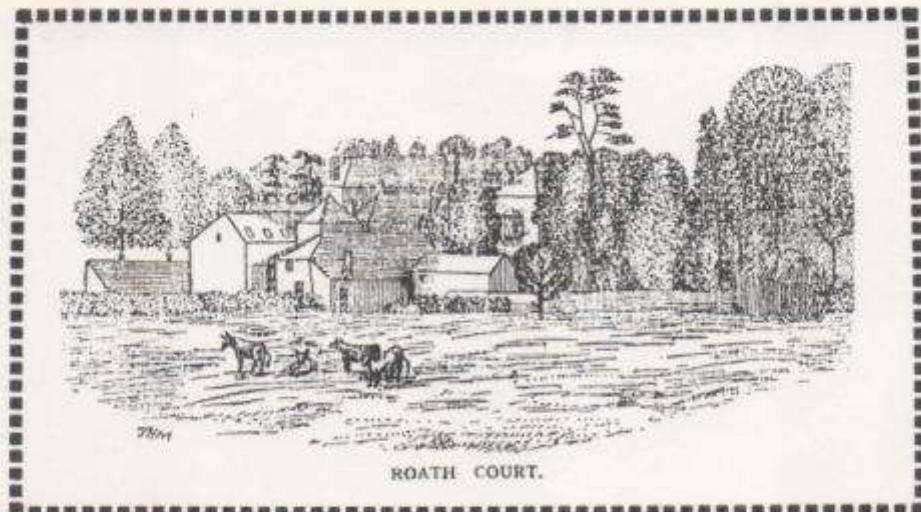


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## FOREWORD

After the long interval since the last Newsletter (Vol.6 No.1 - 1st. quarter 1990) I am pleased to celebrate resumption of publication with the reproduction of the text of a lecture delivered to the Society on 5 October 1989 by the Revd. John R Guy, Ph.D., A.R.His.S. On THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN ROATH.

Dr Guy has been living and working in the West of England for many years but he likes to maintain his old connections with Roath and has accordingly taken a keen interest in the Roath Local History Society since it was first established.

I am extremely grateful to him for allowing publication of this most significant and substantial contribution to an important aspect of local religious history.

Alec Keir  
Editor  
April 1991

## ROATH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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## THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN ROATH

The catholic movement in the church of England in the nineteenth century was both a revival and a reformation. It was a revival in the sense that it was an attempt to reawaken within the church a consciousness of its sacramental nature, namely, that it was a divine institution founded by Christ, with its bishops successors of the apostles rather than officers or servants of the state. It was also a reformation, or rather, a re-formation; a return to, re-emphasis upon, and restoration of, the fundamental teachings of the church, as the scholarly leaders of the movement in the nineteenth century understood and interpreted them. The principles of the movement were first enunciated and published in a series of **Tracts for the Times**, ninety in all, which flowed from the pens of a group of scholars, mainly Oxford dons, in the years between 1833 and 1841. Those who embraced the views expressed in the tracts became known as **Tractarians**; the movement of which they became a part the **Oxford Movement**.

It was not, in the precise sense of the word, a popular movement. It was not, at least in its early years, adapted to the understanding, taste or means of the ordinary 'man in the pew'. Largely concerned as it was with theology and liturgical theory, it was formative of the thinking of the students and academics who were not at that time in positions of authority in the church, and of a relatively small number of parish clergy who were open to its influence. It is in fact difficult to guess what lasting impact, if any, the Oxford Movement would have had upon the church of England, had it not been for the fact that its ideas and principles were given outward expression by the Ecclesiological Society. This had grown out of a Cambridge undergraduate club, the Camden Society, founded in 1839 for the study and restoration of England's heritage of medieval churches. It was the work in the parishes of the Cambridge Camdens which provided the laboratories where the theological principles and liturgical theories of the Tractarians could be tested in practice.

Both the Oxford Tractarians and the Cambridge Camdens were backward-looking. This is not to suggest that they were obscurantist (though some were). They were, rather, inspired by a similar vision to that of the artists, architects, poets and writers who made up in Europe what is known as the **Romantic Movement**, with its idealisation of the Middle Ages, and a mystical view of nature. The point was succinctly made by Kenneth Clark in his seminal work, **The Gothic Revival**, first published sixty years ago. The late eighteenth century had seen the beginnings of a move away from the reason and order of the classical towards the picturesque, to scenes adapted "to raise the imagination to sublime enthusiasm, and to soften the heart to poetic melancholy".

Perhaps no one encapsulated the mood and the mind of this burgeoning romanticism better than the poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott, whose writings, particularly the **Waverley Novels**, were to spread what Clark called 'gothic sentiment' to a broad spectrum of readers. By stimulating and nourishing the imagination, Scott arguably laid some at least of the foundations for the catholic revival. Indeed, John Henry Newman, in many ways the most important of the early leaders of the Oxford Movement, went so far as to say that Scott was the man who made the catholic revival possible. As Clark pointed out, chronology is against a wholesale acceptance of this rather sweeping generalisation, but there can be little doubt that Scott's work, shot through as it is with a 'sense of the gothic', embedded in medieval history, informed by antiquarianism, and with a scholarly delight

in the past and a vivid and colourful representation of characters and events, cultivated the tastes of his readers.

The romanticism which is inextricably woven through both the Oxford and Cambridge movements of the middle years of the nineteenth century became explicit in the second stage of the catholic revival they engendered, namely its **ritualist** phase - though as I hope to be able to demonstrate this is both an inadequate and misleading understanding of it. It was far more than a prettification of worship, an emphasis upon the shadow of ceremonial at the expense of the substance of faith. It was not, as the title of this paper is intended to indicate, "just bells and smells".

Here in south-east Wales the inauguration and progress of the catholic revival coincided with the development and expansion of Cardiff. The initial impetus for this had been given by the construction of the Glamorganshire Canal in 1793-94, but thereafter, as John Hilling has reminded us, "the initiative for progress and expansion was with the Butes", who by the middle of the nineteenth century owned some 22,000 acres of land in Cardiff and the valleys. Hilling feels the Bute role in the phenomenal development of Cardiff was crucial. "At the end of the nineteenth century the physical shape and appearance of the town was largely the result of works carried out for and on behalf of the Butes, and by the geographical location of their property". The expansion of Cardiff, and the vast increase in its largely proletarian population did indeed have much to do with the entrepreneurial policies of the Butes, and of the second marquess in particular, although he himself was only an infrequent visitor to his south Wales estates.

Yet in that important book **Cardiff and the Valleys. Architecture and Townscape**, first published in 1973, I think that Hilling is at fault in assigning the Bute family too

significant a place in the provision of what, for the sake of simplicity, I will call 'Anglican' places of worship to meet the perceived challenge, if not the expressed needs, of the rapidly growing population. When the second marquess died prematurely in 1848, Cardiff was still contained within the boundaries of four medieval parishes, St Mary's and St John's in the town itself, Roath to the east, and Llandaff to the west.

The second Lord Bute was, there can be little doubt, a sincere churchman, who had been greatly influenced by the Evangelical revival in the English church, which had been prominent in his youth. Nevertheless in Cardiff Lord Bute's direct ecclesiastical influence was limited, and that late in his life, to the parishes of St Mary's and Roath. At Llandaff, where the cathedral served also as the parish church, the two vicars-choral appointed by the canons discharged the cure of souls. At St John's, Cardiff the vicarage was in the gift of the dean and chapter of Gloucester. Even so, it would be just as wrong to undervalue as it would be to exaggerate, Bute's contribution to Cardiff's church history.

By 1840 St Mary's parish, although housing perhaps one third of the town's population, had long been without a church, and the living was held in plurality with St John's. Here Bute provided £1000, and the site for a new church in Bute Street, whereon the Liverpool architect John Foster was to raise in 1843 the quasi-romanesque building that survives to this day. Rather more importantly the marquess also purchased the patronage of the living from the Gloucester chapter. When, very soon after the consecration of the new church, the vicar John Webb resigned (probably by arrangement,

as he continued as vicar of St John's), Bute was able to install his own man, the influential Evangelical, William Leigh Morgan. Morgan was already vicar of Roath, which parish he continued to hold in plurality. Clearly the marquess intended to guide the church life of the developing town in the way of his own evangelical sympathies. Had he not died suddenly at the age of 55, the pattern of church growth here and concomitant doctrinal and liturgical emphases might have been very different.

Bute left an infant heir, scarce a year old, whose direct personal influence over Cardiff's Anglican church life was to be a negative one, for shortly after attaining his majority, having been previously sympathetic to the principles of the Oxford Movement, he became a Roman Catholic. Thus the church of St Margaret here in Roath, consecrated in July 1870, was in reality the last flowering of the ideals of his long-dead father, as mediated through the second marquess's trustees, and the views of its evangelical vicar, Canon Leigh Morgan. St Margaret's, built to designs prepared by the Llandaff architect John Prichard, being an aisleless, cruciform structure, was quite unsuited for any elaborate liturgical performance, and remains so to this day. This is not at all surprising, as in the late 1860s, when the plans for the new church were drawn up, no such developments were envisaged.

The third marquess's secession to Rome in fact marked the end of one era, and the beginning of another. His change of religious allegiance meant that Bute patronage of and support for Anglican church 'extension' in Cardiff abruptly ceased. Nowhere was this more apparent than at St Margaret's, where work on the central tower was discontinued, the projected spire never built, and the intended peal of bells not installed. The retirement of Leigh Morgan shortly afterwards, in 1872, from his livings of Roath and St Mary's brought an equally abrupt end to the evangelical dream of the second marquess. As a Roman Catholic, the third Lord Bute could not present to his livings in person. This was a responsibility which devolved upon his trustees, and these, as might be expected, were men broadly sympathetic to the principles of the Catholic revival, which therefore now made its, rather late, appearance on the scene. It was the Bute Trustees who brought Griffith Arthur Jones to St Mary's and Frederick William Puller to Roath.

It is necessary initially to say something of the men who were responsible for the course of the catholic revival in Roath. These were particularly the clergy who served at the outset in the undivided parish, and then, in the last quarter of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth, in the subdivisions of it. It has to be borne in mind that the revival at this date was a predominantly clerical movement, a theological and liturgical outlook shared by a growing number of parish priests, and introduced by them into their parishes with the authority of their office and with the encouragement, or at least the tacit approval, of their patrons. At a time when the old Vestry meetings were largely concerned with what today we would consider to be 'secular' affairs, and before the advent of effective parochial church councils, the incumbent had a great deal of scope for individual initiative. A determined man could quickly stamp both his authority and his outlook upon a parish.

In one such as Roath, with its novel, syncretic proletarian population, with no developed sense of corporate identity in these early years, the clergy of the parish were able, with some success, though not entirely without opposition, to adopt that course of action. Although they were able to gain the support, the regard, and in some measure the affection of many in their congregations, and by their

evident social concern that of large numbers of the 'non-churched' as well, we must not lose sight of the fact that the catholic revival in Roath was not a spontaneous or indigenous phenomenon. It was a paternalistic, and to a degree a patrician, import. Just as evangelicalism had been imposed 'from above' by Canon Leigh Morgan with the support of Lord Bute, so anglo-catholicism was imposed 'from above'. That having been said, in such a novel and amorphous setting as the Roath of the 1870s and 1880s it could hardly have been otherwise.

A second general point that needs to be made about the influence of the clergy is this. Their largely unfettered authority was combined with a developed and educated sense of culture and taste, and this was to leave an indelible imprint upon their parishes, in the church buildings they created and enriched, upon the art, artefacts, and music which were the adjuncts to the worship offered within them. It also percolated through to the formation and regulation of the social life of the various church communities, as we shall see. Let us, however, first of all, look at the personalities and impact of some of the clergy themselves.

### **The Roath Clergy.**

Frederick William Puller was to serve as vicar of Roath for eight years. In 1872, when he came to the parish, he was very young - only 29 years of age. He came from a privileged background (his father was MP for Hertfordshire and he himself was an old Etonian); and he was English. Unlike Jones at St Mary's, a Welsh-speaking Welshman, (for some years after Jones' arrival there was a regular monthly service in the vernacular held in St Mary's) Puller seems to have had no prior connection with the principality. After Eton he had studied at Trinity College, Cambridge (graduating with first class honours) and at Cuddesdon, the theological college near Oxford which is a fruit of the catholic revival and played a signal part in the dissemination of its ideals. Here he had come under the powerful influence of the principal (1863-1873) Edward King, subsequently bishop of Lincoln, an outstanding teacher and spiritual director. Before coming to Roath Puller had been a curate in Walworth. When he left Cardiff for Oxford in 1880, his successor as vicar of the undivided parish, Charles Alan Smythies, was one of his own curates, a man he had chosen himself and who had worked with him for eight years. Smythies was also relatively young - 36, from a privileged background (his maternal grandfather was Admiral Sir Eaton Travers) and English. Like Puller he was a product of Trinity, Cambridge and Cuddesdon. He was thus another proud to call himself a "disciple and friend" of Edward King. Smythies' biographer drew attention to King's emphasis upon self-discipline, self-sacrifice and holiness, an ordered life of prayer, work, worship and relaxation, and these priorities can be seen to recur again and again in the church life of Roath and that of its clergy.

Both Puller and Smythies also had this in common; some cultural breadth of vision. Puller was proficient in French, was "a brilliant conversationalist, his mind...stored with a very wide range of clear and exact knowledge and...an endless fund of good stories". Whilst a curate in London he had, in 1870-71, made a lengthy visit to the United States of America. Smythies in his turn maintained a lifelong interest in natural history, and on graduation in 1867 had spent a year travelling on the continent. (He was also a crack shot and a capable sailor of small boats. Both of these talents were to prove invaluable when he became Bishop of Zanzibar in 1883).

Puller's other curates were from similar backgrounds. Wentworth Watson, curate from 1873 and later vicar of St Thomas's, Oxford, retired from the parochial ministry in 1900 when he inherited Rockingham Castle in Northamptonshire, the 'stately home' which featured a few years ago in the BBC TV serial *By the Sword Divided*. The others were another friend of Edward King's, this time from childhood, James Edward le Strange Dawson, with whom he maintained an intimate and sometimes playful correspondence throughout his life. Dawson had been a student of King's at Christ Church, Oxford, had come to Roath in 1877, and was put in charge of the St Saviour's district in 1878. He became the first vicar of that parish in 1893. The others were Francis Edward Nugee, curate from 1879-1887 and then vicar of Sneinton, Nottingham; and Frederick John Beck, curate from 1879, who was to succeed Smythies as vicar, and remain for forty years. Cast in the same mould were the two priests who became respectively the first vicars of St German's and St Martin's. Robert Ives came to St German's in 1884 on the recommendation of Bishop Smythies. Before ordination he had been a master at St Mark's College, Chelsea, and when he came to Roath was domestic chaplain to the earl of Devon. Evan Alexander Sutherland, priest-in-charge of St Martin's at the age of 28 in 1901 and vicar from 1903-1905 was described by a contemporary as "in every sense a gentleman". Many of these clergy were indeed "gentlemen", often with independent means, which was almost a prerequisite for service in the Roath parishes at this date, where the stipends were small if not nominal.

It is time now to turn to a consideration of the church buildings which are the lasting memorial of these early leaders of the catholic revival in Roath.

### **The church buildings.**

The pattern of church extension in Roath is incomprehensible unless it is seen for what it was, a vigorous response to a missionary situation. It should not, therefore, be expected that great architecture would be part of the initial phase of that response. It was appreciated that some, at least, of the seeds broadcast might fall upon stony ground, some of the first "mission stations" fail, or become redundant. So it proved in practice. As in so many other ways, Puller laid the foundations. He established three missions within the parish; St German's in 1874 (replacing a converted barn, the Splott

Chapel, opened by his predecessor in 1857), St Clement's in 1875, and St Columba's, Adamsdown Place, in 1877. All three of these churches were associated with schools. In fact, St Clement's and St Columba's were 'school-chapels', dual-purpose buildings. The third, St German's, was demonstrably a temporary expedient, being housed in a second-hand prefabricated, corrugated iron building, and its school (later the Metal Street Schools) in the old Splott Chapel.

Here we can see the thrust and the priority of Puller's work. Christian worship was to go hand-in-hand with the Christian education of the young; and the churches had to prove themselves by outgrowing their originally cheap and functional premises. It is an illuminating commentary upon Puller's work in Roath that when he went out to South Africa in 1883, one of his first initiatives was the building of just such a school-chapel in the mission district of Capetown which was in his charge. It evolved into St Philip's church and, it is worth noting, St Columba's Children's Home.

Little now survives of Puller's Roath foundations. The school-chapel of St Columba closed after some fifty years. It had been built at the expense of Puller's curate, the Revd Wentworth Watson. The altar is now the high altar of St Saviour's church in Splott Road, where the south aisle chapel, added in 1895, continues the dedication. St Saviour's also houses a statue of St Columba, the work in 1982 of Anton Wagner.

St Clement's had a shorter life. After twelve years, in 1887, it was replaced by St Anne's church on an adjacent site. The original altar can still be seen in St Anne's. Its accompanying reredos, in Penarth alabaster, was that placed by Prichard behind the high altar in St Margaret's church, and moved to St Anne's in 1926. The 'iron' St German's remained for many years as a hall. It had been extended in 1876, and in 1884 that extension was dismantled and re-erected in Splott Road as the nucleus of the first St Saviour's church. The prefabricated and portable nature of these buildings meant that they had useful lives, often appearing under different names and in different places, over many years. The old Splott Chapel, known as Christ Church, was replaced in 1875 by the Metal Street Schools and passed out of history, though when I was the last curate of St Francis' Church in 1968 we still possessed the bell, and our High Altar reredos had been constructed from the chancel screen of the iron St German's. I wonder what happened to the bell ?

The permanent churches of Roath, which are among the old parish's greatest treasures, belong to the 'second generation' of the catholic revival in Cardiff, to the ministries of Beck, Ives and Sutherland. Little would, however, have been possible without the co-operation and support of generous patrons and benefactors. With Lord Bute a Roman Catholic, the mantle of patron fell upon the shoulders of one of Roath's leading landowners, Lord Tredegar. It was Lord Tredegar who gave the land upon which was built the permanent St German's and St Saviour's Churches, the Metal Street Schools and St German's Clergy House. He was also a substantial benefactor to the Ruby Street Mission and its chapel of St Lawrence, opened in 1908. Tredegar's generosity and public support - he laid the foundation stones of both St German's and St Saviour's - over thirty years made an important contribution to the success of the catholic revival in Roath. Of the three major churches built, only St Martin's was on land given by another benefactor, the Mackintosh of Mackintosh.

Inevitably, when considering the buildings, it is upon these three that we should concentrate. However it would be wrong not to mention St Agnes', Bertram Street, opened as a mission in 1884 and provided with a permanent home in 1886; and St Francis' Church, built at the expense of its first curate from 1889-1895, Hugh Smith Nicholson. (Nicholson subsequently joined Puller as a member of the Society of St John the Evangelist, and devoted his life to work in India.) Both churches were sturdy, functional but architecturally undistinguished buildings, at least when viewed from the exterior, though the same was not true of their furniture and fittings.

In a somewhat different category is St Anne's church, the permanent chancel and temporary nave of which was consecrated in September 1887. The north aisle was added five years later. The architect was Arthur Reeve of London, and his design was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1886. Unhappily the church was never completed as Reeve intended. His design included north and south aisles, a nave with a soaring wooden vault, a clerestory above the arcades, and a western narthex. Reeve

made the most of a restricted site. The **Roath Parish Magazine** for August 1927 contained a description and illustration of the church as the architect intended it.

The architect whose name is perhaps most readily associated with the Roath churches is George Frederick Bodley. Born in 1827, Bodley was the first pupil (as well as the brother-in-law) of the prolific church builder and restorer, Gilbert Scott. His style, however, evolved away from that of Scott, and it is the verdict of one of the leading scholars of the Victorian period that he "brought Gothic to a state of refinement which it had probably never reached before". By the 1870s his reputation was already firmly established. He had built All Saints, Cambridge, and, what is often regarded as his masterpiece, St John's, Tue Brook. His connection with Roath began in 1873 when Puller invited him to prepare plans for the new Metal Street Schools, an admirable short history of which was published in 1973 to mark the centenary.

By the time Bodley was commissioned to design the permanent St German's church a decade later, he was at the height of his powers, the architect of, among others the fine church of the Holy Angels, Hoar Cross. It has been said of his work at this time that it was a true reflection of late nineteenth century anglo-catholicism; with its scholarship and refinement as different from the popular religion of the medieval centuries as it was possible to be. St German's is generally acknowledged as a magnificent church, skilfully placed upon a site where it was hemmed in by narrow streets. Bodley's characteristic lofty chancel and high aisles are well exemplified here, as well as the uncluttered and open vista between nave and chancel.

It is interesting to compare St German's with St Saviour's, built only a few years later. Here Bodley had a corner site on the broad thoroughfare of Splott Road, and the resulting church has none of the soaring quality of its neighbour. Instead he made a deft use of perspective within, to give the church an air of being longer than it actually is. The effect has been largely destroyed recently, since the nave is now truncated by its western end being turned into accommodation to replace an overlarge parish hall.

Both St German's and St Saviour's exemplify another of Bodley's distinguishing features. He was the first nineteenth century architect who really understood how to colour a church. Unlike many of his contemporaries, who tended to leave colouring to other people, so that otherwise quite distinguished churches were spoiled by haphazard decoration and eclectic furnishing, Bodley insisted that the decoration was an integral part of the overall design. His artistic ideals were those of the pre-Raphaelites - he was a friend of William Morris, Burne-Jones and Rossetti among others. Much of Bodley's superb decoration, particularly of the ceilings, survives in the Roath churches, though over the years it has shown a tendency to fade. His personal concern for detail is also revealed in the font which he installed in St German's in 1898, by the organ-cases in both churches, and by his close supervision of the design for the stained glass installed in 1900 in the great east window of St German's. I shall say more about the stained glass of the Roath churches shortly.

St Martin's church stands apart from these two churches. It was built a decade later, between 1899 and 1901, as a memorial to Bishop Smythies, who had died in 1894 at the age of fifty, and, as he was buried at sea, had no other. The architect of St Martin's, F.R.Kempson, (the Llandaff Diocesan Architect) like Bodley at St German's, made skilful use of an awkward site. The church, built in brick,

has an engaging lack of symmetry. There was room for a spacious nave and chancel, and also, as the present vicarage in Strathnairn Street had not then been built, for a wide south aisle. The church's close proximity to Albany Road, however, prevented the erection of a similar north aisle, which is restricted to little more than a processional way. Kempson did make use of all the ground available for both the north porch and the north chancel aisle, now the chapel of the Holy Cross, but only by taking the building line right out to the pavement. The resulting problems caused by noise and detritus have got worse as the years have passed.

Where Kempson failed, and Bodley succeeded, was with his interior. The elaborate high altar reredos and great mural which filled the east wall were not part of his original decor, but the heavy decorated tracery and green glass of the windows, coupled with the richly painted ceiling, made the interior extremely dark. Here the blitz did St Martin's a great service, as the simplified tracery, plain glass, and light ceiling have transformed the church, enabling Kempson's not undistinguished design to be better appreciated. A little of the original glass and tracery can still be seen at the west end of the building.

### **Furnishings and Fittings**

Let us turn now from the buildings themselves and look for a while at some of the furnishings and fittings which adorn them. It is in these respects that the churches of the catholic revival in Roath have continued since their foundation to be patrons of the visual arts, as alongside the work of earlier generations of craftsmen can be found the sometimes exciting work of contemporary artists.

A common, but often overlooked feature of the churches is the stained glass windows. Most date from the very end of the last century, and the early years of this. Perhaps the earliest now surviving is that in St Margaret's church, dating from 1897, and depicting the archangel Raphael - the angel of healing. Inspired by a painting of Perugino in the National Gallery, it was erected as a memorial to Dr K.McLaren.

As I said earlier, the architect Bodley closely supervised the fittings of his churches. His influence over the window glass in both St German's and St Saviour's is very apparent. Bodley worked closely with C.E.Kempe, who a recent biographer dubbed the Master of Glass, and Kempe's style was closely empathetic to the architect's vision. It was Kempe who designed and made the windows in the Lady Chapel at St German's. Towards the end of his long life (he died in 1907) Bodley also worked with the partnership of Burlison and Grylls, and this resulted in windows in both churches. In 1898 the vicar of St Saviour's, Le Strange Dawson, paid for a window depicting St Margaret and St German in the south aisle of the church. In 1900 and in 1905 Burlison and Grylls installed windows in St German's, the glass in Bodley's impressive triple lancet at the east end, and that depicting St German and his disciple St Genevieve in the north aisle.

Kempson, too, designed one window for his St Martin's church. It was, in fact, to be the only stained glass window in the church prior to the blitz, which destroyed it. Erected in 1903 in the Holy Cross chapel, in memory of Harry North, curate of St Martin's from 1889 until his death in 1847, it was a conventional depiction of the crucifixion, with Mary and John. When the church was restored in the 1950s, a new memorial window to North was installed, the work of Hugh Easton, with a simple

design of the cross, and a representation of the consecrated host at its heart. Easton was also responsible for the new east window in the church, portraying the risen and ascended Christ in glory. The design is subtle, being set in plain glass, and as the window is high in the east wall, the sky outside forms the backdrop. The movement of clouds and the changing colour of the sky behind the glowing figure thus presents the worshipper who is facing it with a kaleidoscopic effect. Another window worth mentioning is also of comparatively recent date. The east window of St Margaret's, depicting the Ascension, was installed in 1951, the work of the Whitefriars studio of James Powell.

A characteristic feature of parishes influenced by the catholic revival was the proliferation of "guilds", organisations of a devotional nature, centring upon a simple rule of life for the members, and a short service or guild office, held regularly in church. Such organisations were subject to strict lines of demarcation of age and sex. By 1882, for example, St German's had its guilds of St Mary and St Stephen. By 1888 there were guilds of St German (for men), St Stephen (young men and boys), the Blessed Virgin Mary (young women and girls), St John (teachers) and All Souls (to pray for the sick, dying and departed). At St Martin's in 1902 we find guilds of St Margaret (for women), the Blessed Virgin Mary (iris), St Lawrence (boys) and St Nicholas (young children). Parishes also had branches, or wards, of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, which was, like the English Church Union, a national organisation. Mention of these now forgotten groups is made here because many commissioned their own elaborate banners, often very fine pieces of needlework, which were carried by their representatives in processions held both inside and outside of the churches. The guilds may have gone, but at least some of the banners remain, though now often rolled up and stored away. Their intricate needlework, costly material and interesting designs are part of our heritage of the visual arts from this period, and need to be appreciated.

The same is true of many of the vestments and altar frontals which date from this period, some of which still survive. The white festal frontal for the high altar at St Saviour's is now a century old. It was worked by the sister of the first vicar. Another prominent feature of the Roath churches was, and in many cases still is, the reredos behind the altar. These works of art often were not part of the original design. That in St German's, for example, which so well fits Bodley's conception, was not installed until 1922, fifteen years after the architect's death, as a memorial to the first vicar, Robert Ives. It was designed by Cecil Hare, a former partner of Bodley's. It is a triptych (the wings were added in 1926) and consists of a central panel with recessed and canopied niches, continuing in the doors on either side. There are figures of Isaiah, David, John the Baptist, John the Divine, Paul, David of Wales and German, grouped about a seated figure of the Majestas.

The two reredos in St Martin's, now both destroyed, dated from about the same time. That in the south aisle was a triptych painted by a Belgian war refugee. The central panel was a representation of the Annunciation, and those on either side the figures of Jeremiah and Isaiah. On the wall behind was a painted frieze of angels, and below the triptych six portraits of the heavenly bodies. The high altar reredos was installed as a memorial to members of the Brocket Grover family who fell in the Great War. Here the central panel was a representation of the crucifixion over another of the Last Supper, flanked by Old Testament sacrificial scenes. The east wall behind was covered in mural paintings depicting saints David, Winifred and Edward the King on the north side of the altar, and saints Martin, George and Cyprian on the south. 'the whole decorative scheme was undoubtedly the

most elaborate in Cardiff, but it survived for little more than twenty years, being destroyed in the bombing of 1941.

The reredos in St Margaret's church dates from 1926, and was installed as a memorial to Canon Beck. It is an important work by the distinguished architect and church furnisher, Sir Ninian Comper, and is based upon ideas suggested by elaborate carving Comper found in Seville and Dijon. The central figure, in Derbyshire alabaster, is of the Risen Christ. The figure is flanked by the twelve apostles, six on either side, painted and gilded by a pupil of both Comper's and Bodley, Bernard Smith. Each apostle holds in his hand one of the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed, and each also bears his own traditional attribute - Peter the keys, James a pilgrim's staff, and so on. One notable feature is that the central figure of Christ is of a beardless youth. Comper's expressed intention here was to show Christ in all his beauty and strength, triumphant over death, and 'strong to save'.

St Saviour's church now contains two notable modern works. The new high altar reredos, painted by the Cardiff artist Tony Goble, and commissioned for the centenary of the parish in 1988, is intended to show the life-giving and sustaining nature of God. In the Lady Chapel are aluminium panels by Frank Roper, continuing a theme he explored at Llandaff Cathedral, wild flowers whose Welsh names are associated with Mary; here St John's Wort, Briar Rose, Buttercup and Lily. Roper has, of course, made other notable contributions to the art of the Roath churches, particularly his Stations of the Cross in both St Martin's and St Saviour's, and his Calvary at St German's.

Finally I want to turn to one aspect of the catholic revival which requires much more attention than it has hitherto received, namely, the musical life of the churches.

### **Music.**

It is difficult today for us to appreciate the growth and vigour of the musical life of the churches in the latter part of the nineteenth century. That this was possible was due in no small measure to the music publishers, Novello and Company. The repeal of various taxes on paper and advertisements between 1853 and 1861 enabled this firm in particular, under the management of Alfred Novello and Henry Littleton, to undertake the publication of cheap scores of oratorios, and the large-scale printing of church services and anthems. In 1861 Novello also brought out the first edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, which, with its emphasis upon the liturgical year, its hymns for holy days, festivals and for the celebration of the sacraments, was itself a fruit of the catholic revival. For the first time a wide range of sacred anthems, of church services and hymns were readily and cheaply available for use in parish churches. There was to be a symbiotic relationship between the catholic revival and the development of church music.

The epitome of this was the relationship between Benjamin Webb, rector of St Andrew's, Wells Street, in London and his organist, Sir Joseph Barnby. Webb had been one of the leaders of the Ecclesiological Society, and with Barnby he developed a type of music far removed from the austerity of the early Tractarians. Initially the emphasis had been upon plainsong, particularly at St German's, where under Mr W. Stothert between 1874 and 1890 the tradition had flourished, and at St Martin's, where it was in regular use until 1902. In the 1880s, however, it is the music of Gounod, Barnby, George Mursell Garrett and Sir John Stainer that predominated.

Large, surpliced choirs adorned the chancels, and the church services, in particular the Holy Communion, became 'fully choral'. Barnby was a disciple of Charles Gounod, the French composer, and this influence is very apparent in the movement Webb and Barnby fostered. For example at Christmas 1881, the Choral Eucharist at St Margaret's (held at 7.30 a.m.) was sung to a setting by Barnby, and that at St Columba's to Woodward in A. Herbert Hall Woodward was a priest, and precentor of Worcester Cathedral, whose church music was rather pedestrian but within the compass of a reasonable choir. The music of Gounod himself, adapted for the liturgy of the Church of England, was also performed. At Christmas 1887 his anthem **O sing to God**, (the words by the Revd Benjamin Webb) was sung at Evensong in St German's, as were his cantatas **Bethlehem** and **Nazareth** - both dismissed by one modern authority as "saccharine confections". At Easter 1888 the principal celebration of the Eucharist at St German's was sung to Gounod's **Messe Solemnelle**.

Garrett, in the opinion of a contemporary analyst of Victorian church music, plumbbed the depths. His work was unadventurous, repetitious and banal - but it was technically easy to sing, and this was no insignificant consideration. The same was true of Woodward in A, used in the school-chapel of St Columba. It was a unison setting, and it only cost 6d a copy. (Gounod's Nazareth was even cheaper - 2d.) This music admirably suited the rather exotic transalpine ceremonial that was now beginning to accompany the liturgy, in contrast with the restraint that had characterised the offering of worship under Puller. It also accorded with the mood of the time, as the church choirs did not confine themselves to anthems and settings of the services. At Christmas 1881 St Margaret's choir had performed part of the Christmas music from Handel's Messiah (one of the works made readily available by Novello's) and in January 1882 gave a performance of Sir William Sterndale Bennett's May Queen, with tickets priced between 1/- and 3/-. The May Queen had been published in 1858, and Sterndale Bennett was one of the most distinguished English composers of the Romantic school.

This somewhat sentimental phase was relatively short lived. The 1890s saw a reaction to all this. In 1890 itself the Easter Vestry of St German's passed a resolution saying that "it would be desirable except at choral celebrations at Great Festivals that music of less elaborate nature should be adopted in order that the congregation might be able to join in the services". The last years of the century saw the appearance in the repertoire of the choirs of the works of Charles Villiers Stanford, Henry Thomas Smart and Richard Terry. Stanford made a great contribution to the renaissance of English church music in the late 19th century - his work is still deservedly popular - and his B Flat setting of the Evensong canticles was in use on festal occasions in even so small a church as St Agnes' by 1896. Another setting for the canticles, Smart in F, was in use at St Francis' church, a tribute to both the resources and competence of the choir there, as it is a moderately difficult work, which cathedral choirs were not ashamed to perform. By contrast the Short Mass in C, also used in St Francis', by Richard Terry, a distinguished Roman Catholic composer of these years, was easy to sing, easy on the ear - and with more than a touch of 'Gilbert and Sullivan'.

Much more research needs to be done on the church music of Roath under the catholic revival, but the outline seems to be clear. There were church choirs of some size (that at St Martin's in 1902 when Illtyd David was choirmaster comprised ten basses, six tenors, one alto and twenty-one boys - 38 in all), whose regular 'fare' was acceptable if rather pedestrian, but who were not afraid to tackle

works of 'cathedral' standard on festivals and special occasions. The works were also contemporary in every sense. They were all of recent date, mainly by living composers, and mirrored contemporary tastes. Today's repertoire is probably nowhere near as ambitious or adventurous.

This music was directed by men of some ability. Mr Higgins, choirmaster at St German's from 1893-1900 and again from 1910-1920, who built up a large choir at the church, had been trained as a chorister at Canterbury Cathedral. Theodore Aylward, at St German's between 1900 and 1910, had worked as an organist at both Llandaff and Chichester Cathedrals. Some were also composers in their own right. Mr W.Scott, organist of St Margaret's in the early 1880s, had written a Benedictus and Agnus Dei to supplement Barnby's setting of the communion office. Across Cardiff, at St Catherine's in Canton, the organist William Hodson, was producing settings for Mattins, Evensong, the Communion and anthems which were printed and sold by Novello's, works which have been adjudged competent at the least, and with some spark of originality and fluency.

The music was also greatly assisted by the fact that several of the Roath churches possessed organs of quality. That in St Margaret's was the oldest, built in 1871 for the new church by Bevington's. At St German's, the organ by William Hill was installed in 1885, the gift of the Revd Francis Nugee; at St Saviour's the instrument was provided by an anonymous donor in memory of H.O.Wakeman, the historian and tutor at Keble College, Oxford, who had himself been a benefactor of the church. It was built by Wordsworth of Leeds. At St Francis, thanks to the generosity of the Revd Montague Noel, formerly vicar of St Barnabas', Oxford who retired to Roath, an organ was installed which came from Magdalene College, Oxford in 1900. It is now in the parish of Abercanaid. By contrast, St Martin's had several false starts. The original one-manual organ was sold in 1903 to Coedkernew church (it is still there) and replaced by an instrument built by the Roath firm of Gill. This was a disaster, and it was removed in 1907, the parish magazine commenting acidly, we are "unable to record any feelings of regret at its departure". Phipps of Oxford, who had in 1905 installed an instrument in St Cyprian's (now in Glyntaff), built a new two-manual organ which served without criticism until it was destroyed in the blitz.

The Roath of the catholic revival was not then, "just bells and smells". In the church buildings that still survive as a precious architectural heritage, in the encouragement and patronage of the visual arts which was a characteristic of the movement, and happily still remains so, in the spirit of experiment and adventure which characterised its public worship and accompanying music, the catholic revival has left an indelible mark upon the cultural and religious life of the area. The vision and drive of men of the calibre of Puller, Smythies, Beck, Ives, Sutherland, Dawson and Watson among the clergy, and a large number of committed and generous lay patrons and benefactors should not be forgotten. But neither should the skill and artistry, the devotion and application of those who gave that vision a concrete reality.

Although the concern of this paper is with the ancient parish of Roath, it would be a mistake not to set the developments here within the somewhat wider context of central and eastern Cardiff. Comparisons can be illuminating, and it is therefore worthwhile to glance, albeit briefly, at the adjoining parish of St John the Baptist.

Although the role of Griffith Arthur Jones and the parish of St Mary's in the Catholic Revival is well known, and has been touched on earlier, the contribution of the parish of St John's has been hitherto underestimated. In fact the story here can be seen to strikingly parallel that in Roath itself.

After the separation of St Mary's parish under Leigh Morgan, John Webb, vicar of St John's since 1822, continued as incumbent until 1864. Both he and his successor, Daniel Howell (1864-1875) were unsympathetic to Tractarianism - indeed, under Howell the parish magazine, presumably closely reflecting the vicar's views, maintained a distinctly protestant and occasionally stridently anti-ritualist position. Howell left the parish in 1875, and the arrival of his successor saw - as had Puller's at Roath three years earlier - an immediate change of emphasis and tone. Charles James Thompson was a graduate of Hertford College, Oxford, who had also studied theology at King's College, London. Ordained in 1862, he had served several curacies in England before coming to the Llandaff diocese as Inspector of Schools in 1871. Like this neighbour he was therefore relatively young (in his 30s), an Englishman, and strongly committed to the cause of Christian education. He was also, like Puller, a disciple of the Tractarians.

From his two predecessors Thompson inherited a parish with five places of worship - the ancient church of St John the Baptist, the church of St Andrew (consecrated 1863), and missions at Blackweir, Crockherbtown (1865) and in the "Tredegarville School Chapel". Like Puller, Thompson was to build upon this foundation. The Tredegarville School Chapel was replaced in 1878 by an iron church, with accommodation for 500 and dedicated to St James. The Blackweir Mission, which had hitherto no permanent home (services had been held from time to time by Lay Readers in the Barracks), was housed in the new church of St Alban the Martyr (June, 1883). New missions were established in Woodville Road (1879) and on the corner of Merthyr & Hirwaun Streets (1888 - later, 1894, replaced by St Monica's). The close parallel with Puller's work in the neighbouring parish of Roath is obvious: the use of temporary iron churches, which in some cases (St James', St Teilo's) led to the building of impressive, permanent structures, the close association of church and school (St James', St Monica's) and the formation of new parishes out of the old (St Andrew & St Teilo, separated in 1884). It must be said, of course, that such developments were by no means confined to Cardiff and Roath, nor were they solely characteristic of the Catholic Revival. There are plentiful examples elsewhere.

It is in the building, enriching and reordering of the churches in his parish that Thompson's sympathy with the Catholic Revival is perhaps most notably revealed. Between 1881 and 1894 Thompson directed a systematic restoration of St John's, fully in accord with the ecclesiological principles of the Cambridge Camden Society. The Camdens "wanted to clear the chancels of pews, have a proper sanctuary with the altar raised on steps and with a proper reredos, a clear view of the altar from the nave with the pulpit and reading pew placed well to the side of the chancel opening, and the font placed at the west end. Later they advocated the introduction of lecterns, choir stalls in the chancel with robed choristers, lighted candles and frontals on the altar, screens, side chapels, organs removed from the west end gallery to an organ chamber off the chancel, sedilia and piscinae, credence tables, representational stained glass, in fact a return, according to their own interpretations, to what English churches might have looked like in the fourteenth century..." If Thompson's work at St John's is set in the context of this summary of Nigel Yates', in his valuable

Historical Association pamphlet, **The Oxford Movement and Anglican Ritualism**, then Thompson's Catholic Revival credentials are fully revealed.

He began with a complete re-ordering of the chancel in 1881. A new altar-table was provided, raised upon steps, in a sanctuary floored with encaustic tiles. In 1886 the reredos was removed (revealing the earlier 17th century arrangement, an east wall painted with cherubs and bunches of vines, with the Ten Commandments above, on either side of the east window), and the chancel entirely remodelled by the architect Prichard. The new corbels supporting the ceiling are most revealing. The six depict not only St Dyfrig and St Augustine, and the Cardiff Marian martyr Rawlins White - which might have been expected - but also William Laud, Charles I's archbishop of Canterbury who was revered by many of the Tractarians, and two of the men with whom the nineteenth century Revival was synonymous, John Keble (1792-1866), and Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882). It was Keble's 1833 Oxford Assize sermon which is usually regarded as inaugurating the 'Oxford Movement', and Pusey who, after the secession to Rome of John Henry Newman in 1845, became, to all intents and purposes, the spiritual guide and mentor of its subsequent development. There can be no doubt that C.J.Thompson shared Pusey's theology and ideals. In 1882 he had preached a sermon in St John's on the loss sustained by the Church of England in Pusey's death, and in 1886, when he came to re-hallow the chancel, the Bishop of Llandaff noted its Tractarian ethos in his address. Thompson clearly intended the new chancel at St John's to be Cardiff's memorial to Keble and Pusey's work.

Thompson's other restoration work at St John's also echoes Yates' list. The old reading desk was removed in 1883 and replaced by a brass eagle lectern. The choristers were robed in 1886 (those at St James' had been since 1879), and an altar dossal and cross introduced in 1884. In the same year the organ was removed, from the west gallery and placed in the chancel. From 1890 there was a steady provision of 'representational' stained glass, and in 1889, with the rebuilding of the nave, north and south aisles, a second altar was introduced for weekday services in the south aisle.

As in Roath, leading artists were employed to enrich the church; stained glass by Bowles of High Holborn, by W.F.Dixon, who had worked with Clayton & Bell, and by Philip Westlake. Westlake also painted the frescoes in the Cardiff Castle chapel, representing scenes from the Passion and resurrection appearances of Jesus, as a memorial to the 2nd Marquess of Bute, and in 1884 painted the "Adoration of the Shepherds" as a reredos for St Mary's. A new organ was built by perhaps the leading figure in that field, Henry Willis, in 1894, and, in 1891 a new reredos was commissioned from a native of Cardiff William Goscombe John (later Sir William). A relatively early work of this sculptor, it was dedicated on All Saints' Day 1892, having taken fifteen months to complete. It has as its theme one central to the Catholic Revival, "the genesis and history of the sacramental idea". The principal figure is the Christ as Melchisedech, with Abraham and Isaac, Aaron and Peter. In terms of the Anglo-Catholicism of the late 19th century, the symbolism is direct and unequivocal.

What he did at St John's, Thompson repeated in the new St James' church, work on which began in 1891, and was completed for consecration on 15th June 1894. The architect E.M.Bruce Vaughan, whose other work is normally judged insipid, provided here one of Cardiff's most distinguished churches, inspired by those "common in Brittany and Normandy". As at St John's, the focus of the interior is upon the altar, in an artistically richly decorated chancel. The pulpit was designed with

five recesses, to receive statues of great preachers. Those chosen were St Paul and St John Chrysostom, the Reformation bishop Hugh Latimer, and - rather more surprisingly - the fiery Savonarola and the recently departed H.P.Liddon (1829-1890), Canon of St Paul's, and one of the leaders, and most uncompromising communicators, of the second generation of the Catholic Revival. Once again, through the medium of art, C.J.Thompson made plain his sympathies.

In Roath under Puller, Smythies, Beck and the clergy at St German's, St Saviour's and St Martin's, the Catholic Revival, as we have seen, was characterised by a quickening of church life, an increasing frequency of services, with an emphasis upon the eucharist, in the formation of parish guilds, and a rich variety of music. Once again, all of these developments are paralleled in the neighbouring parish of St John's.

In the year of his arrival (1875) Thompson first held a "Harvest Festival" (in September) - an observance, it is generally accepted, introduced into church life by the Tractarian priest-poet Robert Stephen Hawker of Morwenstow in Cornwall. In 1876 Thompson established the "Three Hours' Devotional Service" (an idea inspired by the Jesuits) from 12 noon to 3.00 p.m. on Good Friday, and, more remarkably, a "Service with Adult Baptisms" at 7.00 p.m. on Easter Eve. He thus restored to Cardiff, perhaps for the first time since the Reformation, a form of the ancient Easter Vigil. By 1879 Holy week had become a central and solemn observance at St John's, with daily celebrations of the eucharist from Monday-Thursday, as well as the "Three Hours" and Easter Vigil. In the same year, Thompson restored the observance of the Patronal Festival on 24th June, again with a celebration of the eucharist, (There were to be 256 communicants at this service - at 7.00 a.m. - in 1882), and by this date a weekly celebration had been introduced.

In 1882 Thompson inaugurated the Parochial Guild of St John the Baptist, "to deepen the spiritual life of the members", who had to be communicants. He also insisted that the new church of St Alban the Martyr in Blackweir should be open daily, for the purpose of private prayer and meditation. However, as in Roath, there were also more socially oriented groups, including a Cricket Club, Bellringers' Association, and Drum & Fife Band. The music of the public worship of the church was given careful attention. One of Thompson's first acts in January 1876 had been to introduce the Tractarian-inspired Hymns Ancient & Modern to the services, and with the appointment in 1889 of George Henry Cole, FRCO, as organist at St John's, coming as he did from St Mary's, the music of the parish church came into line with that in Roath. In 1905, for example, St John's Choir, augmented "by a few ladies' voices" performed extracts from the Passion Music of J.S.Bach on Good Friday, and on the Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week in 1923, "The Solitudes of the Passion", words by the Revd E.A.Welsh and music by Dr Albert Ham of Toronto.

St James' church, too, had a strong choral tradition, even before the building of the permanent church in 1894. (Its choir, as I have noted, was robed as early as 1879). Thereafter the richness and variety mirrors that in Roath. At Christmas 1904 (when there were 500 communicants at St James'), the eucharist was sung to Eyre in EF Flat, with a Te Deum (West in G) and anthem "There were shepherds" by Nicholl. Evensong was sung to Clare in D. In 1905 the choir gave the first performance in Cardiff of Maunder's oratorio "Olivet to Calvary".

Enough has been said to show that the Roath phenomenon was not isolated in Cardiff. It was closely paralleled by developments in both neighbouring ancient parishes, St Mary's and St John's, where during the long incumbencies of Griffith Arthur Jones and Charles James Thompson, the Catholic Revival also took root and bore fruit. It is interesting that both men chose to remain in Cardiff, although there was the prospect of higher preferment. Thompson was in fact offered a colonial bishopric, and refused, and in 1882-83 Jones was considered for the bishopric of Bangor, though in the event an offer was not made. Indeed, the length of the ministries of Beck at St Margaret's (1883-1919), Ives at St German's (1884-1917), Dawson at St Saviour's (1888-1902), Jones at St Mary's (1872-1903) and Thompson at St John's (1875-1901, when he left to become Preacher at Gray's Inn) in architecture, art, worship and music indelibly stamped the characteristics of the Catholic Revival on so much of the church life of Cardiff.

JOHN R.GUY  
1989/90

As this paper was originally a lecture, it is not equipped with the usual scholarly framework of footnotes and references. Instead, for those interested in following up lines of enquiry, I have listed here the principal sources from which the information has been drawn.

Pre-eminently, there are the surviving Parish Magazines, particularly of St John's, St Andrew's, St Mary's, and the Roath churches. Many of these can be consulted at the Cardiff Central Library, and form an immensely valuable corpus of material, much still awaiting proper study and analysis, which throws a flood of Light onto Cardiff's church life from the mid-19th to mid-20th century.

I have also made use of published histories of several of the churches, notably St Margaret's, St German's and St Francis', along with my own notes, accumulated during the years that I lived in Roath, and (1968-70) when I was curate of St Saviour's.

Readers of this paper may also find the following of use ;

1. John C.Read, **The Church in Our City** (Cardiff, 1954), which gives useful "potted" histories of Cardiff's Anglican churches. This can be supplemented by my own **Churches of Cardiff, published as a series of twenty newspaper articles** in the South Wales Echo between April and September, 1954, and my 'The Church in Cardiff' in volume 2 of Stewart Williams' **The Cardiff Book** (Barry, 1974), pages 154-171.
2. Nigel Yates, **The Oxford Movement and Anglican Ritualism**, (Historical Association, General Series No.1U5, London 1983) is a succinct and easily digested introduction to the subject of the Catholic Revival in the Anglican Church in the 19th century. He also provides a very useful short bibliography.
3. Peter G.Cobb, **The Oxford Movement in 19th century Bristol**, (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association Pamphlet No.68, Bristol, 1988) charts the development of the Movement in a city which had many links with Cardiff, and is worth reading for comparison.

None of the Roath clergy, with the exception of Smythies (1899), has yet been the subject of a full biography.

I am particularly indebted to the Revd Canon Richard Fenwick, Precentor of Guildford Cathedral and a church musician thoroughly acquainted with Cardiff's church life, for his valuable comments upon the choral music performed by the Roath church choirs during the period covered by this paper.



Charles Alan Smythies, Vicar of Roath 1880-1883



Frederick William Puller (front centre) Vicar of Roath 1872-1880. Smythies is on his right. Other curates include Beck, Nugee & Wentworth Watson.

(reproduced from the front cover of Volume 7 of The Journal of Ecclesiastical History by kind permission of the joint editor, the Rev. Dr. John R. Guy.)



Robert James Ives



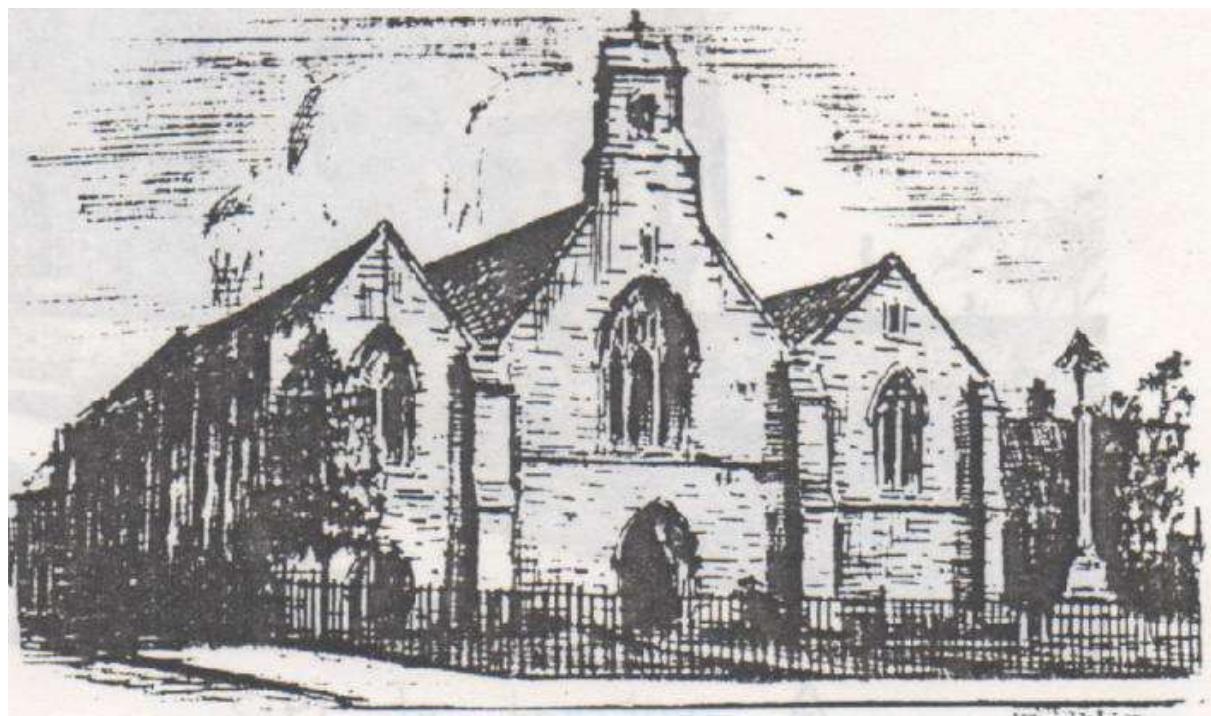
Interior of St Martin's Church



Exterior of St German's church



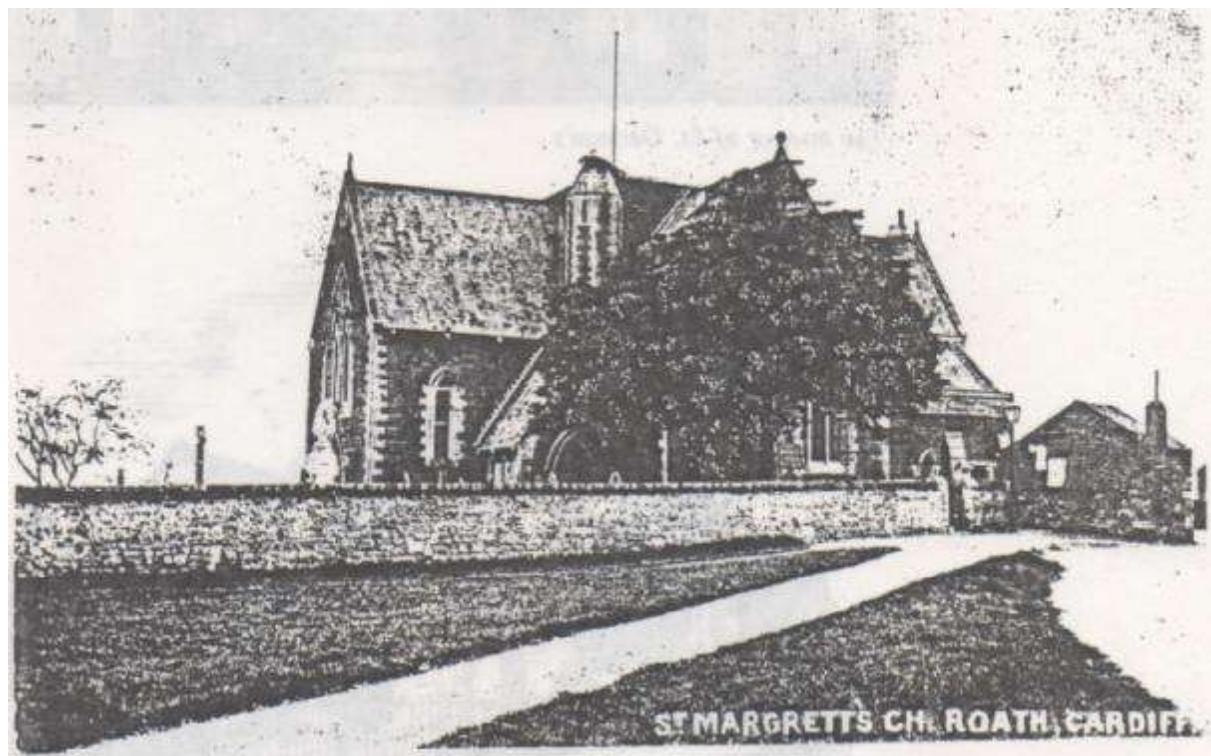
St German's church interior



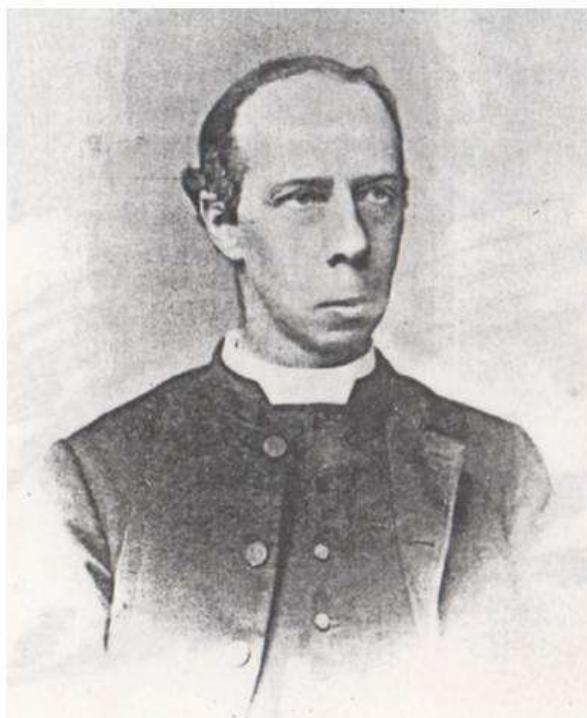
St Saviour's church, Splott Road



St John's church, Cardiff



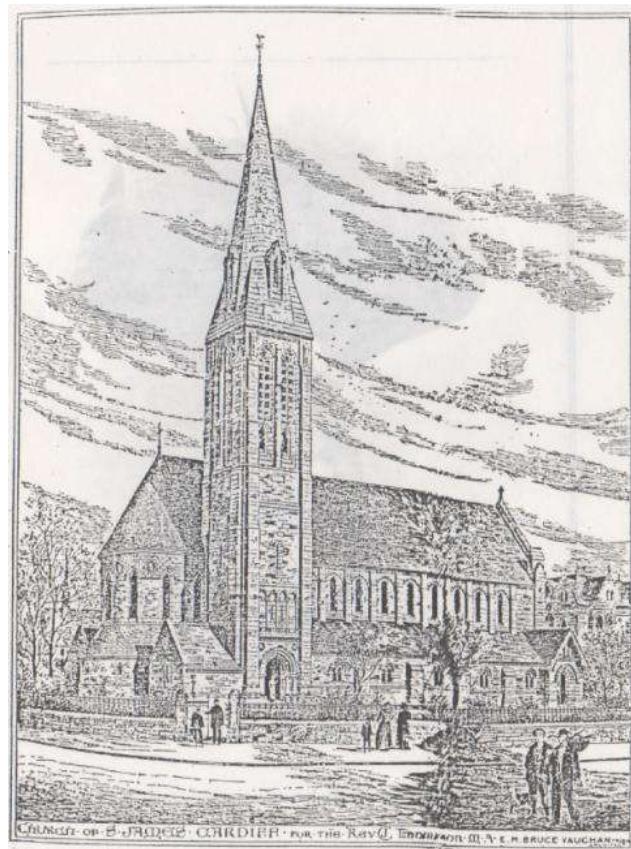
St Margaret's, a postcard of 1912



Rev. F J Back M A.



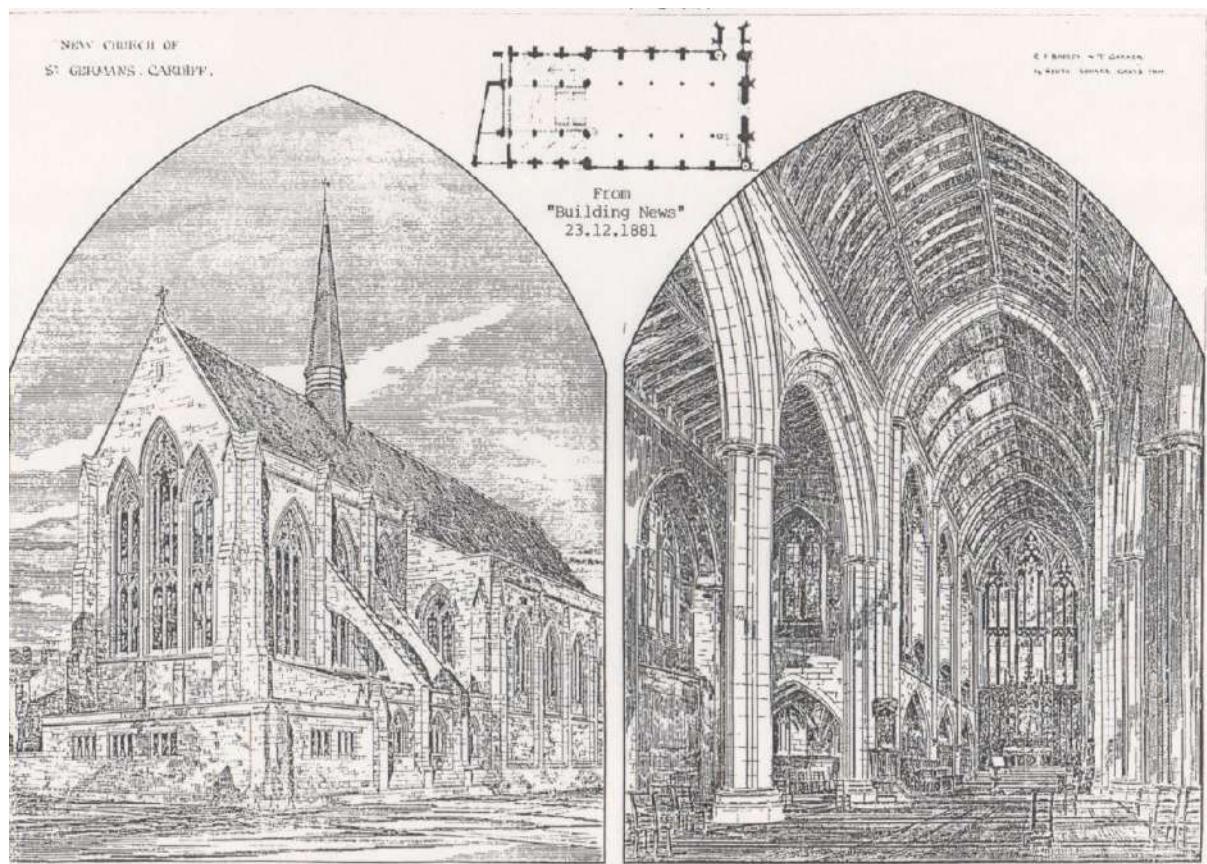
Rev. Cannon Chas. Jas. Thompson D D.



Proposed new church of St James, Cardiff



At Anne's church



St German's church