailing trend, the principles of rhetoric were transferred to music. Not unexpectedly this phenomenon coincided with the growing preoccupation of setting a text according to its semantic content.

As early as 1518 there is theoretical evidence of these ideas influencing musical composition. In his book *Utopia (1518)*, Sir Thomas More stated that, "... music doth so resemble and express naturall affections, the sound and tune is applied and made agreeable to the thing, that whether it bee a prayer, or else a

dytty of gladnes, of patience, of trouble, of mourning, of anger; the fassion of the melody dothe so represente the meaning of the thing, that it doth wonderfullye move, stirre, pearce, and enflame the hearers myndes"(sic).⁵ The first English rhetorician to mention the connection between music and rhetoric was Henry Peacham the elder in his book, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577). A little later Thomas Morley stressed the importance of composing relevant music for a text without reference to the art of rhetoric, yet clearly bearing the principles in mind.⁶ By the beginning of the seventeenth-century the relationship was unmistakable. No less a person than Francis Bacon remarked that, "There be in music certain figures or tropes; almost agreeing with the figures in rhetoric, and with the affections of the mind, and other senses ..." (sic).⁷

It is not known whether Byrd was trained in the art of oratory, but as an educated man it is highly probable since it was a fundamental part of a sixteenth-century English education. What seems apparent is that in this case the text was the source of inspiration for him. In the dedication of the *Gradualia* Vol I, Byrd stated ... "As I have learnt by experience in those sayings (or sentences with deep meaning) in themselves, there is present such profound and hidden strength that to one thinking of divine things and diligently and seriously 'turning them over', I do not know how, but the most apt numbers suggest themselves as if spontaneously. To a mind not indolent or inert they offer themselves freely" (sic).⁸

It appears that Byrd was affected by the power of a text. In the translations by Fellowes and Strunk the words 'meditate' and 'pondering' have been used for the Latin verb 'pervolutanti'. Although not accurate they go some way in making meaning out of what is an unusual use of an intensified verb, especially as it occurs after two adverbs: diligently and seriously. Both the words used in the generally-accepted translations imply a fairly gentle, passive activity. However, Byrd's particular choice while suggestive of contemplation or

speculation, incorporates a sense of activity. 'Pervolutanti', coming from the verb 'voluto', indicates not just turning, or mulling over, but with the additional use of 'per' gives the process more energy. This notion is reinforced in the phrase that follows: "...to a mind not indolent or inert..."

The process of meditation, especially in terms of the Spiritual Exercises, was one that was both a disciplined and active practice. Two particular statements made by Ignatius in his *Directions for Acquiring and Understanding of the Spiritual Exercises* suggest not only a possible explanation of Byrd's compositional procedures, but also his reasons for moving to Stondon Massey where he composed all his Catholic liturgical music. The first describes the difference between an intellectual and spiritual approach to thought: "... it is not an abundance of knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul but rather an interior understanding and *savouring* of things."⁹ The second suggests a possible motivation for those particular works: "In these Exercises as a general rule, he will profit all the more if he is separated from all his friends and from all worldly cares; for example, if he moves from the house where he lives and chooses another home or room where he may dwell as privately as possible, so that he may be free to go to Mass and Vespers everyday, without fear of hindrance from his friends."¹⁰

The distinction between meditation and ordinary thinking may not seem important today, but at that time was distinguished in great detail. St. Francois de Sales maintained that "Every meditation is a thought, but every thought is not a meditation."¹¹ For the benefit of his readers, de Sales divided thinking into three categories: "... we have thoughts to which our mynd is carried without aime or pretention at all, by way of a simple musing as we see flies, flie from one flowre to an other, without drawing any thing from them: And be this kind of thought as attentive as it may be, it can never beare the name of meditation; but must be called a simple thought"(sic). The second type of thought "is named studie, in which the

mynd is like locustes, which promiscuously flie upon flowres, and leeves to eate them and nourishe themselves thereupon"(sic). It is only "when we thinke of heavenly things, not to lerne but to love them, that it is called to meditate: and the exercise there of Meditation: in which our mynd, not as a Flie, by a simple musing, nor yet as a locust, to eate and be filled, but as a sacred Bee flies amongst the flowres of holy mysteries, to extract from them the honie of Divine Love"(sic).

Edward Dawson described meditation as an active and positive path to perfection. "Meditation which we treat of, is nothing els but a diligent and forcible application of the understanding, to seeke, and knowe, and as it were to taste some divine matter; from when doth arise in our affectionate powers good motions, inclinations, and purposes which stirre us up to the love and exercise of vertue, and the hatred and avoiding of sinne; it is the shortest and almost the only way to attaine to Christian perfection: it is the path which all holy men (of what estate soever) have troden. Wherefore let those, who desire to enjoy their company, follow their example"(sic).¹²

Meditation was in fact a methodical process which fused the intellect with the emotions. Joseph Hall explained in *The Arte of Divine Meditation* that the process should channel everything in only one direction: "Our Meditation must proceed in due order, not troubledly, not preposterously: It begins in the understanding, endeth in the affection; It begins in the braine, descends to the heart; Begins on earth, ascends to Heaven; Not suddenly, but by certaine staires and degrees, till we come to the highest"(sic).¹³

In the light of such guidance, it seems to be a possibility that Byrd's creative process, according to his own explanation, bore a resemblance to the exercise of meditation. It would appear that the process of contemplation as described by contemporary writers may have been his source of creative inspiration.

If Byrd meditated on the sacred words, (or thought about them with piety) as he considered their musical setting according to the principles set down in the books of devotion, it was either a conscious decision, or a habitual tendency acquired from years of formal practice.

Whatever the truth, the act of seriously considering "divine things " to someone in Byrd's situation implies a process which may have been derived from meditational techniques. It appears possible therefore that when Byrd approached a liturgical text he not only brought to it a rhetorical attitude, but a background influenced by the practice of meditation understanding which often bore a resemblance to the structure and methods of the Spiritual Exercises. It is the meditational quality which breaks through the 'dryness' of rhetoric as a mechanical and intellectual system, and in musical terms proposes less obvious techniques which come closer to the heart of the matter by incorporating the feelings. It was consistent with the Jesuit spirit, that music was not written simply as the result of a meditative spiritual experience, but was, in addition, created to elicit a similar response in the listener. The fact that Byrd may well have chosen to compose liturgical music based on the foregoing criteria, demonstrates both an expression of personal faith, and the desire to encourage it in others. Furthermore, it implies the possibility of influence from Garnet, Southwell and Gerard, the leading Jesuits in England at the end of the sixteenth-century, who were also renowned for music, poetry and communication of the Spiritual Exercises.

NOTES

- ¹See for example D. Brown, "William Byrd's 1588 Volume" *Music and Letters* Vol.38 (1957) p.372. He claims "Byrd has little interest in the expression of details of the text, he is not 'literary minded', and purely musical values always guide his inspiration;" and W. Gray, "Some Aspects of Word Treatment in the Music of William Byrd" *Musical Quarterly* Vol.54 No.1 (January 1969) p.45. Gray admits that the process of Byrd's word setting is complex and hadn't been fully investigated, but asserts that there are no examples of word interpretation, merely word painting.
- ²Much of Joseph Kerman and Philip Brett's research on Byrd clarifies the premise that the relationship between words and music was important to Byrd.
- ³J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op.cit.* p.149
- ⁴J. Kerman, "William Byrd" *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, op.cit.* p.539
- ⁵Sir Thomas More, *Utopia (1518)* facsimile of the first English translation (Oxford, 1895) p.296
- ⁶Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke (1597)* (ed.) Alex Harman (New York, 1973) pp.290-1
- ⁷Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarium (1627)* in *The Works of Francis Bacon* Vol.III collected and edited by James Spedding (London, 1876) pp.388-9
- ⁸William Byrd, Dedication of the *Gradualia* Vol. I (1605)
- ⁹*The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius op.cit.* p.37
- ¹⁰*Ibid* p.43
- ¹¹St. Francois de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God (1616)* translated by Thomas Carre (Douai, 1630) pp.324-5
- ¹²Edward Dawson, *The Practical Method of Meditation (1614)* cited in L.L. Martz, *The Meditative Poet, op.cit.* p.3
- ¹³Joseph Hall, *The Arte of Divine Meditation (1607)* p.14

CHAPTER 7

*In summ here is all in a summ expressed,
Of much the most, of every good the best.*

*Robert Southwell
'Of the Blessed Sacrament of the Aulter'*

CHAPTER 7.i THE HEAVENLIE BANQUETT

It appears that demonstrations of Catholicism in the arts were particularly evident in the years 1592-1595. The painting of the Sir Thomas More and his descendants was commissioned, Triangular Lodge and Lyveden New Bield were conceived by Sir Thomas Tresham, and Robert Southwell wrote the last of his meditative poems, (Southwell was executed in 1595). It was also during this period that William Byrd decided, or was encouraged, to compose and publish three musical settings of the Mass. According to Peter Clulow, whose research is generally accepted by musicologists today, the Four-Part Mass was printed between late 1592 and early 1593, the Three-Part between late 1593 and early 1594, and the Five-Part between late 1594 and early 1595.¹

Byrd's initial venture into the area of Latin liturgical music was remarkable for a number of reasons. For an English Catholic to compose Mass settings in England at the end of the sixteenth century was a dangerous undertaking, but to have them them printed was unprecedented. Furthermore, the manner of publication was also most unusual. Each of the Masses was published in small, untitled, separate part-books of four pages, facilitating transportation and concealment if necessary. In that period Masses were not issued as isolated compositions. However, in spite of obvious consideration for secrecy, each page of each part-book is clearly marked with the composer's name (see illustration 31). It should be recalled that not only was it a serious offence to say, or hear Mass, but the printers were also at risk. Stephen Vallenger, who published Henry Walpole's poem on the life and death of Campion for example, had his ears cut off and was imprisoned in the Tower until his death. Despite the inherent danger, William Byrd's settings were in some demand, for in c. 1599, second editions of the Three and Four-Part Masses were released.

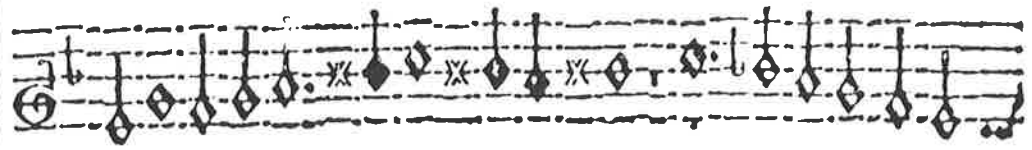
5. Voc.

SUPERIUS.

W. Byrd.

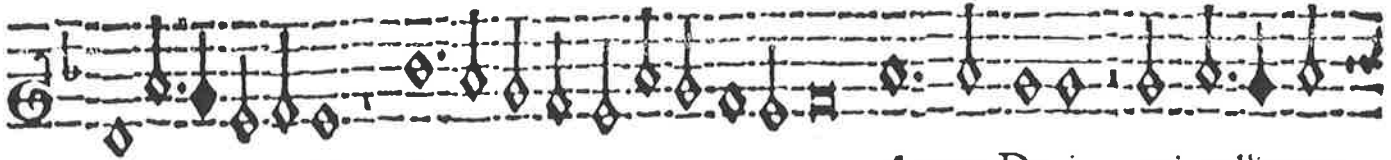


Gnus De- i, qui tol- lis pecca- ta mun- di,



ij.

mi- se-re-re no-



bis. ij.

Agnus De- i, qui tollis pec-



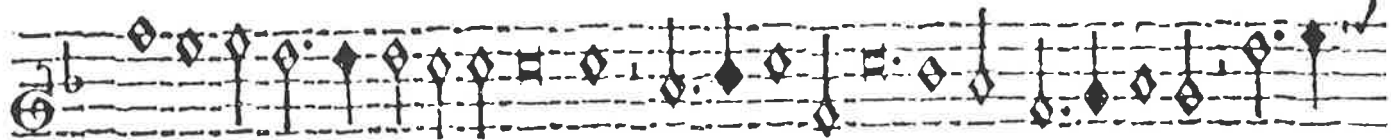
ca-ta mun- di, mi-se-re-re no- bis. ij.

mi-se-



re-re no-

bis. Agnus De- i qui tol- lis peccata mun- di, Agnus



De- i qui tol- lis peccata mundi, do-na nobis pa- cem. do-na nobis dona



nobis pa-

cem. pacem. do-na nobis pa- cem.

FINIS.

Illustration 31. The Agnus Dei of the Five-Part Mass.

Byrd's project was not only unusual in his own country, it was unique in terms of the work produced by Continental composers. Setting the Mass for them was a commonplace task. Victoria, for instance wrote twenty Masses, Lassus sixty, and Palestrina one hundred. Byrd wrote only three. Because of this, and the unusual circumstances in which they were written, each setting was treated with singular care and sensitivity. They are not the work of someone for whom the task was a common occurrence. When William Byrd was faced with the business of composing music for the Mass text, the only available examples were either those written in England before the Reformation, or those from the Continent. The English models were composed according to the Sarum rite which differed from the Roman rite at this time. Furthermore both the English and Continental sources were scarce, since copies were chiefly to be found only among the collections of a few English Catholics. Perhaps because of this, or maybe due to personal choice, Byrd's Mass settings are unusual by the standards of the day. Apart from a reference to Taverner in the Four-Part Mass,² they do not use the common technique of being based on borrowed material, but are almost entirely freely composed. In addition, these works differ from other Mass compositions of the period, in their combination of artistic skill and conciseness. This deviation was obviously pertinent for the people concerned. While a sung Mass was a special occasion for English Catholics, every minute of its performance was time of exceeding danger.

It is difficult to assess the popularity of Byrd's Mass settings, when they were first composed, or where and when they were performed. Although there are several extant sets of the printed part-books, the Mass settings were copied into very few manuscript anthologies. This information gives no indication as to the extent of usage. There is no means of knowing the original number of copies in existence. Furthermore, it was not common practice to include Catholic liturgical music in anthologies at the end of the sixteenth century.³ Similarly, there is no evidence to suggest where, or how, the Masses were performed. Nevertheless,

general descriptions of Catholic liturgical events, combined with knowledge of Byrd's situation, present a plausible explanation. Since private chapels were few and far between, Mass was often a domestic arrangement, being celebrated in a room large enough to hold family members, friends and possibly servants. Sir John Petre was fortunate in having a Long Gallery at Ingatestone Hall. Not only is the capacity of this room sufficient for a small congregation, it also has a small recess called the Chapel, which was of a size to fit both an altar and an officiating priest. Without evidence of other venues, this room with the facilities of space for communicants and a chapel area, was one in which Byrd's Masses were probably sung (see illustration 32).

One other interesting point to consider regarding Byrd's Mass settings, is the people involved in those performances. While sacred music had been the sole province of male singers throughout the history of Christianity, it presented problems to English Catholics at that time. Because it was not possible to train boys, or employ them to sing the highest parts, other arrangements had to be made. From the contemporary accounts it is evident that women were co-opted to fill that gap. It was observed for example, on the occasion that Garnet and Southwell were introduced to a gathering of Catholics which included Byrd that: "The gentleman (Richard Bolt), was a skilled musician, and had an organ and other instruments, and choristers, male and female, members of the household."⁴ It is highly likely therefore, that the original performances of Byrd's Masses not only took place in a domestic situation, such as the one described at Ingatestone Hall, but that the performers consisted of both male and female singers.

Under the circumstances, these works are a remarkable product, demonstrating an intense need on the part of the congregation and performers, and the composer's pious desire to fulfill that need. Because of the infrequency of Mass

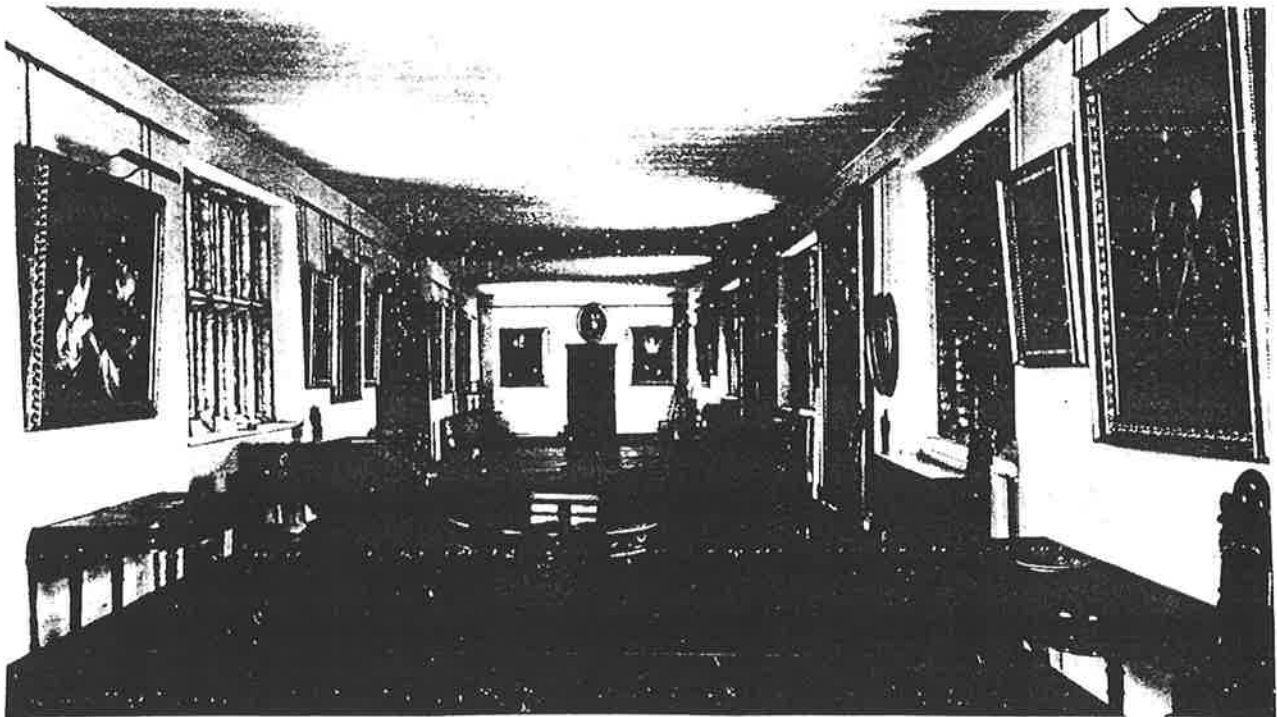


Illustration 32. Ingatestone Hall: Exterior View and the Long Gallery.

in the lives of English Catholics, it became a more revered and valued event, strengthening the bond between priest and laity. Byrd and his fellow Catholics were in no doubt as to the correct attitude they should assume towards it, since a great deal of advice on the subject was included in the numerous books of devotion in use. The importance of holy days, especially when they included the sacrament of communion, was explained by Robert Southwell: "I must rise one hour or half an hour sooner than on other days; and if it be a day of receiving, my first thought must be to think what a happy banquet I am to go unto, desiring God to give me due preparation On principal feasts, it is convenient to prepare myself before for them and to live a day or two before as it were in expectation of them, desiring the presence and solemnity of that day wherein God doth most abundantly bestow his graces"(sic).⁵

According to Luis de Granada, preparation for communion should begin three days before the event.⁶ During this time the individuals should refrain from anything that could conceivably lead to sin, such as talking and laughing; he should in fact keep his heart from "all filthie, vaine, and troublesome cogitations"(sic). Instead, through "spirituall exercises, as in Meditations, and praiers"(sic), the heart should be prepared for the coming of the "heavenlie bridegrome"(sic). In this manner the prospective communicant should "stirre up in (his) Soule a feare, love and hungrie desire of this heavenlie bread"(sic). It is because "the effect of this most blessed Sacrament, is to unite the Soule unto him and to make them both one self same thing: (which is Spiritual Matrimonie),... (that) ... it is very necessarie to consider before with great attention, the manner that he observeth in his comming, that they going forward to receive him, may be agreeable to his comming"(sic).

Guidance was also frequently given on the mental and emotional state necessary during the celebration of Mass. Unlike the reformed religions which

stressed active participation of the congregation, Catholics were encouraged in personal piety as the priest offered the sacrifice on their behalf. Gaspar Loarte reminded his readers to be aware of the Passion during Mass since it was a memorial of "the same, and both the Priest's attire and all the ornaments of the Aultar, with the Ceremonies which be used in the saying of *Masse* do all represent and signifie such things unto us, as he either did or Spake during the time of his painfull Passion: & therefore it is a very Godly thing to have the same in memory, especially at the time of Elevation"(sic).⁷

The Council of Trent redefined the sacrament of the Eucharist by emphasizing the doctrine of transubstantiation, and restoring the adoration of the host to a more central place.⁸ This interpretation naturally focused on the contemplative as a means of stimulating religious fervour in contrast to Protestant activities such as hymn singing. It is therefore not surprising that writers of devotional books also directed their energy to instructing the communicant on how to benefit from the celebration. In fact, if one did not approach the Mass with a definite plan of meditation, a weary attitude would ensue depriving the occasion of "gust and profit," according to Thomas de Villa-castin.⁹ This is not to say that Protestants differed on this point. In the preface to Holy Communion in the Common Book of Prayer, members of the Congregation were warned to be spiritually prepared. It was "so divine and comfortable a thing to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive it unworthily ... so that ye may come holy and clean to such a heavenly Feast, in the marriage-garment required by God in holy Scripture, and be received as worthy partakers of that holy Table"¹⁰(sic). It seems, however, that the methods suggested in the Catholic books of devotion for this purpose were different and were derived from the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. There is a strong similarity between them. De Villa-Castin states that: "... wherefore before thou enter into the Meditation or consideration of any ensuing poynts, to illuminate thine

understanding and Stir up thy devotion, thou mayst first, every tyme thou shalt communicate, making briefly this composition of place, with petitions adjoyning"(sic).¹¹ Note how both the language and methods resemble those found in the Spiritual Exercises.

It is obvious that the reasoning behind such an attitude to the Mass saw the necessity of applying both the heart and mind in a balanced and organised procedure. The purpose of this was to inspire religious zeal and a correct relationship to God. "And seeing that our affectionate part imbraceth nothing, unlesse our understanding both know it, and judge of it, neither can it find out fit objects of heavenly affections unlesse it discourse on them, nor move therewith the will, except it consider the goodnes which often lieth hidden in them; it followeth evidently that without meditation no man can attaine to any height of Perfection"(sic).¹² The accepted approach to the Catholic Mass at that time involved two concepts. Firstly, a meditative approach was a prerequisite, being the only means of attaining 'any height of Perfection'; and secondly, a balance of the heart and mind was fundamental to that process. If these methods were actively promoted, what other option was there open to a composer setting the Mass text who is likely to have familiarity with devotional practices if not the Spiritual Exercises themselves?

NOTES

- ¹P. Clulow, "Publication Dates for Byrd's Latin Masses" *op.cit.* The dates have been determined by analysing the deterioration of the ornamental letter which begins each movement.
- ²P. Brett, "Homage to Taverner in Byrd's Masses" *Early Music* Vol.9 n.2 (1981) p.149
- ³P. Brett, Preface to *The Byrd Edition* Vol.4 (London, 1981) p.ix
- ⁴William Weston, *Autobiography*, *op.cit.* p.72
- ⁵Robert Southwell, *Short Rules of a Good Life*, *op.cit.* p.45
- ⁶Luis de Granada, *A Memoriall of a Christian Life* translated by Richard Hopkins (Rouen, 1599) pp.528 - 533
- ⁷Gaspar Loarte, *The Exercise of Christian Life* (Paris, 1579) p.25
- ⁸H.O. Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter Reformation*, *op.cit.* p.38 and 132
- ⁹Thomas de Villa-castin, *A Manuall of Devout Meditations and Exercises*, *op.cit.* p.531
- ¹⁰*The Communion Service* in *The Common Book of Prayer* *op.cit.* p.137
- ¹¹*Ibid.*
- ¹²Edward Dawson, *The Practical Methode of Meditation*, *op.cit.* p.3

CHAPTER 7.ii MEDITATIONAL INSPIRATION IN THE HEAVENLIE BANQUETT

If the Spiritual Exercises or meditations derived from them were inspirational to Catholic artists of other mediums, the idea of connecting them with musical techniques was not necessarily unusual. It may have been a logical progression of thought. Whether from choice or unconscious influence, this particular approach seems to be evident in Byrd's three settings of the Mass. Furthermore, analysis in terms of this premise tends not only to support Clulow's chronology of the Masses, it also demonstrates an evolving attitude to the possibilities of combining meditative, rhetorical, and compositional techniques, as well as suggesting a personal change in spiritual attitudes.

As has already been mentioned, the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises were distinctive in the use of techniques designed to arouse an emotional response to intellectual contemplation. They were specifically created to generate a vital spiritual life. If those were influences in Byrd's life, how would he have responded as he "meditated upon the sacred words" of the Mass, "constantly and seriously considering" them for the purpose of a musical setting? In order to demonstrate that he may have been influenced to some extent by the Spiritual Exercises or their derivations, examples of meditational procedures and their application in the Masses have been selected for discussion. Because a variety of techniques were used, the subsequent section has been arranged according to the topic under the following headings: **Contemplation of Words; Composition of Place; The Use of the Understanding; Contemplation of Text Which May Have Been Set to Emphasise Catholic Doctrine or Jesuit Principles; The Significance of the Head Motives; The Use of the Affections; The Structure of the Masses as It Relates to the Spiritual Exercises.**

Contemplation of Words

Since the Mass was so familiar, it was important that its text should not become hackneyed for the participants. Ignatius recognised the danger of this occurring in regard to well-known prayers, and advocated three devices to prevent their becoming tedious or meaningless. "The second method consists in contemplating the meaning of each word of a prayer." Each word should be reflected on as long as the individual "finds meanings, comparisons, relish, and consolation in the consideration of it."¹ Whether influenced by this advice or not it is apparent from the manner in which Byrd composed music for the Mass text that he considered each word, reflecting on its meaning and contextual relevance. Music offers particular opportunity for stressing or protracting textual elements, and there are a number of ways in which this has been done; one being his selection of important words requiring special emphasis. There are instances for example, where the text demanded straight-forward homophonic treatment for the sake of clarity as well as significance. Phrases set in this manner are either statements of faith, or unified expressions of praise. The statement "Et unam Catholicam" has already been discussed in this light.² Other phrases similarly treated occur in the Gloria: "Laudamus te", "Gratias agimus tibi" and "Quoniam tu solus sanctus." Note also that in the Four-Part Mass, antiphony, which was also conceived as a rhetorical device, is used for effect at the beginning of the statements of praise (m 7-12).³

Contemplation of the text is also evident in the way in which Byrd selected significant words and emphasised them through repetition and embellishment. Reflecting a similar attitude, Zarlino explained that repetition of words in polyphonic music was permitted in order "to give greater emphasis to words that have some grave sense and are worthy of consideration."⁴ Take for example the name 'Jesu Christe.' It is embellished each time it occurs in the Masses, but the most

conspicuous reference occurs in conjunction with the words "Domine fili unigenite" in the Gloria. The name, 'Jesu Christe', is repeated and embellished as many as five times in the Four-Part Mass, with the reiterated motive sometimes heard starting from progressively lower pitches (m 41-50). Admittedly this is the end of a section, but the meaning of the word is conveyed through the subtle movement of descent, and the introduction of chromatics and dissonance, especially towards the close. Note how the tenor falls an octave in the space of just over a bar, (m 45-6), and the bassus wanders down the octave, with the strong beat emphasizing the direction as he descends to the cadence (m 46-50).

The sensation of descent (possibly symbolic both of Christ's descent to earth and the suffering inherent in this earthly role), is also stressed at the same point in the Three-Part Mass (m 37-42). In this economic work, Byrd demonstrates a consistent attitude as he favours the submediant to create minor harmonies, and adds dissonance and embellishment. The setting of the words 'Jesu Christe' in the Five-Part Mass is also stressed, but from a different viewpoint. What is particularly interesting, is the introduction of octave leaps in the tenor (m 39) and the bassus (m 39-40). Although the leaps occur between the words 'Jesu' and 'Christe', a concept of energy and life connected with the son of God, is echoed through the other disjunct movement of the melodic lines (see music example 6). It is obvious that Byrd was aware of the problems inherent in setting a text as familiar as that of the Mass, and this is evident in the diverse way in which he treated his three Mass settings. Thus, for example, the same section of the Gloria in the Five-Part Mass is in contrast with the earlier works, as different sentiments are conveyed.

Another place in the text which bears evidence of importance and has thus been given special treatment occurs in the Credo at the setting of the phrase "Deum Verum, de Deo vero." Not only is embellishment applied to the words 'verum' and 'vero', but the spacing between the parts and the range of the subject is impressive in

- li u - ni - ge - ni - te, Je - su Chri - ste, Je -

- li u - ni - ge - ni - te, Je - su Chri -

fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te,

- mi - ne fi - li u - ni - ge - ni - te, Je - su Chri -

u - ni - ge - ni - te, Je - su Chri - ste,

40

- su Chri - ste, Je - su Chri - ste.

- ste, Je - su Chri - ste.

Je - su Chri - ste.

- ste, Je - su Chri - ste.

Je - su Chri - ste.

Music Example 6.

all three Masses. This musical idea which perhaps conveys the notion of God's comprehensive nature is particularly interesting in the Four-Part Mass (see music example 7):

Musical Example 7 shows a four-part vocal setting of the Credo text. The score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) in a key with two flats (B-flat major or D minor) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: - rum de De - o ve - ro, ve - ro, - rum, de De - o ve - ro, ve - ro, De - o ve - ro, ve - ro, ge - ni-tum non de De - o ve - ro, de De - o ve - ro, ge - ni-tum non. A fermata is placed over the word 'ro' in the first measure of the Soprano part, with the number '35' written above it.

Musical Example 7.

The setting of this text in the Three-Part Mass bears some resemblance to the Four-Part Mass, but is totally different from that for five voices. In the latter work, only three parts are utilised, and the embellishments are based on descending movement.

Composition of Place

Considering or contemplating each individual word was not the only, or by any means the best known, of the Ignatian methods of meditation. Probably the most renowned were those associated with the term 'composition of place', in which the five senses were applied in order to imbue the meditation with a sense of immediacy and vivacity. To use techniques such as these in relationship to the Mass

may seem disrespectful or incongruous. On the contrary, they were considered a necessary asset according to the books of devotion. Father Francis Borgia stated that, "We must exercise fayth, by considering that in Masse is represented as in a Theater, the life & passion of our Saviour, beleiving assuredly the same to be a true sacrifice ..." (sic).⁵ Thomas de Villa-castin explained the connection between meditative techniques and the Mass even more explicitly: "But one thing is specially to be noted, that when through art to make the composition of place in some passage or Mystery of Christ, either newly borne, or bound to the pillar, or nayled to the crosse, thou must not imagine it happened a far off, in Bethlehem, or in Ierusalem, a thousand and so many yeares since, for this doth weary the imagination, and is not so much force to move (the emotions). But rather imagine those thinges, as if they were present, and even now did passe before thyne eyes: seeing and beholding with the eyes of thy Soule the infant Iesus weeping and crying in the cradle or manger. And as it were heare the stroks of whips, and knocking of thy nails, whereby thou shalt both pray with more facility, sweetness, attention, and devotion, and be moved more & reap more abundant fruit and profit thereof" (sic).⁶

Clearly from this viewpoint, using the senses to construct an interior drama onto which the communicant could project himself, was not an impediment, but advantageous. Although Byrd was not able to re-create musically the use of the senses, in the way that Robert Southwell for example was able to do in poetry, he did seek to create a dramatic setting. While a vital musical setting does not automatically indicate influence of the Spiritual Exercises, this fact taken in conjunction with other evidence in Byrd's life suggests a possibility. The most basic application of a vital approach to the text is evident in his pictorial illustration of descriptive words; a technique in fact used far more extravagantly in his earlier works. For example, where a phrase or word is associated with ascent, upward movement often incorporating notes of short duration, have been used. At the word

'ascendit' in the Credo of the Three and Four- Part Masses, Byrd has applied the additional device of hyperbole for effect, as the bass voice in the former (m 84-85 see music example 8), and the tenor and bass parts in the latter work, (m 95 and 97-98), exceed the ambitus of the mode.

85

Et a - scen - dit in cae - lum, se -

Musical Example 8.

Similar, but more subtle treatment occurs in the Five-Part Mass. What is particularly interesting about this phrase is that in all the Masses, the impetus for the ascent is musically and rhetorically begun at the preceding phrase, "Et resurrexit". At these points the rhythm is less active, the tempo and the melodic climb is less pronounced. The upward thrust which starts at m 94 reaches a climax at m 104 and gradually subsides, creating a musical unity between the two ideas of the text. It is Byrd's ability to sustain an idea of this kind which gives his music the effect of a meditation.

A similar response is apparent in the Three-Part Mass at the words "et exspecto", in the Credo (m 150 ff). In this instance the initial concept of expectation has been musically linked through adaptation of the original motive, to the text describing the life of the world to come, and the Amen. This significant shaping of

the piece according to its syntax, appears to particularly express Puente's instructions concerning meditation on "The Ascension of Christ our Lord", which states : "Hence I will drawe great affections of confidence, hoping to ascend with Christ to heaven ..." (sic).⁷

Text denoting the opposite activity of descent, has likewise been conveyed pictorially. A noticeable example of this occurs at the phrase, "descendit de caelis" in the Credo. In each Mass the word 'descendit' has been described by a three-note motive, incorporating a falling fourth or fifth. In the Five-Part Mass the concept of descent is already introduced at the word 'salutem', and in both the Four and Five-Part works the idea is extended to the word 'caelis'. Amplification of understanding through word-painting is again evident as the subject in the Four-Part Mass gently falls to earth (m 58-61 see music example 9). In the Five-Part Mass, the contratenor (the highest voice in use at this point), falls sequentially with a shaped motive which is echoed in the bassus . Both these settings of the word demonstrate the application of composition of place, as they pictorially evoke the descent from heaven. While pictorial melodic movement does not necessarily imply Jesuit influences, it suggests that it may have been derived from a similar source.

There are numerous instances in the Masses of this type of word illustration. A more simplistic example, depicting the contrast between heaven and earth through upward, followed by downward melodic movement, can be seen at the beginning of the Credo in the Four-Part Mass (m 5-8). A particularly vivid example of descent created in order to "imagine those thinges, as if they did passe before thyne eyes" (sic), is the setting of the phrase, "sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est." In all the works at least one voice exceeds the lower ambitus of the mode , which although a fairly common device in the Three and Four-Part Masses, is a rare occurrence in the Five -Part Mass. (Four-Part m 82, Three-Part m 69, Five-Part m 88-89). Note that amplification, and perhaps interpretation, of the text has been

- lu - tem, de - scen - dit de cae - - - -

- stram sa - lu - tem, de - scen - dit

- lu - tem, de - scen - dit de cae - - - -

60

- - - - - lis. Et in - car - na -

Et in - car - na - tus est,

de cae - - - - - lis. Et in - car -

- - - - - lis. Et in - car - na - tus est,

Music Example 9.

presented through the use of false relations at the name of Pontius Pilate, in the Four-Part Mass (see music example 10):

- ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis sub Pon - ti - o Pi - la -
 - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis sub Pon - ti - o Pi -
 - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis sub Pon - ti - o Pi -
 - to, pas - sus et se - pul - tus est.
 - la - to, pas - sus et se - pul - tus est, se - pul - tus est. Et re - sur -
 - la - to, pas - sus et se - pul - tus est.
 Et re - sur - re - xit

Music Example 10.

The use of dissonance in the Five-Part Mass, which includes a suspension, reinforces the concept of torment associated with Pontius Pilate (m 88 ff). The Ordinary of the Mass, which is clearly more theological in function than dramatic in expression, does not obviously lend it self to vivid representation. The few exceptions are words which suggest the image of the crucifixion, the heavenly host in the Sanctus, or the subjective emotion of the Agnus Dei. It is in these places that

Byrd's Masses incorporate music that resembles the technique known as 'composition of place', used in the process of meditation. Analysis suggests that this was not merely a method of inspiration but could also have been used to assist the listener to "pray with more facility, sweetness, attention, and devotion, and be moved more & reap more abundant fruit and profit thereof"(sic).⁸

The Use of the Understanding

To a composer setting the Mass text under the restraints which Byrd had to accept, particularly the need for brevity, purely pictorial or concrete word illustration had its limits. However, it appears that he may have worked from the premise that it could be a 'theatre' of events or ideas from which meditation developed. If influenced by the Spiritual Exercises, it follows that points of the text would be musically examined and considered for greater understanding, especially in terms of how they related to the exercitant. Whether he was following such a method or not, this particular approach is decidedly evident in Byrd's Mass settings. A specific doctrinal point which appears to have been significant to him, and given special treatment, was the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. The musical techniques chosen to convey this are perhaps fairly obvious, but canon and imitation elucidate this abstract concept particularly well. The phrase "Domine Deus agnus Dei, filius patris" in the Gloria of the Three-Part Mass is set for two voices only in imitation at the fifth, and then sixth (m 43-48). At the same point in the Four-Part Mass, in which the number of voices is also reduced, imitation is heard between the tenor and bass at the beginning and end of the statement (see music example 11).

55

Do - mi-ne De - us a - gnus De - i, a - gnus De - i, fi -

Do - mi-ne De - us a - gnus De -

Do - mi-ne De - us a - gnus De -

60

- li-us pa - tris, fi - li-us pa -

i, fi - li-us pa - tris, fi - li-us pa -

- i, fi - li-us pa - tris, pa - tris, fi - li-us

Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta mun -

- tris, pa - tris. Qui tol - lis pec - ca - ta

- tris, pa - tris.

pa - tris. Qui

Music Example 11.

The Five-Part Mass employs other devices to explain the relationship between God the Father and God the Son, and in this case it appears to have been extended to include the concept of the Trinity. This differing musical interpretation of the text, incidentally, also suggests the notion of a fresh contemplation of the words resulting in a slightly different response to the subject. In a section which has been reduced, the parts are linked together in a rather distinct manner. The points of imitation, clearly definable in the two upper voices for the words "Domine Deus," are in fact begun by the bassus in an augmented variation. At the words "agnus Dei," the second tenor leads, while for the final phrase, "filius patris," the bassus and second tenor come together in parallel motion, and are imitated by the contratenor. The differing combinations of the parts and their changing roles, is suggestive of the interchangeable functions of the Trinity. Is it pure chance that the bassus leads for the text relating to the Godhead, that the middle voice leads at the words describing the unique nature of the Son, and that the two lower voices sing together the text specifying the special relationship between Father and Son while the contratenor imitates above? (see music example 12)

Another dimension of the relationship between the Father and Son has been beautifully conveyed at the words "Et ex patre" in the Credo of the Three-Part Mass. A concept of intermingling of two identities, that are also one, is described as the emphasis of each successive word is passed between the tenor and the cantus (m 18-21). The parts in this brief canon-like section are so closely drawn together that each word is heard as an interpolation in the melodic flow of the other part (see music example 13).

45

Do - mi - ne De - us a - gnus De - -

Do - mi - ne De - us a - gnus De - - i,

Do - mi - ne De - us a - gnus De - i,

Qui

- i, fi - li - us pa - tris.

Qui tol -

fi - li - us pa - - - tris.

fi - li - us na - - - tris

Music Example 12.

20

u - ni - ge - ni - tum. Et ex pa - tre na - tum an - te

u - ni - ge - ni - tum. Et ex pa - tre na - tum.

u - ni - ge - ni - tum, an - te om - ni -

Musical Example 13.

Imitation has similarly been used for the tenor and bassus, to illustrate the phrase "qui ex patre filio", in the Credo of the Three-Part Mass (m 110 ff). At the same place in the Five-Part Mass, imitation occurs between the contratenor and first tenor over a modified and augmented motive in the bassus, (m 133 ff). Perhaps this is a pictorial explanation of the Trinity, since the text refers to it.

The notion of interchanging roles and flexibility between the members of the Trinity, is further clarified at the phrase, "consubstantialem patri" in both the Four and Five-Part Masses. In the latter, the first statement is presented by the superius and second tenor in parallel motion, against a condensed variation of the motive in the contratenor. When the statement is heard in the other two voices, they are inverted so that the highest voice, the first tenor, repeats the first version, and the lowest voice, the bassus, is heard with the condensed version of the motive (see music example 14). The idea of conveying the doctrine through variation in duration

40

fa - ctum, con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem pa - tri,

fa - ctum, con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem pa - tri,

fa - ctum, con - sub - stan - ti -

fa - ctum, con - sub - stan - ti - a - lem pa - tri,

fa - ctum, con - sub - stan - ti -

45

per quem om - ni - a fa - cta sunt,

per quem om - ni - a fa - cta sunt, per quem om - ni -

- a - lem pa - tri, per quem om - ni - a

per quem om - ni - a fa -

- a - lem pa - tri, per quem

Music Example 14.

of a given motive, was possibly derived from the same section of text in the Four-Part Mass, where, as Kerman points out, both augmentation and diminution have been applied for the purpose of elucidation (m 38-43).⁹

Contemplation of Text Which May Have Been Set to Emphasise Catholic Doctrine or Jesuit Principles

The foregoing beliefs expounded in the music were of course accepted by both Protestant and Catholic, but there is evidence to suggest that Byrd's Catholic beliefs or the influence of the Jesuits affected his treatment of the text; that is the specific way in which he considered the words. According to contemporary writing two doctrinal points that were of great importance to Catholics were the Passion and the Incarnation. The former, which is constantly alluded to throughout the Masses, will be discussed in a later section. The Incarnation was also identified for special treatment by Byrd, and is demonstrated in subtle, not blatant, ways. The actual word in the Four-Part Mass seems relatively insignificant in the predominant major harmonies centred around B flat. It is not really until the phrase "et homo factus est" is reached that the sorrow inherent in the statement is conveyed through the device of hyperbole in the altus, and the suspension incorporated in the cadence (m 73-75).

The interpretation of this section in the Three-Part Mass is perhaps closer to one's expectations of a sixteenth-century Catholic composer. The words "Et incarnatus est" are set apart from the previous contrapuntal movement by a homophonic declamation. In addition, the significance of the text is expressed through the B flat centred harmonies, the introduction of E flats, foreign to the mode, and dissonance (m 53 ff). Of the three Masses, the setting of these words in the Five-Part is perhaps the most interesting. This is the only Mass in which Byrd

has reduced the voices at this point. Furthermore, the two tenors are heard in imitation at the unusual interval of a second. The predominance of mediant centred harmonies together with the additional E flats create a marked difference in mood. While the only suspensions occur at the cadence, dissonance is produced through the use of false relations. The concept which particularly sets this Mass apart from the others, as it interprets the Incarnation from another perspective, is Byrd's treatment of the phrase "et homo factus est." A beautifully moulded motive has been applied to the word 'factus' and is heard in imitation and repetition, pictorially describing the creative process implicit in the text (see music example 15).

It seems logical that when the text suggests concrete images Byrd responded accordingly, using musical rhetorical techniques. But what happened when he was faced with abstract or intangible ideas? Ignatius explained the solution to be used when meditating, "In meditations on subject matter that is not visible, ... the mental image will consist of imagining...." For example if the meditation is on sin, "the mental image will consist of imagining and considering my soul imprisoned in its corruptible body, and my entire being in this vale of tears as an exile among brute beasts."¹⁰

While it is not known whether Byrd was influenced by such advice, some of his compositional features suggest that he took a similar approach. One abstract concept which occurs frequently in the Mass, is the life everlasting. In all three works, Byrd has used devices at these references to create the impression of vitality. A notion of a dynamic spiritual life was presumably inspired by his imagination. Whether there was a direct connection or not it also reflects a particularly Jesuit attitude. In both the Three and Four-Part Masses the words "et vitam venturi" in the Credo have been set to short upward runs in imitation, incorporating crotchets (Three-Part m 155-161, Four-Part m 169-176). In the latter work the ascent is

extended in the tenor voice only, where the ambitus is also exceeded. As already mentioned earlier, the 'heaven-directed' activity is in fact a continuity of the impetus instigated in the related foregoing phrase "et expecto resurrectionem", and echoed in the earlier statement "Et ascendit in caelum". In the Five-Part Mass the understanding of the life everlasting appears to be the same, but is conveyed by different means. The motive used imitatively is both rhythmically and melodically erratic, incorporating ascending leaps at the opening which range in distance from a third, up to an octave (m 186-194). In some parts the end of the word 'venturi' has been set to a descending leap. In m 193 both the first tenor and the bassus fall an octave.

The concept of a vibrant spiritual life is similarly implied in all three Masses at the word 'vivificantem' in the Credo. In the Four-Part Mass the perception is amplified, as animation is generated from one voice to the next (see music example 16):

The image shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass) in a four-part setting. The text is: "san - ctum Do - mi - num, et vi - vi - fi - can - tem, et vi - vi - fi - ctum Do - mi - num, et vi - vi - fi - can - tem, qui". The score is written in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. The Soprano part starts with a high note, followed by a descending line. The Alto part starts lower and has a similar descending line. The Tenor part starts with a high note, followed by a descending line. The Bass part starts with a low note, followed by a descending line. The text is written below the staves, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes.

Musical Example 16 .

It is interesting that Byrd apparently linked this notion to the phrase which follows, "qui ex patre filio que procedit", since it has been selected for similar treatment. In the Four-Part Mass life is breathed into the text using dotted crotchets and quavers for the word 'procedit' (m 128 -130). A more complex interpretation is conveyed in the Five-Part Mass. In his latest work of this genre, Byrd appears to have understood the members of the Trinity to have had different functions. Only three voices sing the phrase, and each appears to have been set differently in order to communicate this idea. The imitation between the contratenor and first tenor dissolves as the word 'procedit' is approached. It is only one voice, the first tenor, which carries the life-giving movement evident in the other works. Furthermore, the bassus is set apart from the two upper voices. Although begun in imitation of the second tenor at the octave, the notes are augmented. By separating the parts in this manner, Byrd has represented each member of the Trinity by a different part, implying perhaps, that the life-giving force only emanates from one source (see music example 17).

There is one other place in the Mass where the notion of spirituality is represented by vibrant musical activity, and that is in the Benedictus at the words "qui venit". According to Byrd's compositional techniques, the vitality associated with everlasting life and the Trinity, was also connected with the coming of the Lord in the preparation for the miracle of the Mass (Four-Part m 49-52, Five-Part m 49-54).

From the examples given, it can be seen that though Byrd used rhetorical and word painting-techniques which were common to the music of his time, his use of them was woven into sustained musical structures of quite uncommon skill. Moreover, they imply both a meditative origin on the part of the composer, and an encouragement to contemplation of the text for the listener; such an objective is consistent with Jesuit ideals.

130

- can - tem, et vi - vi - fi - can - - - - - tem, qui

- mi - num, et vi - vi - fi - can - - - - - tem,

san - ctum Do - mi - num, et vi - vi - fi - can - - - - - tem,

135

ex pa - tre fi - li - o - que pro - ce - - - - - dit, pro -

qui ex pa - tre fi - li - o - que pro - ce - - - - - dit,

qui ex pa - tre fi - li - o -

Music Example 17.

The Significance of the Head Motives

Byrd's conscientious approach to composing liturgical music left nothing to chance. One of the techniques employed in the Masses, and noted by musicologists, is his use of head motives. This method which had previously been favoured by English composers,¹¹ and which dates from the Dunstable/Dufay period, was designed in order to link the Mass movements musically. If this was the purpose of head motives, why did Byrd deviate from the traditional formula? It seems unaccountable that he should bother to make use of it in only some of the movements when he was so meticulous about all other details. Similar material was used to begin only four movements of the Four and Five-Part Masses, while in the Three-Part work there appear to be two different systems. The Kyrie, Gloria and Credo in the latter Mass belong to one scheme, and the Benedictus and Agnus Dei belong to another. In all three works the Sanctus is unrelated.

Philip Brett has identified a correlation between the Sanctus of the Four-Part Mass and the same movement in John Taverner's *Meane Mass*.¹² Furthermore he has suggested that Byrd not only used the older composer's work as a model, but incorporated some of the ideas as a means of paying tribute to his musical heritage. If this was his intention why did Byrd choose to demonstrate his respect in only one movement, and that towards the end of the work, rather than use it as the unifying theme implicit in the notion of head motives? Why was the Sanctus singled out for such treatment, and the practice of differentiation begun in the Four-Part Mass continued (although differently) in the other two?

Consider the function of the Sanctus within the context of the Mass. It served as an introduction to the most solemn and important part of the Mass: the Canon of the Eucharist. It prepared the communicant for the mystery of transubstantiation, the very reason for the existence of such a celebration. After the

performance of the Sanctus, the act of consecration took place, and with it the ceremony of elevation. The Sanctus thus had a different function from the other movements, since it not only heralded the focal point of the Mass itself, but directed the believer to anticipate the concept of transubstantiation. This doctrinal point was at the heart of theological controversy at that time.

In his book of meditations, Puente articulated the attitude of a devout Catholic at this most significant moment: "Consider the great misteries that are conteyned in those words which our Lord did speake at such time as he consecrated the bread This is my body which is given for you. 1) Ponder first, that he doth not say. This is a figure, or a representation of my body, but; This is my body, reall, and true: therby to declare the reall presence of his most holy body, as also to give us most excellent proofes and arguments of his mercie and paternall providence towards us"(sic).¹³

It seems reasonable to assume that being aware of the different role of in the Sanctus, Byrd sought to reproduce this concept musically. Maybe Taverner's motive expressed an aspect of traditional English Catholicism which best conveyed the unique quality of the movement. Whatever the answer, Byrd left the immediate and obvious influence of Taverner behind in the later Masses but continued to set the Sanctus apart. The music at the opening of this movement has a celestial and ethereal quality about it in all three Masses. The technique of combining sustained notes with short crotchet runs, derived from Taverner and developed further in the later works, is particularly evocative of the insubstantial diffusion of incense.¹⁴ While incense was not used during the Sanctus, it could have been a relevant symbol for Byrd because of its role in the Mass and association with the presence of the Holy Spirit. Equally, the upward-lifting themes could symbolise aspiration towards heaven, the seat of God's holiness; both ideas are

combined in the psalm verse, "Let my prayer come up unto Thy presence as the incense."

The premise of a theological reasoning behind the unusual use of head motives is substantiated in the Three-Part Mass. The dual systems first link the Kyrie, Gloria and Credo in the Mass of the Catechumens, while the second unites the Benedictus and Agnus Dei of the communicants. These parts of the Mass occur after the celebration of transubstantiation, and anticipate the actual event of communion. This mode of thought is also evident in the Five-Part Mass. In theological and musical terms the promise of the sacrifice, symbolised by the Dorian features of the Kyrie head motive, is not fulfilled until after the Sanctus when it reappears in a slightly modified form in the Agnus Dei. The function of head motives in this particular Mass can also be interpreted in terms of the Spiritual Exercises. The purpose of the Ignatian Exercises was to provoke change. Thus the petition for such, alluded to in the distinct head motive of the Kyrie, is observed to have been fruitful only in the Agnus Dei after the spiritual nourishment associated with the Sanctus has occurred.

The Use of the Affections

One thing is obvious, the Spiritual Exercises were not a purely cerebral form of meditation, but an activity that also required the emotions. Father Ignatius Balsamo commented that, "It is meete then, that the meditation be not drie, and onely pure speculation, but affectuous and full of interior taste"(sic).¹⁵ It has already been noted that all techniques were applied with the intention of channelling the senses to the appropriate affection (emotion) for a correct relationship with God. Thus the intellect was required in the initial stages in order to understand the points of meditation, while later, the use of the emotion was encouraged to implant the meaning and evoke the correct response. The direction of

mediation was therefore, a movement from the understanding to the affection, from the brain to the heart, from earth to heaven.¹⁶ Ignatius gave explicit guidance in the first week of the Spiritual Exercises as to the correct application of the affections in the meditative process. "The second prelude is to ask God our Lord for what I want and desire. The request must be according to the subject matter. Therefore, if the contemplation is on the Resurrection I shall ask for joy with Christ rejoicing; if it is on the passion, I shall ask for pain, tears, and suffering with Christ suffering."¹⁷

Byrd not only appears to have demonstrated that his interpretation of the Mass text was consistent with those instructions, he also created a musical setting designed to elicit the correct affections in the listener. For example, where the subject for contemplation warrants the evocation of joy, Byrd appears to have followed the directions: "I will see in my mind's eye the contemplation that I am about to make and will strive to feel joy and gladness at the great joy and gladness of Christ our Lord."¹⁸

The most notable application of jubilation, apart from the resurrection and ascension passages which have already been discussed, occurs in the settings for the Osannas. While it can be said that composers in many eras composed joyful settings of the Osanna, it was in fact the main aesthetic of Baroque music to move (or arouse) the affections (or emotions) of the listeners. Perhaps Byrd was already expressing such principles. The methods of meditation and the purpose of Baroque music were not dissimilar. In the Four-Part Mass the dotted, falling/rising motive generating energy, begun at the preceding phrase "gloria tua", is carried into the first Osanna, where the vigour and excitement is amplified as the texture and complexity is increased. This may in fact be quite an original procedure, as the convention was often to separate the Osanna sharply from the preceding text. After the previous reduced section, the full complement of voices are incorporated in progressively more

intense movement including ascending crotchet runs and octave leaps in the tenor, while the tenor and bassus parts exceed their ambitus (see musical example 18):

35

- a. O - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in ex - cel - sis.

40

- sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in ex - cel - sis. sis, in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis. cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis, in ex - cel - sis. O - san - na in ex - cel - sis, O - san - na in ex - cel - sis.

Musical Example 18.

Repetition of a textual phrase is a challenge for any composer. Byrd's approach to the problem is interesting. The fact that he wrote different settings of the Osanna for each Mass, and the repetition within each work (apart from the Five-Part Mass in which the repetition is identical other than the reversal of tenor parts), suggests a renewed form of inspiration on each occasion. Furthermore, each setting appears to demonstrate that Byrd wrote from an emotional response to the text, ensuring that the music was "not drie, and onely pure speculation, but affectuous and full of interior taste"(sic). The original material is varied in the second Osanna of the Four-Part Mass, to create a similar affect to that initially produced, but is extended slightly.

The concept of energy has also been used in the Three-Part Mass as a means of expressing the affection of joy, but with a difference. As in the Four-Part Mass, the impetus is initiated in the words "gloria tua." The setting of these words has been condensed to create short, 'breathy', enthusiastic statements broken by rests, with the pulse being juxtaposed through the emphasis of the first syllable of Gloria. However, with the slight uneasiness created in the last statement by false relations, it is with a sense of relief that the Osanna, planted firmly in the F Ionian mode, is heard. The imitation initially begun by the tenor and bassus rapidly becomes more condensed and exuberant, as canon is introduced between the two outer parts (m 23-38). The second Osanna reiterates the rhythmic vitality already heard as the successive entries are made in an abbreviated statement.

The composition of the Osanna in the Five-Part Mass demonstrates another fresh approach to the task. In this work the contrapuntal treatment of the preceding words, "gloria tua", sets the Osanna itself in sharp relief. With the introduction of the full choir, the homophonic-type texture is dance-like in rhythm as the syncopated beat of the second tenor, and later the first tenor, are set in opposition to

the rest of the voices. The message is restrained in comparison to the other settings, but definitely arouses the appropriate sentiment in the listener (m 35-46).

Another place where Byrd's personal sense of gladness, (if not quite so jubilant an emotion), is communicated, is at the beginning of the Gloria. In each Mass the tendency for homophonic-like statements of praise is contrasted with the preceding Kyrie movements. The impetus of the affection is however generated by the rhythmic techniques employed. In the Four-Part Mass it is initially created through the antiphonal exchanges, and continued through the successive entries on the word "glorificamus". In addition, the interpolation of crotchets contributes to the effect, (m 7-15). The latter device is also applied at the same place in the Five-Part Mass, along with a dotted note figure for the word 'benedicimus,' and displaced entries at the phrase "Laudamus te." The impact of all five voices after only three in the previous section, together with the syncopation, produces the appropriate affection; one which presumably reflects the composer's personal response, beginning from an intellectual understanding of the text and ending with an awakening of the emotion (m 9-20).

Given that the purpose of the Catholic Mass was to demonstrate the significance of the Passion through the re-enactment of the sacrifice, it is to be expected that a dominant affection should be one of sorrow. It was also a predominant theme, (and thus sentiment), in the Spiritual Exercises, since it was only through penance and contrition that spiritual progress could be made. Ignatius stated that, "In the Passion the proper thing to ask for is grief with Christ suffering, a broken heart with Christ heartbroken, tears, and deep suffering because of the great suffering that Christ endured for me."¹⁹

It seems that Byrd may have adopted this attitude when setting the text of the Mass. Being set in the transposed G and D Aeolian modes, the Four and Five-

Part Masses particularly project a penitential mood, with each Kyrie introducing the appropriate affection. While the general character of the Masses is important, it is the detailed application of techniques to accent specific areas which suggests that Byrd could have contemplated the words according to the principles of Ignatian meditation. For example, the name of Jesus Christ which has already been discussed, was stressed as important, and illustrated with dissonance implying the inherent suffering. There are two distinct passages in the Mass settings which give particular expression to emotions of grief before the concluding, poignant Agnus Dei movements. In each of the Masses a break has been contrived to occur just prior to these sections to accentuate the change of affection, the positioning of which was extremely uncommon.²⁰

The first of these is the section "Domine Deus, Agnus Dei," which occurs in the Gloria. The reduction of parts at the outset in all three Masses immediately sets the tone of restraint and contrition. However, thereafter, apart from the use of imitation, the varied musical ideas demonstrate a form of renewed inspiration for each work (Four-Part, m 51 ff; Three-Part, m 43 ff; Five-Part, m 42 ff). The moulding of the melodic lines, and the application of dissonance differs from one to the other. In addition, the lower ambitus of the altus is selected to convey grief for the text, "Qui tollis Peccata mundi;" while the same device is introduced by the superius in the Three-Part Mass at the words, "suscipe deprecationem,"(m 61), and "nostram" (m 66). A technique employed for effect in the Five-Part Mass is the slower change of harmonies beginning at m 43, which contribute to the sense of melancholy. The music of the Three-Part Mass is particularly moving at the second statement of "miserere nobis,"(m 71-75). In this case the emotion has been created through the introduction of C sharp, and a cadential suspension (see musical example 19):

70

- des ad dex - te-ram pa - tris, mi - se-re - re

dex - te-ram pa-tris, ad dex - te-ram pa - tris, mi - se - re - re

Qui se - des ad dex - te-ram pa - tris,

75

no - bis, mi - se - re - re no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus

no - bis, mi - se - re - re no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus

mi - se - re - re no - bis. Quo - ni - am tu so - lus

Music Example 19.

The same words are musically elucidated by false relations in the Five-Part Mass at the first statement of "miserere nobis" (m 54-58); while the ascending motive heard in the repetition, is evocative of the plea implicit in the words, (m 70-77).

Whether or not Byrd was influenced by the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius each setting of this section demonstrates an attitude which reflects the principles of them and an interpretation based on the three powers of the soul according to each specific occasion: "Here it will be to ask for sorrow, affliction and confusion because the Lord is going to his passion on account of my sins."²¹

The second prominent expression of contrition occurs in the Credo, beginning at the phrase, "Qui propter nos homines." As in the first section, the device of voice reduction is used initially in all the works, although only temporarily in the Three-Part Mass. However, in this Mass the change of affection is not particularly pronounced until the statement "Et incarnatus est." It is here that the momentum is decreased, and a B flat centred harmony with additional E flats is introduced into the homophonic texture (m 53 ff). It is interesting to note that at the phrase "Crucifixus etiam pro nobis," the bassus is heard in a variation on the falling octave figure, later to become particularly associated not only with pathos in the Baroque era, but with death itself²² (see music example 20):

65

Cru - ci - fi - xus e - ti - am pro no - bis, sub

Musical Example 20.

A similar device was also used at this point in the Four-Part Mass. In this case it is sung by the tenor who, because of the reduced texture, is the lowest voice, (m 75-78). The Crucifixus of the Five-Part Mass is closer in approach to that of the Three-Part work through the particular methods applied to create the desired 'affect'. Apart from the techniques it shares with the other Masses, the Incarnation, Crucifixion and burial are musically linked through the addition of E flats strategically placed to emphasise these points of doctrine and their connection²³(m 67). Note that it is the phrase "etiam pro nobis," and not the expected "crucifixus," which is stressed by application of these accidentals. Throughout this section the dissonance is enhanced by the subtle interpolation of false relations (m 70-77). The penitential mood is maintained through the phrase "sub Pontio Pilato," (which has already been discussed), ending with accumulated dissonance foreshadowing the intensity of the Agnus Dei movements.

The Agnus Dei movements, especially in the Four and Five-Part Masses, are particularly relevant in terms of eliciting the appropriate affection for contrition. Because of their similarity of intent to the Spiritual Exercises, they will be dealt with in the following section which best demonstrates the affinity.

The Structure of the Masses

While there is of course no way of knowing whether Byrd was influenced by either the principles of rhetoric or the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, the structures of the Masses show a similarity to both. In each of Byrd's Masses, the Kyrie sections can be recognised as comparable to the preparatory prayer and preludes or exordium. He created a musical equivalent which prepares the listener for the tone of the ceremony which follows. The prevailing sonority and character of each Mass is understandably established in the Kyrie through the choice of mode and texture. Furthermore the amount of dissonance introduced in this movement is proportional to

that which occurs later, especially in terms of the Agnus Dei movements. The accumulation of dissonance particularly in the second Kyrie of the Four-Part Mass, distinguishes it among Byrd's settings. The brevity of this section in the Three-Part Mass is similarly characteristic of the work as a whole in its concise and economic manipulation of the material, while being the least elaborate and personal. In addition, the homophonic texture and subtle use of dissonance in the Three-Part Mass are precursive. The restrained atmosphere of the Five-Part Mass is similarly introduced in the Kyrie. It is in this movement that the foundation is laid for a less dramatic, but more sensitive, and yet intensive, interpretation of the text.

After preparation, according to the Ignatian Exercises, the next procedure involved the application and analysis of the points for meditation, or topic. Thus after the memory has "set forth the subject", the understanding takes over to analyse and investigate the subject matter. This is comparable to the conformation in which the matter is investigated and reinforced. It has already been observed that Byrd sought to illustrate and elucidate details of the Mass text using the techniques of musical rhetoric. In doing this he consciously or unconsciously complied with the instructions issued by Ignatius concerning the second stage of meditation, which stated that: "... my understanding is to be used to reason more in detail on the subject matter, and thereby move more deeply my affections through the use of the will."²⁴

Up to this point in the process, the intellect had dominated over the emotions; but as the foregoing directions testify, the final part of the exercises made particular use of the affections as did the rhetorical peroratio which was expected to be especially moving. The colloquy at the end of the meditations utilized the emotions aroused by the meditative process, in order to communicate directly with God. "The colloquy is made properly by speaking as one friend to another, or as a servant speaks to his master, now asking some favour, now accusing oneself for some

wrong deed, or again, making known his affairs to Him and seeking His advice concerning them."²⁵ It is a time of intense personal emotion and forms the climax of each exercise. All the details of the Spiritual Exercises had been specifically designed to create a cumulative structure which concluded with man's communion with God. This momentum is evident both in each individual exercise, and the overall progression of the four-week retreat. As a conclusion it was not only significant in terms of the Spiritual Exercises, but was an appropriate close for the Mass. The Agnus Dei was of course heard just prior to the receiving of Communion itself.

Of all the indications which suggest a correlation between the Spiritual Exercises and Byrd's settings of the Mass, there is none so positive as the relationship between the colloquy and the Agnus Dei movements. This section is undoubtedly the most expressive and personal in all three Masses, a most unusual phenomenon in contemporary terms.²⁶ The Masses of Palestrina, Lassus and Victoria all testify that the Agnus Dei was not meant to be set expressively at that time.²⁷ Furthermore, Byrd has taken an unusual step in terms of his own Mass settings by extending these movements slightly. The repetition of text is in excess of that required in each Mass, especially when compared to the Kyrie sections for example, which tend to be understated.

The Four-Part Mass is renowned for its accumulated suspensions, but the irony is that the 'agonising' dissonance is only heard for the text, "dona nobis pacem." This apparent paradox could be a subjective expression of the current state of English Catholicism. On the other hand it may have been a personal response to the meditational guidance that specified, "with the freedom of our will to draw forth sundry Affections ... conformable to that which the understanding hath meditated ... as are Hatred of our selves; Sorowe for our Sinnes; Confusion of our own misery ..." (sic).²⁸ It is quite possible that both suggestions contributed to the sense of

despair which emanates at the prayer for peace in this, Byrd's first setting of the Mass.

Whatever the reasons, the Agnus Dei movements in his two succeeding works appear almost insignificant in comparison. However, this is far from the case. Probably the most obvious difference in the Three-Part Mass is that the little dissonance there is has been applied to the beginning of the text, "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis." It is here also that E flats have been added for effect. Note that all but one of the suspensions resolve on to a minor harmony²⁹ (m 11, 20, 29). The reduced section for the second and third proclamations of the text is important, since it allows a greater impact when all voices combine for the final statement (m 30 ff). The pensive expression of "dona nobis pacem" conveys a wistful appeal for peace, with its more tightly woven contrapuntal texture, and G minor implications. The request is far from the torment of the Four-Part Mass, but is in keeping with the culmination of this concise, and relatively austere work.

Of all the works, the Agnus Dei in the Five-Part Mass is perhaps the most notable. The return of the original head motive implies a fulfillment of musical and possibly spiritual concepts, which is unique to this Mass. Moreover, the intensity of this movement is built by means other than dissonance, although it is not lacking. As in the other Masses, the Agnus Dei also begins with reduced voices, but in this case the texture has been manipulated to greater effect. As each successive appeal for mercy is made, starting progressively higher in the superius (apart from the second statement which begins on the same note), another voice is added, until all forces combine in homophonic style for the final plea (m 33 ff). Without waiting to complete the phrase, a fourth and unexpected statement is made as an urgent and heartfelt cry. Thus the change which is heard at the beginning of the "dona nobis pacem" section is 'affective' as it reflects the text in a polyphonic texture with subtle and strategic dissonance. This prayer for peace conveys the quality and

characteristics of a colloquy, as it culminates the meditative process apparently applied to the rest of the Mass text.

At this point it should be recalled that the structure of the Spiritual Exercises followed a progressive movement. From a state of indifference the exercitant proceeded to a state of compunction, and devotion to Christ; and then through reflection upon the mysteries came to acknowledge the necessity for a reformed life conducive to union with God. The structure of Byrd's Masses appear to show a correlation to such a process, with the conclusions especially incorporating the affection of compunction.

One point remains to be considered. If the setting of the Agnus Dei movements, particularly the "dona nobis pacem" section, was a form of colloquy why did Byrd respond so differently to the same text on different occasions? There is of course no means of knowing, and one can only surmise from the circumstantial evidence. If, as a committed Catholic, Byrd came into contact with the popular books of devotion, then procedures were available to him. For example, the vital method of meditation instigated by Ignatius did not lend itself to repetitive intellectual and emotional responses. The whole idea was to keep them alive, and therefore spiritually productive. Also, there is no reason to assume that individuals maintained a consistent spiritual life. Just as in the material life, they could experience favourable and unfavourable periods. There is another theory which suggests itself. If Byrd wrote the Four-Part Mass just prior to his move to Stondon Massey, and the Five-Part Mass (the last of the three) a few years later after having become established there, the comparison may be evidence of spiritual consolation. Consolation he gained by having made a definite choice to share with, and contribute to, a community of people with similar religious beliefs and aspirations.

NOTES

- ¹*The Spiritual Exercises, op. cit.* p.107
- ²See Chapter 6, Section ii
- ³For the purpose of analysis, *The Byrd Edition* Vol. 4 "The Masses" (London,1981) edited by P. Brett, has been used throughout.
- ⁴Cited in H. K. Andrews, *The Technique of Byrd's Vocal Polyphony* (London, 1966) p.275
- ⁵Father Francis Borgia, *The Practice of Christian Works* (1620) Englished by Thomas Everard. p.124
- ⁶Father Thomas de Villa-castin, *A Manuall of Devout Meditations, op.cit.* pp.128-129
- ⁷Luis de Puente, *Meditations upon the Mysteries of our Holie Faith* Vol.2 *op.cit.* p.446
- ⁸Thomas de Villa-castin, *op.cit.*
- ⁹J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op. cit.* p.202
- ¹⁰*The Spiritual Exercises, op. cit.* p.54
- ¹¹H.K. Andrews, *op. cit.* p.266
- ¹²Philip Brett, "Homage to Taverner in Byrd's masses" *Early Music* Vol.9 (1981) p.169 ff
- ¹³Luis de Puente, *op. cit.* p.91
- ¹⁴I would like to thank my Supervisor, Dr David Swale, for bringing this allegory to my attention.
- ¹⁵Father Ignatius Balsamo, *How To Pray and Meditate Well* (St. Omers, 1622) p.271 Translated out of the French into English by John Heigham.
- ¹⁶See Chapter 2 v
- ¹⁷*The Spiritual Exercises, op.cit.* p.54
- ¹⁸*Ibid* p.102
- ¹⁹*Ibid* p.93
- ²⁰J. Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd, op.cit.* p.195

- 21The third prelude of "The First Day and Contemplation" in the third week of *The Spiritual Exercises*, *op. cit.* p.91
- 22This device is probably best known in Dido's Lament (*Dido and Aeneas* by Purcell), and the Crucifixus in Bach's *B Minor Mass*.
- 23E flat incorporated to give a Phrygian 'flavour', is used very sparingly in the Five-Part Mass. The significance of this special effect is evident through the selection of only two words: "omnia" and "baptisma," in the Credo
- 24*The Spiritual Exercises*, *op. cit.* p.55
- 25*Ibid.* p.56
- 26J. Kerman, *op. cit.* p.215
- 27J. Kerman, "Byrd's Settings of the Ordinary of the Mass" *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol. 32 No. 3 (1979) p.439
- 28Luis de Puente, *Meditations upon the Mysteries of our Holie Faith*, *op. cit.* Vol.1. pp.3-4
- 29The suspension at m 13 resolves to a major harmony.
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CONCLUSION

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Elizabethan history is relatively well-known, but a great deal that has been written about the period is hostile towards the Catholics. This view is not surprising given the complexities, the frequently tense political situations, and the contemporary official view. Greed and ambition lurked behind much of the religious controversy, having little to do with faith. In addition there were many others for whom theological differences were an expression of a pedantic, if not fanatic, mentality. Yet on all sides of the religious controversy there were people of great sincerity. Being a Catholic was not in itself a guarantee of sincerity, any more than it guaranteed homogeneity. William Byrd, Robert Southwell, Henry Garnet, Sir Thomas Tresham, Thomas More II, and others may not have been representative or typical of the English Catholic community, but they were influential. Furthermore, because of the calibre and integrity of some of these people, the stance they adopted was not merely valid in their own eyes, but had an impact on the history and culture of England.

Because the lack of evidence is inconclusive and circumstantial, it is not possible to arrive at any definite conclusion as to how Byrd came to terms with serving two masters, the Church of England and the Catholic Church. However, a number of facts have been established. Firstly, it is known that the Jesuit mission sought to encourage and inspire English Catholics to a deeper personal spiritual life and a greater commitment to their faith. Secondly, it has been ascertained that Byrd had a close association with well-known Catholic families, some of whom gave refuge to Jesuits and were strongly influenced by them. Thirdly, it has been established that Byrd met Jesuit missionaries in the company of his Catholic associates on at least two occasions. Fourthly, it has been established that Byrd made a decisive public demonstration of his Catholic sympathies when he moved to Essex in 1593. And, finally, it has been proved that shortly afterwards he began

composing Catholic liturgical music, and that the three Masses were an expression of his love for that central act of Catholic worship.

On the other hand, several aspects of the debate remain unknown. Why, for example, while making a public demonstration of his commitment to Catholicism did Byrd choose to publish a collection of English works, *Psalms, Songs and Sonnets* (1611), and dedicate it to a non-Catholic patron? As far as he was concerned it was: "like to be my last Travailes in this kind, and your Lord-ship my last Patron. . ." (sic). Remember that in 1605 he also alluded to the first volume of the *Gradualia* (1605) as his swan song. Another enigmatic point is the extent of Byrd's relationship with Jesuits. Although several writers have assumed that a friendship existed between Henry Garnet and Byrd, only two meetings with any of the Jesuit missionaries have been recorded. Furthermore, since it is not known whether or not he ever undertook the Spiritual Exercises or availed himself of the books of devotion, it cannot be proved whether they influenced the composition of his Masses.

The inspiration for William Byrd's Masses is, like the inspiration for Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises, steeped in that same ancient Catholic spirituality which seeks the path to deep communion with God through acts of meditation and devotion. It may never be possible to demonstrate a direct connection between the Spiritual Exercises and the Masses, but it should not be surprising to find that the Masses are at times suggestive of the Spiritual Exercises. Even if Byrd never undertook the Spiritual Exercises, both the Exercises and his Masses spring from the same ultimate source.

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