

THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTION OF BISHOP CHARLES HENRY DAVIS, OSB (1815-1854) TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

by

Graeme Pender, ADipMus, BEd (SecMus) (Melb), BTheol (MCD), GradDipTheol
(MCD), MTheol (MCD)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Theology

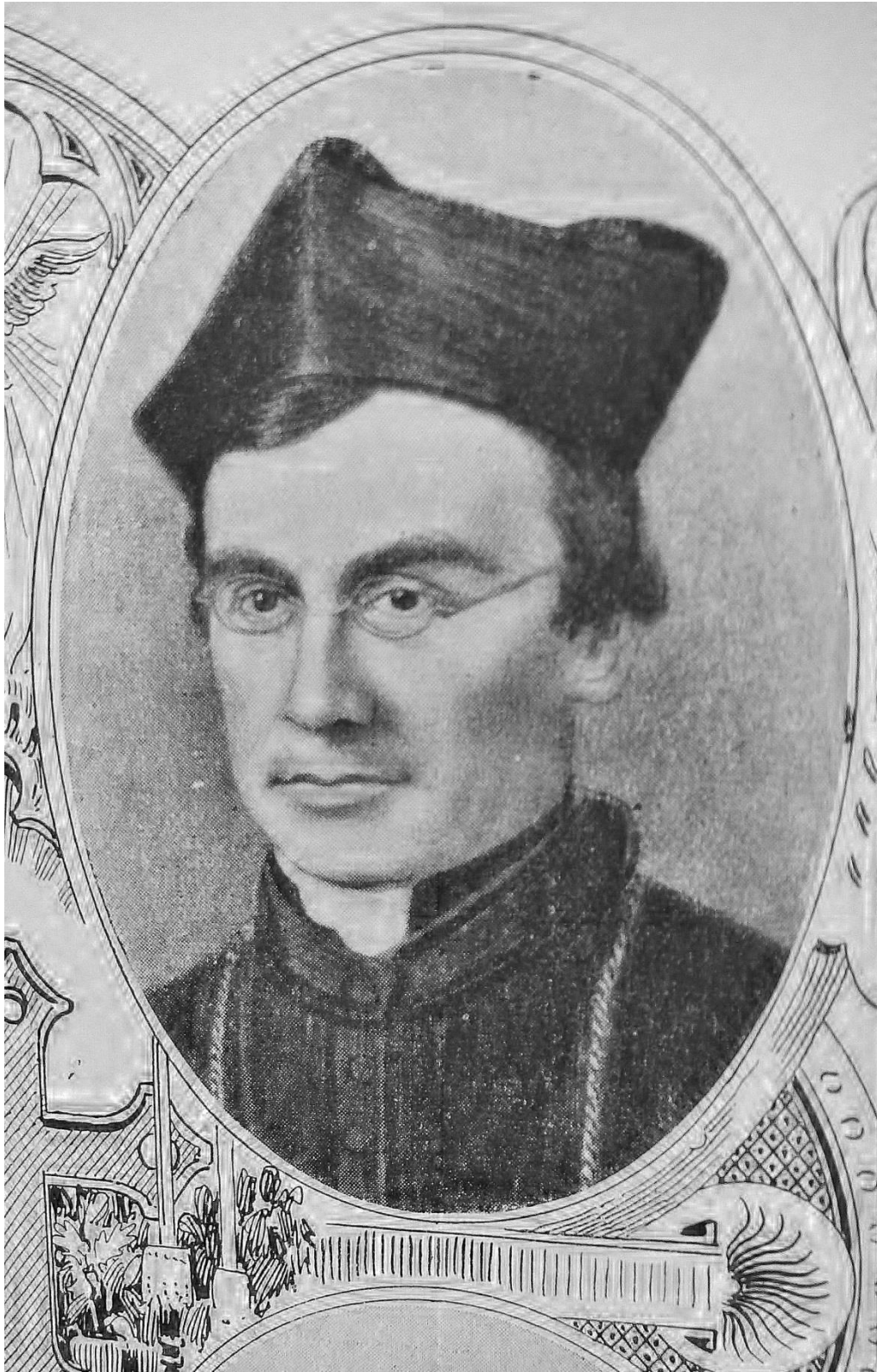
University of Divinity, Melbourne

May, 2016

This thesis is dedicated to my loving wife Lorinda and daughter Charlotte.

“Listen, my son, to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is advice from a father who loves you; welcome it, and faithfully put it into practice.”

- Prologue to the Rule of St Benedict -



Bishop Charles Henry Davis, OSB (1815-1854) from Moran, P. F. *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, (Sydney: The Oceanic Publishing Company, 1896).

Abstract

This thesis examines the life and ministry of Bishop Charles Henry Davis, OSB (1815-1854). It includes his childhood in Wales, his schooling at St. Gregory's in Bath, England, and his subsequent training and ordination as a Benedictine priest at Downside Abbey, Bath. The study then moves to an analysis of his appointment as Coadjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding (1794 – 1877) in Sydney and titular Bishop of Maitland until his premature death in 1854.

The thesis especially concentrates on Davis' significant contribution to the early Roman Catholic Church in Sydney from 1848-1854. Apart from a handful of articles written since 1902, and passing reference to him in general histories, no research of any significance has been conducted on Davis. Histories of this period have focused on Archbishop Polding' episcopacy whilst seemingly overlooking the valuable work accomplished by Davis, particularly during Polding's lengthy periods of absence from Sydney. The evidence suggests that Davis became the driving force, if only temporarily, who held together Polding's 'Benedictine Dream,'¹ owing to his sound judgement and pastoral capacity, particularly at the monastery.

¹ The term 'Benedictine Dream' was made popular by Australian historian Patrick O'Farrell and refers to the establishment of a Benedictine monastery at St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney; the opportunity for a Benedictine education for both men and women; and the hope that the diocese would become largely staffed by Benedictines.

Contents

Chapter 1	
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2	
Charles Davis: Early Life.....	13
Chapter 3	
Charles Davis: Education at Downside	42
Chapter 4	
Charles Davis: Musical Contribution to the Early Australian Catholic Church	107
Chapter 5	
Subiaco: Charles Davis: Chaplain.....	142
Chapter 6	
Charles Davis: His Ministry to the Convicts and Orphans.....	167
Chapter 7	
Charles Davis: Education.....	191
Chapter 8	
Charles Davis: Leadership in Sydney.....	236
Chapter 9	
Charles Davis: Illness and Death and Conclusion.....	298
Appendices: List of Tables, Pictures and Calendar.....	328
References.....	463

Abbreviations

AB	<i>Australasian Bandsman</i>
AC	<i>Australasian Chronicle</i>
AL	<i>Austral Light</i>
ABHR & CF	<i>The Australian Band of Hope Review, and Children's Friend</i>
BJ	<i>Benedictine Journal</i>
BColl	Benedictine Collection
BMD	Births, Marriages & Deaths Register
CO	<i>Colonial Observer</i>
CW	<i>The Catholic Weekly</i>
DA	Downside Abbey (Archives)
DAA	Downside Abbey Archives
EBC	English Benedictine Congregation
FJ	<i>Freeman's Journal</i>
FPA	Fernham Priory Archives
GH	<i>Goulbourn Herald</i>
ISN	<i>Illustrated Sydney News</i>
LE	<i>Launceston Examiner</i>
MM	<i>Maitland Mercury</i>
MM & HRGA	<i>Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser</i>
MC	<i>Morning Chronicle</i>
ME	<i>Moruya Examiner</i>

PPG	<i>The Port Phillip Gazette</i>
QA&GA	<i>Queanbeyan Age and General Advertiser</i>
SA	Sydney Archives
SAA	Sydney Archdiocese Archives
Sol.A	Solesmes Archives
SAR	<i>South Australian Register</i>
SbAA	Stanbrook Abbey Archives
SC	<i>Sydney Chronicle</i>
SG	<i>Sydney Gazette</i>
SG & NSW	<i>Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser</i>
SH	<i>Sydney Herald</i>
SM	Senate Minutes
SMH	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
SPF	Society for the Propagation of the Faith
OSB	Order of St. Benedict
QA & GA	<i>Queanbeyan Age & General Advertiser</i>
PPP & MA	<i>Port Philip Patriot & Melbourne Advertiser</i>
UG	<i>Usk Gazette</i>

List of people contacted during the research of Bishop Charles Henry Davis

E = Email

I = Interview

C = Correspondence

Dom Aidan Bellinger OSB (Downside Abbey) – E

Christine Brain (Usk Real Estate) - C, E

Frank Carleton (Amateur Benedictine historian) - E, C

Rachael Carter (Usk Genealogy) – E, I, C

Mark Collins (Roughwood Churches) – E

Austin Cooper, OMI – E, I, C

Anselm Cramer, OSB (Ampleforth Archives) – E

Frances Daniels (Parish, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Bath) – E, C

Malcolm Daniels (Downside baptisms, marriages, and deaths) - E, C

Bonney Djuric (Roman Catholic Orphanage, Sydney) – E

Elizabeth Doyle (Maitland, Newcastle Diocese) – E

Pauline Garland (Sydney Archdiocese Archives) – E, I

Colin Gibson (Gwent Records) – E, C

Sr. Carmel Hall (Hobart Archdiocese Archives) – E, I

Sr. Lia van Haren SGS (Good Samaritan Archives) – E

Peter Hocking, OSB (New Norcia Archives) – E, C

Dom Simon Johnson (Downside Abbey) – E

Jane Jones (Gwent Records) – E, C

Terence Kavenagh, OSB - E, I, C

Julia Mant (Sydney University Archives) – E, I

Carole Marshall (Canada) – E

Tony McCumstie (Mannix Library) – E, I, C

Rachel Naughton (Melbourne Archdiocese Archives) - E

Catherine Place (Catholic Theological College) - E, C

Lynn Regan - Veech Library (Catholic Institute of Sydney) – E, I, C

Jo Robertson (Sydney Archdiocese Archives) – E, I

David Russell (Ex-Musical Director of St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney) – E

Hildegard Ryan, OSB (Jamberoo Archives) – E, I, C

Elizabeth Swain (Sydney Archdiocese) – E

Esme Weare (Usk resident) – E, C

Peter Williams (Wales and the Marches Catholic History Society) – E

Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

This study is substantially the result of the generous support of many people. Firstly, I am indebted to my supervisor, Rev. Professor Austin Cooper OMI from the Catholic Theological College for the wisdom, guidance and continuous advice he gave me during these six years of research. I doubt I would have been able to complete this study without his consistent friendship and warm support. Secondly, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Br. Terence Kavenagh OSB from the Arcadia Benedictine Community, Sydney. His discerning knowledge of the English Benedictine Congregation and Archbishop John Bede Polding's Benedictine community at St. Mary's, Sydney provided me with the invaluable historical background and religious context. In particular, I would like to thank him for providing a typed copy of the *Benedictine Journal* and help in deciphering a number of Davis family letters, a task he described as a 'hobby.'

This research could not have occurred without a wide range of source material. Firstly, my thanks go to Ms. Pauline Garland and Jo Robertson from the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives who worked tirelessly locating various sources relating to Davis' episcopacy in Sydney. Secondly, my sincere appreciation goes to Sr. Hildegard Ryan OSB of Jamberoo Benedictine Community for access to the 'Subiaco Chronicles' from the 1840s and 1850s; copies of two extant musical compositions by Davis; and his surviving personal belongings.

I would particularly like to thank Rev. Doctor Dom Aidan Bellenger OSB for taking the time and trouble to search the Downside Abbey Archives for copies of Davis' musical compositions and arrangements.

Deserving of mention is Ms. Lynn Regan of Veech Library (Catholic Institute of Sydney) for help in relevant documents; staff of the State Library of New South Wales and the State Library of Victoria for assistance in locating primary source material and their invaluable Newspaper collections. I would also like to thank Ms. Catherine Place for taking the time and trouble to assist in the editing process of this thesis.

Finally, a study such as this could not have been completed had I not had the support, tolerance and love of my wife Lorinda Pender and daughter Charlotte. Throughout these six years of post-graduate study, they endured my full-time teaching and duties as the Director of Religious and Moral Education at De La Salle College, as well as my formation commitments and ordination to the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Thank you to my beautiful girls.

Chapter 9

Davis' Ill-health, death and Conclusion

Charles Davis experienced three life-threatening illnesses beginning in 1849 which eventually resulted in his death on 14 May 1854. His premature death removed the common-sense voice of one of Polding's closest advisors.

Davis' health had never been strong, even in England. One person wrote to Polding concerned about whether or not Davis would survive the voyage to Australia.¹ Other people described Davis' health prior to his departure as one that was "in a most delicate state."² During the journey, Davis complained of a "severe attack of pain in [his] face which came on a few weeks after being at sea and continued...during all the hot part of the voyage."³ Edmund Moore, a member of St. Mary's Community once described Davis' health thus: "We cannot but fear that Dr Davis is making strides, whether very long or only long simply I will not say, to the grave."⁴ Moore observed that Davis never complained about his illness, but "occasionally used to betray signs of great pain at Office, particularly one day just after he had said Mass":⁵

He continued to grow visibly worse, naturally he would do so, considering all the duties that devolved upon him in the absence of the Archbishop, Dr Gregory and the Subprior...but to use his own expression 'he fought against it'.⁶

Ironically, Davis questioned whether Edmund Moore would "have the health and strength to be of much use" at the monastery. Davis wrote of Moore:

¹ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

² Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA M201.

³ Davis to Heptonstall, 9/12/1848, M114.

⁴ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, B Coll, M180, D.A. See Kavenagh, T. *Tjurunga*, "My Dear Alphonsus....," 1975/10, 49.

⁵ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, B Coll, M180, D.A. See Kavenagh, "My Dear Alphonsus....," 49.

⁶ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, B Coll, M180, D.A. See Kavenagh, "My Dear Alphonsus....," 49.

[H]is appearance [is] delicate and I apprehend he will never be able to bear the discipline of the Monastery or the hardships of the Missioner's life in the country.⁷

Soon after arriving in Sydney, Davis complained of the cold even when the summer weather was generally stifling. Early in March 1849, whilst Polding and Gregory were visiting remote southern parts of the colony, Davis became ill and fainted during the singing of the Litanies at an ordination to the Diaconate.⁸ Edmund Moore wrote at length:

All were quite alarmed. Br Bernard Caldwell and myself were prostrating and were told of what had happened by feeling the sub-deacon, (who had been infirmarian), skipping over our heads in a hurry to procure some restorative in the shape of cold water or a smelling bottle. His Lordship revived after being senseless for 3 or 4 minutes and endeavoured to go on with the function, but was apparently about to faint again when the Rev Dean McEncroe insisted on the necessity of his being carried into the open air – Dr Davis heard this proposal and urged that he felt much better just then – However he in vain endeavoured to continue the ceremony – a fit of vomiting came on him in which he threw up a great quantity of bile and then he appeared really better. After waiting a few minutes, he finished the Ordination and the Mass, reciting instead of singing all that followed, except the Post Com and the Blessing; wh. with no little effort, visibly fighting against the real feelings of sickness which were on him, he did, in order to expel from the minds of those present all idea of his being unwell.⁹

Over the next couple of weeks, during the absence of Polding and Gregory, Davis was sick. He had been “growing paler in the eyes of everyone” and continued to “grow visibly worse.”¹⁰ On the Feast of St. Patrick, for example, he was meant to preach at the High Mass, but “was unable [to do so], being very weak.”¹¹ Even on the Feast of St. Benedict the following week, Davis was supposed to sing High Mass at the Cathedral, but could not due to his sickness, so instead said the Conventual Mass at

⁷ Davis to Wilson, 28/2/1849, M154.

⁸ *BJ*, 3/3/1849. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 49.

⁹ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, M180, DA. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 49-50.

¹⁰ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, M180, DA. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 49.

¹¹ *BJ*, 17/3/1849.

7am.¹² According to Moore, Davis was “forbidden to say Mass or the Breviary, or in any way to apply his mind seriously to anything.”¹³ His hours of rest were “ad-libitum.” His medication consisted of prescriptions from the doctor, as well as a quantity of gin three times a day, and brandy.¹⁴

About six weeks after Polding and Gregory had begun their visitation of the Goulburn, Yass and Queanbeyan districts, Polding received a letter from McEncroe advising him to return to Sydney as soon as possible because of Davis' poor health.¹⁵ They arrived back at St. Mary's on 24 March 1849. Immediately, Polding began nursing Davis, however, “there was not substantial improvement.”¹⁶ During the Holy Week ceremonies Davis became so ill, that Polding insisted on Davis remaining in his room. On 6 April (Good Friday), Polding ordered Davis to drink beef-tea in an attempt to strengthen his constitution. Davis reportedly said to Polding: “Your Grace is turning me into a complete heathen.” Polding replied: “Obedience is better than sacrifice.”¹⁸

On 25 April 1849, Davis and Polding left St. Mary's monastery for Subiaco with the intention of travelling to Campbelltown the next day. Sometime during 26 April, they both returned to Subiaco on account of Davis becoming seriously ill. Polding returned to St. Mary's on 27 April, leaving Davis in the care of the nuns at Subiaco.¹⁹ It became clear that Davis was not recovering, so Polding returned to Subiaco on 29 April with a doctor. Davis' health had deteriorated so much, Polding ordered “the prayers of the Mass ‘Pro Infirmis’...to be said by all the priests of the Archdiocese...for the recovery of the Bishop, until further notice.”²⁰ On 1 May, Gregory celebrated the Conventual

¹² *BJ*, 21/3/1849.

¹³ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, M180, DA. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 50.

¹⁴ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, M180, DA. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 50.

¹⁵ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

¹⁶ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

¹⁸ Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 211.

¹⁹ *BJ*, 27/4/1849.

²⁰ *BJ*, 29/4/1849.

Mass for “the recovery of the Bishop,” whilst the entire community observed a “solemn fast” for Davis’ health,²¹ and disregarded their usual monthly recreation day due to “the precarious state of the health” of Davis.²² His breathing and heart were affected and “anasarcous symptoms also developed.”²³ His pulse increased and “the functions of the heart were evidently much disturbed.” Moreover, Davis suffered a general disease that affected his liver and bowels, which “were and had been for a very long time much out of Order.”²⁴ Davis’ left foot had also swelled, causing him considerable pain.²⁵

On 2 May, despite the fact that Davis “was somewhat better,” he received the anointing of the sick from Polding.²⁶ The *Benedictine Journal* began to report that Davis was beginning to improve, however, on 9 May it was recorded that “[t]he Bishop was much worse today, [and] not expected to live.”²⁷ Sr. Magdalen Le Clerc wrote:

The Doctors gave not a shadow of a hope, and one night he appeared so near his agony, that we were all called in to receive his last Benediction. I never saw such an image of death, it seemed marked in every feature.²⁸

Given the state of his declining health and the fact that “three of [the] best doctors” had done as much as they could in their treatment of Davis, Polding wrote that “we looked to God & to God alone for help.”²⁹ Polding prayed for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary to heal Davis and wrote at length:

²¹ *BJ*, 1/5/1849.

²² *BJ*, 3/5/1849.

²³ Anasarca is a general swelling throughout the body, considered a massive edema due to effusion of fluid in to the extracellular space and is very common in patients suffering from kidney failure and heart failure. Symptoms will include: vomiting, cramps, shortness of breath, weakness in the body, swelling of the ankle and feet, anaemia, unable to sleep at night, burnished skin, loss of appetite, changes in blood pressure and insomnia. See <http://www.doctorsend.info/2012/01/anasarca-causes-symptoms-and-treatment.html>, accessed 12/4/2014.

²⁴ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

²⁵ Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849, M180, DA. See Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” 49.

²⁶ *BJ*, 2/5/1849. Dame Magdalen Le Clerc wrote in a letter to the Abbess of Stanbrook (June 1849): “On 1st of May he received the Last Sacraments, and continued for several days suspended as it were between life and death.” See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 164.

²⁷ *BJ*, 9/5/1849.

²⁸ Le Clerc to Abbess of Stanbrook, June 1849. See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 164-165.

²⁹ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

This being the Month devoted to the B. Virgin we in especial manner invoked her powerful intercession. The Night of the 10th was passed in great apprehensions. Between five and six I made a Promise to the B.V. to institute some devotion not already established in her honour within my jurisdiction if my dear Coadjutor were restored to health. I only desired to be enabled by his aid to promote the divine Glory and the Salvation of Souls, through the means we used, but especially through Holy Order. Before I went down to the Chapel I mentioned to the Bishop this Promise that I had made. I asked his Lordship to join with me in making it and in only desiring to live for the purposes above named. I then went down to the Chapel, desired the Sisters to join in my intention, said the Mass for the agonizing, but with a firm confidence that God could and would grant our prayer offered through and with his Most Blessed Mother. On my return after Mass – God be ever praised – I perceived a change for the better – the crisis was passed, and since that morning of May 11th, His Lordship has continued to improve, is enabled to sit up some hours each day and though very weak, for we are obliged to be very particular as regards Diet, is declared to be by his Medical Attendants better than before this attack.

This proof of the divine goodness so manifestly interfering at a time when other circumstances occur to afflict, will I am sure, Dear F. President, move your heart & the hearts of all our Brothers and Sisters to bless and praise his Holy Name; will animate us to greater fervour in the great work to which we are called and inspire us with a more lively devotion to that good Mother through whose hands all favors come.³⁰

According to Le Clerc, Polding was grief-stricken. During his celebration of the Mass for “The Agonizing,” Polding wept “such abundance of tears that it would have melted the hardest heart.”³¹ Davis had been unconscious for some time and close to death, yet, Gregory noticed that during the elevation of the Eucharist, “the Bishop raised himself a little, and prayed fervently (his door was open in order that those with him might follow the Mass).”³² Davis asked those in his room if Polding was saying Mass. After they answered “yes,” he said, “I know he is praying for me.”³³ At the

³⁰ Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849, DA, M201.

³¹ Le Clerc to Abbess of Stanbrook, June 1849. See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 165.

³² “Chronicles,” *Subiaco* 1, 1849-1899, 11/5/1849, n.p. Courtesy of the Benedictine Congregation, Jamberoo Abbey, NSW.

³³ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 212.

conclusion of Mass, Polding went to Davis' room and returned later saying, "Our prayers have been heard."³⁴

The *Benedictine Journal* reported that "[t]he Bishop is considered by his Medical attendants to be now past danger."³⁵ Polding invited everyone in all the churches of the Sydney Archdiocese to thank God for "having heard the prayers offered for the Coadjutor Bishop's recovery, granted as is believed through the intercession of the Ever Blessed Virgin." The Mass "Pro Infirmis," which Polding had called for throughout the diocese was discontinued.³⁶

Although Davis had passed the likelihood of death he was still very unwell. Nevertheless, he visited and ministered each day to Sister Scholastica who was seriously ill during his recuperation period. He read the Scriptures to her; he prayed with her; and he prepared her for death.³⁷ Clearly, Davis was a man who had a deep love and care for the well-being of others.

Davis remained at Subiaco in the care of the nuns for about four months. At about 2pm on 14 August 1849, Davis arrived back at St. Mary's Monastery in a carriage accompanied by Gregory. Not only did the bells of St. Mary's announce "the joyful event to the citizens" of Sydney, the monastic band was assembled and "by their performance testified the delight they felt in the return of him whom they had despaired of seeing on this side of the grave." Davis appeared in 'good spirits' and was "very strong," although not fully recovered. He expressed his thanks at the reception he

³⁴ "Chronicles," *Subiaco*, 11/5/1849, n.p.

³⁵ *BJ*, 21/5/1849.

³⁶ *BJ*, 1/7/1849.

³⁷ "Chronicles," *Subiaco*, 11/5/1849, n.p. Following her death on 8 October 1850, Davis assembled St. Mary's community and recited prayers from the *Garden of the Soul*. The following day, after Matins, Davis celebrated a Requiem Mass for Scholastica Gregory. Polding and Henry Gregory were at Subiaco at the bedside of Scholastica. See *BJ*, 8/10/1850 & 9/10/1850.

received and hoped he would not be separated from the community again, rather, remaining with them for the rest of his life.³⁸

Davis' second serious illness developed two years later on 12 April 1852 whilst Polding was away in Adelaide and Perth. It was a sickness that "well-nigh proved fatal."³⁹ Although there is little reported on this attack compared to the first, it still managed to leave Davis close to death and render him bedridden, unable to carry out his duties. Regrettably, the author of the *Benedictine Journal* in 1852 seemed to favour brevity in lieu of detail. Accordingly, there are few recorded details of Davis' second illness, treatment and subsequent recuperation. One can only make a guess at the doctors' treatment; probably a similar mixture of medicine and alcohol proscribed to him during his first illness, with plenty of rest.

The *Journal* reported that Davis was "in a very delicate state of health and unable to take part in the [Holy Week] functions." The next day, he was "much worse...and [was] considered by the doctors to be in a very dangerous state."⁴² Despite his precarious state of health, Davis still managed to consecrate the Holy Oils for the Easter celebrations.⁴³

By Easter Sunday, Davis appeared to be recovering, although the doctors were not permitting visitors.⁴⁴ He later went to Subiaco on the afternoon of the 14th because Davis "was so weak that he was unable to celebrate Mass."⁴⁵ It is unclear whether he remained at Subiaco, or returned in the evening after only a brief visit. Since he was in

³⁸ *BJ*, 14/8/1849.

³⁹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 211.

⁴² *BJ*, 15/4/1852.

⁴³ *BJ*, 12/4/1852.

⁴⁴ *BJ*, 18/4/1852.

Interestingly, Davis spent only a day at Subiaco during his final illness in 1854, when the nuns had "never seen him looking so ill, not even when he was supposed to be dying." See Sr. Mary Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M458 (a).

charge of St. Mary's during the absence of Polding, Davis most likely felt he needed to be at the monastery, no matter how bad his health was.⁴⁶

By the morning of 25 April, his health had improved and he dictated a Pastoral Letter "which was read in the several churches [that] morning."⁴⁷ Whilst the contents of his Letter are unknown, it appeared to have had "great effect upon the minds of the Sydney Catholics."⁴⁸ Perhaps some of Davis' Letter appealed for donations to the clergy of Adelaide, since the *Benedictine Journal* reported, "Sydney Catholics...are ever ready to come forward with their substance when called upon by their clergy." The next entry stated that £150 was collected in the hall of St. Mary's Seminary that evening "for the relief of the Bishop of Adelaide."⁴⁹

Davis continued to recuperate and managed to celebrate a 'private Mass in St. Felician's Chapel' the following month.⁵⁰ By all accounts, he continued to recover so that by 6 June, he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 'upwards of 120 persons' at St. Benedict's Church.⁵¹

The *Benedictine Chronicle* revealed that during this Easter illness, the children from the school at Subiaco donated a silver lamp to the value of £30 to the altar of the Blessed Virgin "as an offering for his recovery." The author of the Chronicle included that "their devotion was rewarded by his restoration to health."⁵²

Despite the grief-stricken out-pouring of Polding during Davis' first illness in 1849, which included his oath to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the author has been unable to

Interestingly, Davis spent only a day at Subiaco during his final illness in 1854, when the nuns had "never seen him looking so ill, not even when he was supposed to be dying." See Sr. Mary Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M458 (a).

⁴⁷ No recorded entries were located in any of the local papers, including the Catholic newspaper, *FJ*.

⁴⁸ *BJ*, 25/4/1852.

⁴⁹ *BJ*, 25/4/1852.

⁵⁰ *BJ*, 11/5/1852.

⁵¹ *BJ*, 6/6/1852.

⁵² "Chronicles," *Subiaco*, n.p.

locate any letters or comments by Polding that make reference to this illness, possibly because communications were quite sparse and difficult between such remote places.

At the Christmas of 1853, following an "Exhibition" for the children at Subiaco he had prepared, Davis suffered another illness. It seems he exerted himself too much and together with the excitement "which His Grace thought knocked him up, [Davis] declared [it] rather did him good than otherwise."⁵³ Davis recovered but became unwell once again in the February causing him to be "unable to come to [Subiaco] for the feast of his consecration."⁵⁴ Davis' illness seemed to exacerbate itself to the degree that he even began to lose interest in music. Sister Mary Walburge commented:

[The bishop] appeared, too, about three weeks ago, so listless and unable to take any interest in, or derive any amusement from, what was going on when the children gave him a little concert, with which he is always so delighted, that we were sure he must be very ill – when music had lost its power to please.⁵⁵

In the April of 1854, Davis became seriously ill for a third time, but remained at St. Mary's running the Archdiocese as best as he could following Polding's departure for Rome on 21 March 1854. This bout of sickness proved fatal for Davis. He died at St. Mary's on 14 May 1854, the day before his fortieth birthday.

Prior to Polding's departure, Davis "begged him" for an Altar for the Sisters' at Subiaco, dedicated to St. Joseph. Davis found a picture at St. Mary's to hang above the altar "and brought it to us; afraid, as he said...to come to Subiaco unless protected by St. Joseph." The nuns were making a "fervent Novena to St. Joseph" for the return of Davis' health. A week prior to his arrival at Subiaco, he had been suffering from diarrhoea.⁵⁶ On the anniversary of Davis' recovery from his first major illness in 1849,

⁵³ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁵⁴ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁵⁵ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁵⁶ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, p. 6.

the 11 May, he intended to spend at Subiaco and celebrate Mass at the altar of St. Joseph. Walbuge wrote: "This was his last Mass."⁵⁷ On 11 May, Davis "was disturbed by violent throbbings of the temples and heart, accompanied with highly feverish sensations; and in the course of the forenoon...perceived evidences of an occasional absence of consciousness."⁵⁸ The following extract from Walbuge's letter provided a more detailed description of Davis' last day at Subiaco which has been reproduced in full:

On Wednesday, the 10th, he came to hear Confessions. I heard the noise of his stick in the passage, which he never uses except when very ill, and went to the community room to ask how he was. They had never seen him looking so ill, not even when he was supposed to be dying. His Lordship could scarcely get through the confessions; every word was an effort. He told Mother Superioress, when going to his room, that he felt as though he should never recover, and he had often said he expected to be found dead in his bed. Next morning at Mass it was evident that he was very, very ill; his voice faltered very much and he was scarcely able to speak. Mass being over, he said himself the prayers for our Novena. After Mass he said he felt quite a different being; but this was only the effect of excitement, and he soon relapsed into his former listlessness. Still talked, telling us of the dreadful shipwreck off the coast of England, and that your nephew was amongst the few saved. He left us for St. Mary's in the afternoon, fainted in the carriage and retired early to rest.⁵⁹

After Davis' return to St. Mary's, he was reported to be "quite delirious" and suffering convulsions to the degree that "three of his monks could with difficulty keep him in bed."⁶⁰ Davis was attended by doctors three times daily, but on the Saturday 'became so prostrate that he was unable to speak except at intervals, and in monosyllables.'⁶¹ Davis received the Last Rites from Father Maurus and frequently repeated the phrase, "Oh my Good God have mercy on me!"⁶² After receiving the Last

⁵⁷ Walbuge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁵⁸ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6.

⁵⁹ Walbuge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁶⁰ Walbuge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁶¹ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6.

⁶² Le Clerc to unnamed recipient, 21 May 1854, M. 456 (9b).

Sacrament, Davis seemed to improve.⁶³ Around 6pm. a procession of “brethren” made their way to “the sick chamber” during which Davis received the Holy Viaticum.⁶⁴ At the last Mass in the Cathedral the following day:

[T]he usual solemnities...were dispensed with, the Choir hushed, and the ordinary discourse omitted; and an announcement was made from the Sanctuary that as the recovery of the Bishop could only now be expected from the mercy of God, it was the request of the Clergy that the laity should join in offering a *Novena* for His Lordship's restoration...[consisting] of three *Paters* and *Aves* with an invocation to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph.⁶⁵

Over the next couple of days, there appeared “a visible improvement,” however during the Tuesday evening Davis' breathing became “laboured” together with “strong evidences of acute pain” during the night. At noon the following day, the “brethren and clergy” gathered around Davis' bed and prayed the “Litany for the Departing Soul.” At 3.30 p.m. on Wednesday 17 May 1854, the day before his fortieth birthday, following his final absolution by the Sub-Prior, Davis died.⁶⁶ In a letter to the Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, Sister M. Walburge wrote:

[H]e left this land of sorrow and suffering and exile...(the eve of his birthday), for our own bright heavenly home...Oh how we will miss him here – none can tell – Pray for us all – pray for St. Mary's, for Australia, for Subiaco, for Lyndhurst etc. etc., I have not said pray for our venerated Bishop for we feel he is praying for us - & watching over our interests in Heaven. I feel a much greater inclination to invoke his intercession than to pray that he may be united to God, for whom alone he laboured on earth - & whose blissful vision we feel confident he is now enjoying.⁶⁷

The details of Davis' death were published in the local newspapers, including the South Australian Register and in particular, Sydney's Empire newspaper which

⁶³ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁶⁴ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6. The Holy Viaticum is the final reception of Eucharist for a dying individual.

⁶⁵ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6.

⁶⁶ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6.

⁶⁷ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

reported the following and alluded to the recalcitrance emerging at St. Mary's monastery:

[Davis' career] has been characterised by useful activity and industry, and this combined with the partial disarrangement into which the Catholic Church here have recently been thrown, will cause his loss to be severely felt by a large portion of the public at large, but more especially by the members of the Church of which he was a dignitary.⁶⁸

The Funeral of Bishop Charles Henry Davis

At 2 pm the next day, Davis' body, dressed in his mitre and pectoral cross, shoes, gloves and "jewelled ring upon his finger, symbol of his immaculate espousal of the Church of Christ" was removed to Polding's drawing room. Lying beside him on his bier was his chalice and missal.⁶⁹ At 6pm Davis' body was placed in the Cathedral to lie in state until Saturday 20 May.

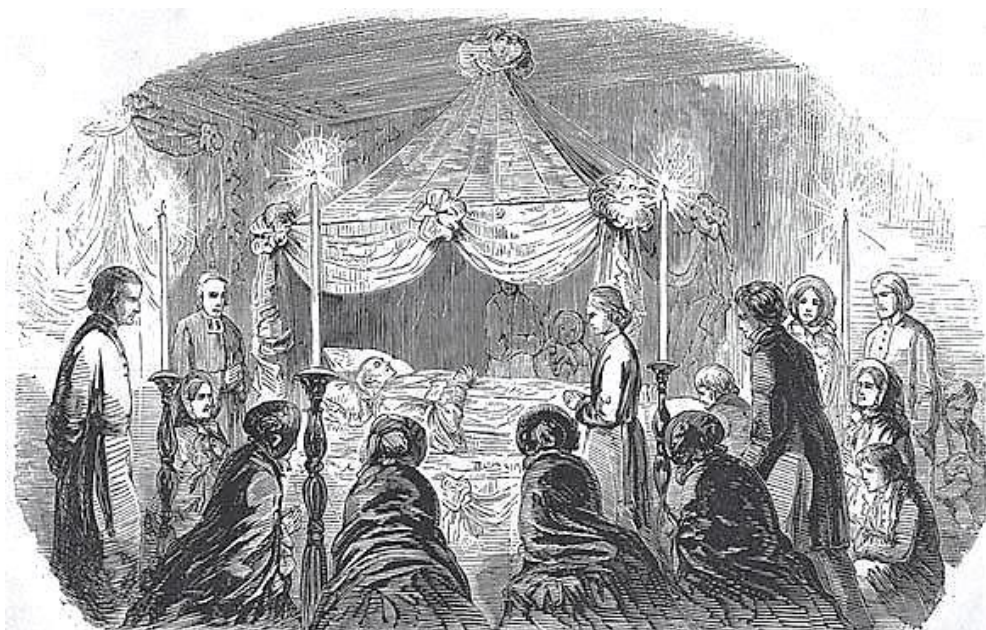


Figure 1: Bishop Davis lying in state at St. Mary's Cathedral.⁷⁰

Davis was placed in two coffins. The inner coffin was lead. This was placed inside the outer coffin made of a highly polished unornamented cedar. The Sydney

⁶⁸ *Empire*, 18/5/1854, 2. Also, refer to *SMH* 23/5/1854, 5; 19/5/1854, 5; *SAR* 2/6/1854, 2.

⁶⁹ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 6.

⁷⁰ <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an8021120>, [accessed 3/5/2014].

Archdiocesan Archives are in possession of an isosceles trapezium-shaped lead plate in poor condition measuring 31cm (top) x 40cm (side) x 40 cm (side) x 27cm (bottom).⁷¹ Its identity was not known and the archivist was unaware of what it was. She had seen the name "Davis" on the paper inscription glued to the lead. The entire inscription was faint, and the plate was bent, stained and very dirty. A pencil rubbing of the plate on tracing paper revealed it was the plate attached to Davis' lead coffin in 1854.⁷² The lead plate was removed from the original coffin following Davis' reinterment to the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral in 1945. For whatever reason, the importance of the plate had been forgotten. The pencil rubbing produced a copy of the following inscription, engraved in the Old English font and reproduced below.

Figure 2: The transcription that appeared on the plate affixed to Davis' coffin.

**Hic requiescit Reverendissimus
Omnus Omnis Carolus Henricus Davis, O.S.B.,
Episcopus Maitlandensis et Reverendissimo
et Illustrissimo Omno Omno
Joanni Bedae Polding Archiepiscopo
Sydneyensi Coadiutor qui obiit in festo
Sancti Paschalis Baylon
anno reparatae salutis 1854.
Cujus animae de sua magna pietate
propitietur Deus.**

Pax

⁷¹ In this case, the term: Isosceles Trapezium, is the British definition where the shape has a pair of opposite sides parallel, whilst the sides that aren't parallel are equal in length and both angles coming from a parallel side are equal.

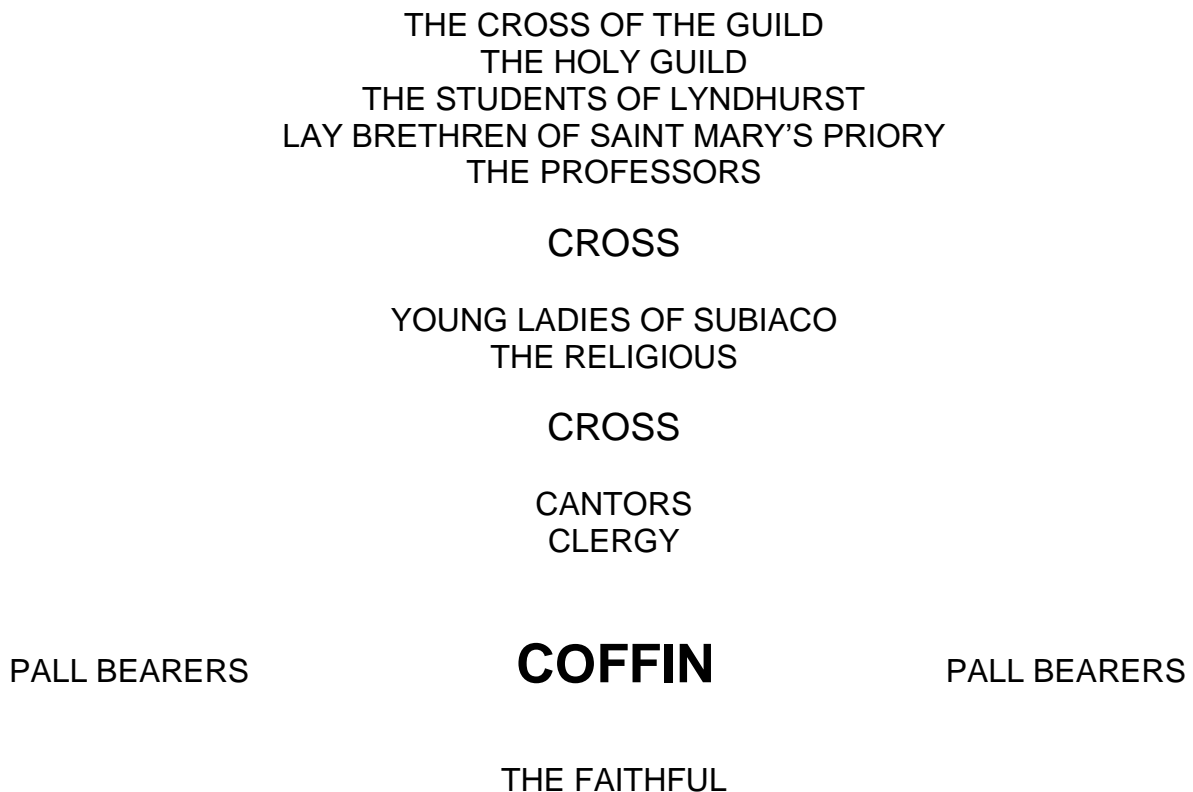
⁷² Please see the Appendices No. 44 for photographs of the pencil rubbing.

Figure 3: A translation of the inscription

Here reposes the Right Reverend Lord, Lord Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B., Bishop of Maitland and Coadjutor to the Most Reverend and Most Illustrious Lord, Lord John Bede Polding, Archbishop of Sydney – who died on the feast of Saint Paschal Baylon,⁷³ in the year of repaired Salvation, 1854. May God in his great clemency be propitious to his soul. Peace.⁷⁴

Davis' coffin was placed upon an "imposing Catafalque draped with black velvet" midway between the Sanctuary and the Aisle of the Cathedral, whilst the sanctuary, altar, pulpit and organ were veiled. The diagram below provides an impression of the seating arrangement at Davis' funeral:⁷⁵

Figure 4: The seating plan at Davis' funeral



⁷³ St. Paschal Baylon, 24 May 1540 – 17 May 1592 was a Spanish friar who practiced rigorous asceticism, and was canonized a saint in 1690. He is the patron saint of Eucharistic congresses and Eucharistic associations. See http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=5230, [accessed 3/1/2014].

⁷⁴ *FJ*, 27/5/2854, 6.

⁷⁵ *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 7.

The Solemn Requiem Mass on the 24th May was celebrated by the Right Reverend Dr. Murphy, who also presided at the Office for the Dead on the evening before and again at the final absolution. Archdeacon McEncroe addressed the congregation.⁷⁶ Davis' coffin was carried through the streets of Sydney by relays of clergy and laity as far as St. Benedict's church which was situated at the old toll-bar on the Parramatta road. The coffin was followed by a procession of people two miles long, including the Senate of the Sydney University. After reaching St. Benedict's, it was placed on a hearse and a carriage procession drove a further fifteen miles to Subiaco, arriving there at 1pm.⁷⁷

Davis' coffin remained at the convent mortuary until he was buried in the mortuary chapel which was described as a building "of moderate dimensions, built of brick." The chapel was located near the convent in a circular enclosure, peppered with cypresses and other trees.⁷⁸ The burial service was conducted by Fr. John Sheridan.⁷⁹

It seems that Davis willed his heart to the nuns of Subiaco, although there is no record of Davis' last Will and Testament at the New South State Records Office, the Sydney Archdiocese Archives, or with the Benedictine Sisters at Jamberoo. Regardless of the existence of a Will or not, his heart was removed prior to his burial and placed in a glass container containing formalin. His heart is now located in a small cedar box resting on the altar of St. Joseph at the Benedictine convent at Jamberoo Abbey, Jamberoo, New South Wales.⁸⁰ A lock of his hair was cut from his head and is located in the Heritage Centre of Jamberoo Abbey.

⁷⁶ *FJ*, 26/5/1854.

⁷⁷ Alan Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854, Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop," *Australian Catholic Record* 59, no. 2, (1982): 216.

⁷⁸ Terence Kavenagh, T. "Obit List/History – "Subiaco" Rydalmere & Pennant Hills 1849-1985," *Tjurunga* 30 (1986): 76; *FJ*, 27/5/1854, 7.

⁷⁹ *New South Wales - Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 – Burials*, 1782, 119, 9/11/2008. See Appendices No. 46h for a copy of Davis' Burial Extract.

⁸⁰ See Appendices No. 46a - h for photographs of his ewer, basin, chalice, paton, cope, heart, hair, portable altar and burial extract.

Local tributes to Charles Davis

Following his death, numerous tributes flowed in, both from Catholics and non-Catholics alike. The fact that Davis' funeral procession was two miles in length was "sufficient to testify to the honoured estimation in which the memory of the deceased prelate" was held by the people of Sydney.⁸¹ His loss to the Sydney Catholic community and monastery was "severely felt," especially as Polding was absent overseas.⁸² Sr. Magdalene Le Clerc described Davis accordingly: "The respect and veneration in which the dear departed Bishop was held by all ranks & denominations was almost unprecedented...his loss is considered one of the greatest calamities that ever befell this colony."⁸³ Similarly, the following article published in the South Australian Register shortly after his death summed Davis up both as a man and a priest:

Dr. Davis was a...man of remarkably good sense, of benevolent and generous sentiment, and of a quiet, gentlemanlike, unobtrusive demeanour, that procured for him the respect and esteem of all who came within the sphere of his acquaintance. This estimation of his character was entertained not only amongst his intimate friends, who were aware of his superior worth, but also by those who had an opportunity of observing his career and conduct in the various charitable societies to which he devoted his zeal and labours... The loss of such a man at such a time is a serious one, not only to the religious body over which he presided, and by whom he was beloved, but to the whole colonial community, whose welfare his enlarged spirit of benevolence embraced, by which he will be long held in revered remembrance for the many excellent social virtues which he cultivated and cherished.⁸⁴

While much was published in local newspapers regarding the impact of Davis' death, one surprising aspect of Davis' premature death was the apparent silence of Polding. It has been impossible to locate any comment made by Polding about the

⁸¹ *SMH*, 19/5/1854, 5.

⁸² *Empire*, 18/5/1854, 2.

⁸³ Le Clerc to unnamed recipient, 21/5/1854, M. 456 (9b).

⁸⁴ *SAR*, 2/6/1854, 2.

death of Davis, either the impact on him personally, or the impact on the Catholic population of Sydney at the time of Davis' death. Some references, though they are scant to Davis' death appear in letters written later in the year.

The first of them occurred in a letter written in Rome on 1 July 1854 to Propaganda Fide in relation to the Willson – Therry dispute. At this time it appears Polding was unaware of Davis' death:

Bishop Willson agreed in Sydney to the Archbishop's proposals which were fair and equitable, but, on the other hand, when the Coadjutor Bishop proposed them to Therry, the latter refused to accept them, saying that he could not do so without prejudicing the temporal interests of the others, because Therry did not have faith in the other party, that is, the Bishop.⁸⁵

A week later, Polding wrote to Pope Pius IX thanking him for his consolatory words during his audience with him.

It is quite beyond my power to express how consoling to me, in my **deep afflictions** [authors emphasis] were the **words of paternal affection** [authors emphasis] which your Holiness was pleased to address to me, when I had the honour of prostrating myself to receive your Benediction. In that moment I received most ample compensation for all that I had suffered in my missionary labours and in my long and perilous travels and journeys.⁸⁶

Perhaps part of Pius IX's "words of paternal affection" consoling Polding in his "deep afflictions," in part, concerned Polding's reaction to the news of Davis' death? These comments could well be interpreted to be pointing to Polding's "missionary labours" in Sydney and his "long and perilous" missionary journeys. A later letter by Polding to Cardinal Barnabo in 1858, however, referred to the private discussion with the pope "of the passing of the late Bishop, my coadjutor."⁸⁷ It seems Polding shared his grief with Pius who consoled him as a father would a son.

⁸⁵ Polding to Propaganda Fide, 1/7/1854, PF CO, Vol. 5. ff. 539-42, SMPD tr It.

⁸⁶ Polding to Pope Pius IX, 8/7/1854, see Patrick F. Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, (Sydney: The Oceanic Publishing Company, 1895), 447-448.

⁸⁷ Polding to Barnabo, 11/8/1858, SAA, U1418. SMXC tr Fr.

Doubtless Polding was profoundly saddened on learning of the death of Davis. For whatever reason, however, it seemed Polding refrained from writing his feelings down in any great detail, either in private correspondence, or in a pastoral letter to the parishes of Sydney following his return in 1856. He responded to the Warden and Members of the Guild of St. Mary and St. Joseph, albeit very briefly. His comments reveal some insight into his grief:

My dear Children in Jesus Christ,

I have received your letter of condolence on the **irreparable loss** [authors blocking] we have sustained in the death of **my good and beloved Coadjutor. This bereavement has filled up to overflowing the chalice of affliction** [author blocking]. It hath seemed meet to the all-wise Disposer of things to try us. We will submit with unqualified resignation to His Adorable Will and thus enter into the dispensations of His Providence; we know that every chastisement is intended for our good.⁸⁸

Even though Davis was a very sick man, Polding relied on Davis whilst away on his missionary journeys. The whole point of being an Archbishop was to, as regularly as possible, visit and build up the Church in his enormous diocese. Polding had to go because Davis could not. Polding was probably initially unaware of Davis' frailty, but hoped that he would thrive in the better climate. He witnessed Davis' first illness and was grief-stricken, but was absent during Davis' second and third illnesses. It is possible that the full extent of Davis' second and third sicknesses failed to affect Polding as much as the first because of his absences from Sydney.

⁸⁸ Polding to The Warden and Members of the Guild of St. Mary and St. Joseph, 8/11/1854, published in *FJ*, 10/2/1855, 9-10.

The reinterment of Bishop Charles Henry Davis

In 1925 the eastern section of Subiaco (approximately 65 acres) was sold by the nuns. Whilst this area of land included the cemetery, the cemetery still remained the property of the nuns and was fenced off by a circular iron railing. Over the years the cemetery had become the subject of flooding, causing the structure of the mortuary chapel to deteriorate. The chapel was eventually demolished and the remains from the vault were buried.⁸⁹ In 1939, the Most Reverend F. Gleeson DD, Bishop of Maitland wrote:

The body of the first Bishop of Maitland lies in an unhonoured grave outside the walls of the Benedictine monastery, Rydalmere. Previously the cemetery was within the convent property, but when the estate was subdivided, the burial ground was in the area sold. It is fenced, indeed, but there are none to care for the graves.

Hearing that His Grace was about to transpose the venerable remains of the pioneer Bishops and priests to a new and honourable resting place in the crypt of St. Mary's, I suggested to the Administrator that His Grace might consider translating Dr. Davis' remains thither.

I have made bold to set this matter before your Lordship to support my claim that the Bishop's remains belong to Sydney, and to ask earnestly that your Lordship will not refuse the permission I ask. Then, Sydney owes those now forgotten remains respect and honourable sepulchre.⁹⁰

By mid-1945, the decision to reinter Davis "in a vault within the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral where previous Bishops and Dignitaries are buried" was made. Moreover, the Secretary of the Sydney Board of Health, wrote that if "it is found necessary to provide an inner and outer coffin, such will be done."⁹¹

Davis' original outer wooden coffin was in very poor condition at the time of exhumation, probably due to the high humidity within the grave. The upper area of the coffin was surrounded by "sand which [had] compacted below the upper level of the

⁸⁹ Kavenagh, "Obit List/History – "Subiaco" Rydalmere & Pennant Hills 1849-1985," 77.

⁹⁰ Gleeson to Kelly, 16/11/1939, SAA Box N1352.

⁹¹ Administrator to Secretary, Board of Health, Sydney, 1/6/1945, SAA Box N1352.

coffin.” Additionally, the deterioration of the wood revealed the inner lead coffin.⁹² So, before Davis could be reinterred at St. Mary’s, his remains had to be once again “placed in a leaden case securely soldered, and in an outer shell of wood” before his body could be removed from the burial site. Furthermore, both coffins were “enclosed in an outer covering of cement not less than six inches thick.”⁹³

The Funeral Directors of Wood Coffill Limited, Sydney were charged with exhuming the remains of Davis and transporting them for reburial in the crypt of St. Mary’s Cathedral.⁹⁵

The reinterment of Davis was presided over by the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Reverend N. T. Gilroy D.D. in the crypt of St. Mary’s Cathedral on 25 August 1945. Following Mass, Davis was reburied in a vault near the main altar of the Cathedral crypt during a ceremony that was described as “quite private,” but “none the less impressive.”⁹⁶

Conclusion

Davis’ illnesses, death, burial and reinterment were explored and it became clear he was not a person of robust health; in fact, only after a short time at Sydney, he nearly died. Despite Davis’ poor health, he carried out his sacred duties with continuous assiduity. It is disappointing the *Benedictine Journal* ceased its entries at the end of August 1853 because, had it continued, it would have provided a greater

⁹² Notes by Dean Redden, 21/3/1991, SAA Box N1352.

⁹³ Boyle (Secretary, Office of the Director of Public Health) to Rev. McCooe (Administrator, St. Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney), 21/6/1945, SAA Box N1352.

⁹⁵ *Wood Coffill Limited – Funeral Directors*, August 1945, SAA Box N1352. See Appendices No. 45 for a copy of the receipt forwarded by them to the Cathedral for payment.

⁹⁶ Gilroy to Monsignor Davis, 25/8/1945, SAA Box N1352; *CW*, 30/8/1945, 7; *TCW*, “After 91 years in a temporary grave – a pioneer Bishop comes home,” 30/8/1945, 2. Gilroy had Archbishop’s Vaughan’s remains brought back from England too.

insight into the reactions to his death experienced by the monks at St. Mary's, as well as a first-hand account of Davis' final hours in the monastery.

Each time Davis recovered from his illnesses, he resumed his massive workload such as: his duties with the Senate of the Sydney University; presiding over the two Colleges of St. Mary's Seminary and Lyndhurst; and his daily episcopal duties. Not to mention his responsibility as acting Abbot of St. Mary's Monastery for an aggregate of just over two years due to Polding's absences on mission. When Polding left for Rome in 1854, Davis became the most senior Roman Catholic ecclesiastic in the colony with responsibility for the whole Sydney mission. Despite his often debilitating ill-health and crushing workload, Davis showed remarkable human and Christian qualities.

He was revered by the majority of Sydney's population both as a person and as a bishop evidenced by the outpouring of grief and vast crowd who attended his funeral. His eventual interment with Polding, Therry, McEncroe, Vaughan and others in the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral pays a final tribute to a man who supported Polding as his Coadjutor for nearly six years and whose most enduring work was in the domain of education, administrative and pastoral leadership and sacred music.

Conclusion

This thesis examined the life and ministry of Bishop Charles Henry Davis, OSB (1815-1854). Davis' childhood in Wales and his schooling and priestly formation at St. Gregory's and Downside Abbey was studied. His ordination to priest, his Episcopal ordination and appointment as Coadjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding (1794 – 1877) in Sydney in 1848 until his premature death in 1854 was also examined.

In particular, this study focused on Davis' significant contribution to the early Roman Catholic Church in Sydney from 1848-1854. This included his administrative abilities within the Benedictine community and the diocese; his pastoral care both inside and outside St. Mary's monastery; his enormous contribution to the field of Catholic education and higher education in the Colony and his talent as a musician. Whilst he was an effective peacemaker, he did not significantly change anything that was in place under Polding. Because most histories have focussed more on Polding during the period 1848 to 1854, a period of general disorder and confusion at St. Mary's, Davis has always 'lived in the shadow' of Polding. Consequently, his notable contribution to the early Catholic Church in Australia has generally been overlooked. Finally, one of the aims of this dissertation was to show that Davis was the determinant that held Polding's 'Benedictine Dream' together (if only temporarily).

A summary of the findings

The family background of Davis was investigated in an attempt to identify key factors that may have influenced him educationally and spiritually. Until now, there has never been any significant research into Davis' family. It was discovered that his family were devoted Catholics who were members of the Catholic recusancy. Research

indicated that Davis' brother, Michael Davis, was influential in the building of St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Church in Usk. Davis' own father planned and built 12 alms-houses in Usk for the care of the poor and underprivileged. His father's association with the alms-houses may have inclined Davis to minister to, and speak out against the immoral treatment of the convicts on Cockatoo Island in Sydney.

In addition to the customary classical education at St. Gregory's, Davis was exposed to music, poetry and drama; areas of study which allowed him a freedom to express and develop his gifts of artistic expression. The relationship between Prior Thomas Brown and the Davis family was considered and revealed some animosity between the Davis family and Brown because of Brown's refusal to allow Charles and Edwin Davis to visit their dying father in Usk. Despite the outcome of Brown's decision, Charles Davis had an immense respect for Brown as a confidant and advisor. A personal letter to Brown from Davis intimated a side of Davis' nature that only Brown knew about; a temperament that appeared distressed and inconsolable. It was speculated that only a few months before his ordination to priest Davis may have been refused permission to leave Downside to attend his father's deathbed because he was struggling with his vocation.

Davis held important roles at Downside such as Cellarer, Prefect of Students, Infirmary, Organist and Parish Priest of St. Benedict's at Downside, but ceased these duties (except as Parish Priest of St. Benedict's) following his ordination to bishop in 1847.

Davis' apparently uneasy relationship with Prior Wilson during the mid-1840s was considered and it was established that the tension between the two men might have emerged because of Davis' need for a greater challenge in leadership.

Every secondary source suggested by inference that Davis was the only candidate nominated and selected to be Polding's Coadjutor and the Bishop of Maitland. Research has shown this was not to be the case. There were a number of candidates selected and scrutinised by Propaganda Fide as possible candidates before Davis was considered. Possibly Downside did not want to lose Davis to Australia because Davis was extraordinary in what he did; taking into account he held at least six key roles simultaneously prior to being ordained bishop. Perhaps his delicate health may not have made him a first choice for colonial life.

His musical contribution was examined and it was shown Davis was a prolific composer, arranger and improviser, bridging the brass and military band genre and the sacred. As stated earlier, the whereabouts of Davis' hundreds of compositions for brass band, choir and organ appear to be lost, excepting two extant compositions: "Sharon" and "O Salutaris Hostia." Two performance genres were defined: the Approved and Anonymous genres and it was learned that Davis applied both genres in his musical life at Downside Abbey and St. Mary's Cathedral.

Of particular interest was Davis' moments of prayer expressed via the organ. In fact, he was able to improvise numerous sections of standard organ repertoire, his own compositions and arrangements, as well as extemporise sections of the liturgy during periods of quiet prayer and reflection. Davis reformed the choir of St. Mary's, replacing professional singers with a choir initially singing simple liturgical compositions written by Davis, followed by compositions by the great composers and solemn High Mass each Sunday.

A brief history of musical performance at St. Mary's Cathedral was traced in an attempt to present the musical milieu Davis entered after arriving in Sydney in 1848. This comparison showed that Davis did not arrive in a colonial environment oblivious

to improvisation. Rather, performances of extravagant orchestral Masses, organ recitals, sacred oratorios, as well as complex improvisation by church organists were a regular part of Australian colonial life.

The Benedictine convent at Subiaco was founded by Polding in a further effort to establish Benedictinism in Australia. Whilst tradition holds that Davis was appointed to the role of Chaplain, it was difficult to locate any extant material from Polding or Davis directly relating to this position. Depending on priests of St Mary's to celebrate Mass as often as possible, Subiaco maintained a formal relationship with St. Mary's. Davis regularly visited the convent to assist in the administration of the school, lead retreats, celebrate Mass when time allowed, administer the Sacraments to the school children and officiate at various liturgical functions. In all probability, Davis served as their Chaplain 'ex-officio' by virtue of his position as bishop.

Polding envisioned a female branch of the Benedictine Order in Sydney to work in the field of education teaching young women from the local Catholic community. Discussion focused on the prospectus and curriculum offered by the Subiaco community, which, in all probability was designed by Davis and Dame Magdalene Le Clerc.

Three significant areas of Davis' ministry during the early years of his appointment to Sydney were considered: his work with the prisoners of Cockatoo Island; his work on behalf of orphaned boys and girls in the Roman Catholic Orphan School; and his attention to the spiritual needs of the Irish Orphan girls from Hyde Park Barracks.

Davis' continued to petition the Government concerning the fundamental human rights of prisoners on Cockatoo Island. Davis also managed the lives of orphaned Catholic children, knowing the Church could only provide a temporary solution for their care. Davis' spiritual involvement with the Irish orphan girls from Hyde Park

Immigration Barracks was perennial. He led at least one Retreat with them and sometimes personally prepared the children for Eucharist and Confirmation followed by administering the Sacrament of Eucharist and Confirmation.

Davis' contribution to Catholic education was immense. He was frequently acting Abbot of St Mary's Monastery, President of Lyndhurst College and represented the Catholic Church on the Senate of the University of Sydney. Davis was placed in charge of St. Mary's Seminary and was given the task of reviewing the curriculum. He instituted two major strands of learning; "classical" and "mercantile." Later, he expanded the curriculum to include a third strand of subjects. Davis was responsible for the day-to-day running of Lyndhurst College, a school that provided a classical and literary education designed by Davis and enabled its students to matriculate for entry to the University of Sydney. Interestingly, while initially it had great success in educating Catholic boys many of whom went on to hold prominent roles in Sydney society, Lyndhurst failed as a feasible alternative to local education because of three fundamental causes: the continual undermining of the Benedictines by the anti-English feeling of the colony's Catholics who were largely Irish; problems within the ranks of the Australian Benedictines themselves; and Archbishop Vaughan's scathing assessment and closure of the school in 1877. Davis' appointment as a Fellow of the Senate at the University of Sydney was explored. Davis contributed significantly to transacting business, to university administration, to the acquisition of library book stock, to the planning of the university buildings. He attended every meeting of the University Senate except the one in the week before he died and was one of the group who developed the University Senate By-Laws.

Davis grew into his role as Polding's Coadjutor. A number of important aspects of Davis' capacity as a leader appear to have been overlooked by church historians. He

was tremendously pragmatic in his duties as a bishop, particularly whilst Polding was absent from St. Mary's on his missionary journeys. One example was when Davis invited the entire congregation at the end of Mass to join the clergy in the procession through St. Mary's into the monastery gardens on the Feast of Corpus Christi. Another was his ability to care for and 'calm the waters' in the monastery whenever Gregory left on extended periods of travel either alone or in the company of Polding.

Davis asserted his authority fairly when needed, and this occurred particularly in the dispute between Farrelly and Polding. Davis loyally supported Polding during the growing discontent with Polding's desire to make Sydney an Abbey-diocese. Even though Davis did not think this model of 'church' would endure in Sydney, his allegiance to Polding obligated him to the existing order. However, whilst Davis rather than Gregory was the community's preferred Prior, Davis could not resolve the emerging instability at the monastery which had begun in the early 1850s. Furthermore, he was unable to resolve the prolonged and intractable dispute between Willson and Therry in Tasmania.

What is remarkable about Davis was his ability to communicate with the ordinary person. He was a refined and educated Welshman who helped the acceptance of Catholics among Sydney's establishment and among the Government officials with whom he had dealings, both administratively and personally. He was able (as Polding was) able to 'speak both languages.' Davis was a person of vision, especially in the area of music and liturgy. He recognised the importance of the laity and engaged them as much as he could in significant Cathedral liturgies. Davis' many collegial appointments at St. Mary's, as well as his modifications to some of the customary practices in the monastery and Cathedral were significant.

Davis' permanent removal of John Davis Murra from his Indigenous family and his involuntary transportation to a monastery in Europe was shameful and an example of the arrogance (conscious or unconscious) of the European settlers in assuming that their culture and civilisation was superior. While Davis (and Polding) believed they were acting in the best interests of Murra and his family in the hope of his conversion to Christianity, Murra was eventually forgotten by Davis, Polding and Gregory after he left St. Mary's.

Finally, the illnesses, death, burial and the reinterment of Davis to the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney were explored and considered.

By the early 1850s, any hope that St. Mary's would remain the cathedral chapter of Sydney with episcopal succession reserved to the Benedictines and the Archdiocese being officially and indefinitely under the government of the Benedictine Order was quickly fading. Had Davis survived and taken on the role of Archbishop following Polding's death in 1877, he would not have continued attempting to consolidate the Benedictines as the centre of Catholic life in Sydney. Davis believed it would be years before the Benedictines could meet the needs of Sydney's Catholic community. Even during his short time in Sydney, he was aware that much of the Australian population was fiercely Irish and serious action was necessary to preserve its connection to the Catholic religion. Davis, most likely, would have taken his typical pragmatic approach towards religious matters, by consulting and working with the various religious congregations, especially the Irish bishops, in the hope of recruiting additional priests to Australia as missionaries.

Limitations of the research

Whilst researching this dissertation, a number of major limitations began to emerge. The onset of parameters around one's research seems to imply that certain other areas of importance are either excluded or perhaps even given a lower level of importance such as a detailed examination of the various pastoral duties allocated to the other Benedictine monks within the diocese of Sydney. The benchmark for inclusion or exclusion of material in this dissertation has been determined by its ability to assist in the explanation and clarification of the foci stated at the beginning of this chapter.

The first limitation was the lack of resources influences, observations, references or implications available in the current literature that focused directly on the ministry of Charles Davis. This is a disappointing limitation, especially given Davis' administrative assistance and the heavy reliance Polding had on Davis during his six years in Sydney.

The methodology therefore becomes a second limitation in the sense that it impedes the examination of literature on early Australian Benedictinism in any great depth. Had there been more available literature which focused on the ministry of Davis, the latter approach may have been considered.

Final recommendations for future research

Since this research is the first significant attempt to document the life and contribution of Davis, a fourth limitation emerges: the development of ideas on the subject. This study does not try to be anything other than a cautious effort in the advancement in the current field of literature on Polding's 'Benedictine Dream.' Nevertheless, it is hoped that this contribution might offer some encouragement for

others to continue investigating the immense contribution of Bishop Charles Davis to the early Australian Catholic Church.

In addition to the literature already written on early Australian Benedictinism, this dissertation on the life and work of Charles Davis OSB hopes to offer an original contribution. Similarly, the premise that it was Davis who managed the affairs of the Archdiocese and kept Polding's 'Benedictine Dream' alive, albeit for six years, may well be considered another contribution. Finally, it seems Davis has been caricatured as one who played 'second fiddle' to Polding. Another significant contribution to the early Australian Catholic Church was the study of Davis' active role in ministry, political diplomacy, sacred music, his promotion of Catholic education at a secondary and tertiary level, and his leadership of the monks at St. Mary's monastery during the absences of Polding and Gregory. Moreover, little research into the life and contribution of Davis to the Church in nineteenth century Sydney has been attempted in Australian Catholic literature. There is an attempt to present and critique a considerably broad selection of literature on practically every fact known about Davis' life. In essence, the approach adopted is generally all-inclusive which aimed at a producing a synthesis of material. It is hoped that aspects of this dissertation might assist others to advance and deepen the necessary historical evaluation of early Australian Benedictinism.

Chapter 8

Davis and his Leadership in Sydney

Charles Davis demonstrated strength and competence as a church leader, especially while in charge of the Sydney Diocese and St. Mary's Monastery during Polding's numerous missionary absences and an overseas trip.

Davis' negotiation skills were seen in his effort to settle the land dispute between Bishop Willson and Fr. John Therry in Hobart, as well as the Fr. Patrick Serenus Farrelly affair and his handling of the insurgent monks of St. Mary's. Likewise, some of the significant reforms instituted by Davis at St. Mary's monastery during Polding and Gregory's absences will be examined.

Davis' living of the Rule of Benedict in nineteenth century Sydney demonstrates his Benedictine spirituality was like a golden thread weaving its way through his pragmatic living of the Gospel in colonial Australia. St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians embodies Davis' interpretation of the Rule and his approach to instilling the Benedictine charism into his monks:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col 3:16-17).

Not only did Davis make Christ present within the monastery, he strove to show the presence of Christ in everything he did whilst living in an atmosphere of faithfulness and conversion by accepting Benedict's invitation to be a part of the Body of Christ.

Church Administration

A large part of Davis' duties as Polding's Coadjutor was looking after the administration of the Archdiocese. Polding lacked business expertise and found it hindered his missionary work within the colony, causing him to depend on others to introduce planning policies, along with the general management of the Sydney Archdiocese.¹ Following his arrival in December 1848, Davis discovered the organisation of the Archdiocese was in serious disarray. Over the period of about one year, through "dint of perseverance, [and] closely questioning all concerned," Davis was able to reorganise the administrative side of the Archdiocese into some kind of order.² His expertise and management was greatly appreciated because in a letter to the Prioress of Princethorpe, Polding wrote: "I have the greatest consolation and the most efficient support in my excellent coadjutor Dr Davis."³

Examination of Davis' extant correspondence with the Colonial Secretary reveals the kind of mail that passed across his desk from that quarter. Letters advising the Colonial Secretary of ecclesiastical appointments to local churches, applications to build churches, the payment of stipends, the distribution of Church funds from the Government, information regarding diocesan spending and almost daily advice regarding orphan children in need of care appeared to be Davis' main concern as an administrator. Due to his "attention to detail and a gentle but firm manner of transacting business," Davis was proficient at managing the correspondence of the Archdiocese.⁴

¹ Bede Nairn, "John Bede Polding," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/polding-john-bede-2557>, [accessed 2/1/2013].

² Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 154; See also R. A. Daly, "Charles Henry Davis," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/davis-charles-henry-1963>, [accessed 2/1/2013].

³ Polding to Prioress of Princethorpe, 6/3/1852, Fernham Priory Archives (FPA), transcript only.

⁴ R. A. Daly, "Charles Henry Davis," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/davis-charles-henry-1963>, [accessed 2/7/2015].

One surviving letter from Davis to the *Society of the Propagation of the Faith* in France reveals another level of Davis' expertise as a manager: his ability to obtain substantial financial donations for the welfare of the Archdiocese. Davis outlined the shape of the Sydney Archdiocese and advised the Society that the Government adequately "subsidises our priests in areas where there are 300 Catholics," but revealed "these areas are very few in number while on the other we have thousands of Catholics scattered over this vast diocese." Davis continued by stressing the only way to minister to these people was through missionary activity to "defray the costs of which we have few or no resources apart from what we receive from the charity of the faithful of Europe." His letter outlined the government subsidy "of only £200 for one church which has perhaps many thousands of parishioners...and requires the labours of several priests." Davis mentioned St. Mary's Seminary which could "up to a point...remedy the deficiency of priests in [Sydney], by using those we can of our ecclesiastical students for teaching and other clerical duties." He advised Propaganda, however, there was a "total lack of funds for supporting the seminary" and the recently purchased Subiaco property "is now quite overgrown and will need a lot of cultivation before we can expect any income proportionate to the needs of the seminary." The letter described the two houses run by the Sisters of Charity: the Magdalen asylum (Good Shepherd) and "the other devoted to assuaging the spiritual and corporal needs of the poor in the hospitals and other asylums." Davis pointed out that whilst there were only ten nuns working, "four times that number" was needed in their ministry. Due to the lack of funding, numbers were severely restricted.⁵

The heart of his letter focused on the "total lack of means to give religious instruction to our numerous children." As "thousands of children...grow up in infidelity,"

⁵ Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 7/10/1850.

Davis claimed, “children grow up without any religion and with little or no idea of morality” due to the lack of funding. Whilst the Benedictines attempted to “make up for this lack of Catholic teachers,” he argued the need for financial assistance to “establish a class of Catholic teachers” and “maintain them while they [teach] the children of the poor in the far-flung districts.”⁶

Davis was always in search of the moral life and it was in this instance he was ‘listening’ to the important things in life; a foundational Benedictine attitude. He was trying to respond to a need: local children growing up in an irreligious environment. Davis advocated the founding of new Catholic schools, supplied with “good Catholic teachers” to teach Catholics who were generally poor.⁷

Davis acknowledged the poor condition of the Archdiocese and was able to acquire large sums of money for dispersal to areas and regions in need of immediate funding. In a letter to the Colonial Secretary, for example, he requested an advance of £2,000 from the accumulated reserves of Church and School Estates to build a home for Polding and his successors. The property was Lyndhurst; a residence that seems to have been envisaged as a multi-purpose establishment: a property that was to become a school for the sons of wealthy local Catholics and a need for the Archbishop’s residence to somewhat match the home of the Anglican Archbishop as a symbol of his Office. He requested the Governor for approval to purchase the Bowman

⁶ Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 7/10/1850, J. Waldersee, Documents translated from French. The Society of the Propagation of the Faith (Prop. Foi), published in M. Xavier Compton, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding, OSB 1*, ed., M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Doreen Dyson, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 2000), 208-209.

⁷ Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 21/8/1850. J. Waldersee, Documents translated from French. The Society of the Propagation of the Faith (Prop. Foi), published in M. Xavier Compton, *Adjutor Deus*, 204-205. Earlier correspondence from Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith revealed a letter of appreciation for the amount of £25,000. In 1849, this sum was substantial and would have assisted Polding’s Australian mission immensely. £25,000 converts to £16, 924. The 1849 sum of £16, 924 converts to the 2010 equivalent of £1,370,000. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/>, [accessed 2/1/2013]. The money assisted the ‘spiritual and temporal needs’ of 3,000 destitute Irish orphan girls.

house along with the three acres of land adjoining it “and to authorize this payment of the two thousand pounds from the Colonial Treasury for this object.”⁸ He regularly advised the Colonial Secretary of the finer details of Polding’s Benedictine Congregation.

Below are a number of charts summarising correspondence mainly between Davis and the Colonial Secretary.⁹ Figure 1 indicates that from early 1850 until 1854 Davis dealt with twenty-two different applications regarding the establishment of churches. The building of churches was one of Davis’ concerns as an administrator. His responsibilities included Sydney and stretched as far as Sofala (250km north-west of Sydney), Queanbeyan (289km south-west of Sydney) and Brisbane (925km north of Sydney). He took full advantage of *The Church Act of 1836* which provided the granting of public funds in proportion to the increasing numbers of Roman Catholic worshippers in different areas of New South Wales.¹⁰ The Act promoted “the Building of Churches and Chapels...in New South Wales (29th July 1836),”¹¹ creating a religious union between the State and churches using the census as a plan to control the number of churches eligible for public money.¹² One letter that required analysis was the

⁸ In 2010, £2000 from 1851 was worth the equivalent of: £171,000. This figure converts to the 2010 Australian sum of \$265,451. See http://coinmill.com/AUD_GBP.html#GBP=171,000, [accessed 2/1/2013].

⁹ See the collection of transcribed letters in J. Waldersee, Documents translated from French. The Society of the Propagation of the Faith (Prop. Foi), published in M. Xavier Compton, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding, OSB* 1, ed., M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Doreen Dyson, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 2000). Whilst this edition does not present every extant letter of Davis, it does provide a generous overview of transcribed correspondence by Davis during his term as Polding’s Coadjutor, especially in regard to his business dealings with the Colonial Secretary, Edward Deas Thomson. A list outlining a three-month snapshot of orphan applications forwarded to Davis in 1851 has already been discussed. Please see Chapter 6 for these details. These letters are not included in this summary, but suffice to say between 1850 and 1852 alone, Davis would have dealt with an enormous number of individual requests for Catholic care.

¹⁰ It was not until 1859 Queensland became an independent colony from New South Wales. Hence, Davis’ concern for the construction of a church in Brisbane. (Letter to the Colonial Secretary 9/7/1851, SAAM P43m, 83-84).

¹¹ <http://intranet.cbhslewisham.nsw.edu.au:82/sor/concepta.asp?resource=12&conid=10>, [accessed 4/1/2013].

¹² For a detailed discussion on the growth of Christianity in colonial Australia, see K. Inglis, “Religion and Society in Colonial Australia,” *Tjurunga*, 15, (May 1978): 5-25.

correspondence sent by Davis to the Colonial Secretary on 22 July 1850 requesting the reserve of £2,000 which “the Vicar General under the direction of the Archbishop has applied for a Residence for the Head of the R. C. Church, be devoted to securing some permanent means of providing R. C. Clergymen for the Colony.”¹³ This suggested the use of the money “be appropriated to the Foundation of an Ecclesiastical Seminary, in which young men may be prepared for the duties of the Sacred Ministry.”¹⁴ It seems this proposal was not initially supported,¹⁵ however, since Davis’ request for £2,000 went to London, the Executive Council advised Polding it would likely be approved.¹⁶ In July 1851, Davis received a letter on behalf of the Colonial Secretary, stating permission had been granted.¹⁷ On 18 September, Davis wrote to the Colonial Secretary asking “to sanction a Grant of 5 acres of land as a site for the Residence in question” and a “portion of Grose Farm immediately contiguous to the 2 acres...for the erection of a Roman Catholic Church, Schoolhouse and Presbytery at Camperdown.”¹⁸ Coincidentally, the location of Grose Farm was where the University of Sydney was being established.¹⁹

Earlier, on 15 September, Davis applied for two acres of land in Camperdown with the goal of building a “Roman Catholic Church, Schoolhouse and Presbytery.” Interestingly, Davis’ application mirrored a five acre application by the Anglican Bishop, William Broughton in 1851, who was in search of a sizable property at Camperdown

¹³ Davis to Thomson, 22/7/1850 (with reference to the letter from Gregory to Thomson, 25/5/1850, (SAA P43). See Kevin J. Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary: A History of St. Patrick’s Manly*, (St. Leonards NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 37-40.

¹⁴ Davis to Thomson, 22/7/1850, SAA, P43. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

¹⁵ Thomson to Davis, 29/8/1850, SAA, P15. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

¹⁶ Thomson to Gregory, 5/7/1850, SAA, P15. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

¹⁷ Elyard to Davis, 21/7/1851, SAA P16. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

¹⁸ Davis to Thomson, 18/9/1851. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

¹⁹ The farm granted to Lieutenant Governor Francis Grose in 1792 became the name of the larger area set aside for the University of Sydney in the 1850s (Grose Farm), http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/place/grose_farm, [accessed 4/1/2013].

for his residence.²⁰ Polding, it seems, changed his mind and decided to purchase the property at Lyndhurst instead. Davis wrote to Thomson seeking to use the £2,000 to purchase “the House of Lyndhurst situate near the Glebe Estate, late the property of Dr Bowman” and three acres of land adjoining the Bowman house as Polding’s residence.²¹ As the reader might recall, an additional seventeen acres were acquired at the cost of an extra £2,000, but Polding never officially lived at Lyndhurst.

Figure 1: Church Buildings

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
Church building	22/3/1850	Colonial Secretary	Application to build Church at Ryde. Payment of Stipend.
Church building	22/3/1850	Colonial Secretary	Application to build Church at Petersham – Payment of Stipend.
Church building	22/7/1850	Colonial Secretary	Distribution of revenue derived from Church & School Estates
Church building	9/7/1851	Colonial Secretary	Bill for Church at Brisbane.
Church building	15/9/1851	Colonial Secretary	Building a Church, School & Presbytery at Camperdown.
Church building	23/10/1851	Colonial Secretary	Financial aid for Church at Petersham (£500).
Church building	24/10/1851	Colonial Secretary	Permission to build Church and residence at principal places where gold digging is carried on (& Salary).
Church building	14/11/1851	Colonial Secretary	Distribution of funds for Church use.
Church building	7/2/1852	Colonial Secretary	Purchase of building materials for Church at Sofala.
Church building	9/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Erection of Church at King’s Plains instead of Carcoar.

²⁰ Davis to Thomson, 15/9/1851, SAA, P43. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

²¹ Davis to Thomson, 13/10/1851, SAA, P43. See Walsh, *Yesterday’s Seminary*, 37-40.

Church building	12/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Appropriation of land for clergyman's house at St. Patrick's, Church Hill.
Church building	30/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Payment of £1,280.10.0 on Church at Balmain.
Church building	2/4/1852	Colonial Secretary	Payment of £2,199.3.0 on Church at Darlinghurst.
Church building	14/4/1852	Colonial Secretary	Transaction of Plans for presbytery at Queanbeyan.
Church building	9/7/1852	Colonial Secretary	Sum of £353.6.8 be made available to begin building residence next to Queanbeyan Church.
Church building	11/8/1852	Colonial Secretary	Obtaining stones to repair Church at the Orphan School, Parramatta.
Church building	12/3/1853	Colonial Secretary	Request for architect to inspect St. Patrick's at Parramatta (deemed unsafe).
Church building	19/4/1853	Colonial Secretary	Application to purchase a house as a temporary Church & several smaller houses in township of Sofala (£320).
Church building	15/7/1853	Colonial Secretary	Re removal of stone from quarry for repairs to St. John's Church in Parramatta.
Church building	24/9/1853	Colonial Secretary	Request for Balances of Churches at Queanbeyan, Berrima & Brisbane be merged in the Balances of 1852 (£3,202.1.9).
Church building	3/10/1853	Colonial Secretary	Distribution of Balances at the credit of Churches at Queanbeyan, Berrima & Brisbane (£1,119.0.0)
Church building	8/5/1854	Colonial Secretary	Information re expenditure of £1,215.11.8 on Church at Ryde.

Figure 2 shows religious appointments occurring between 1850 and 1852 were sparse, numbering only four (not including McEncroe's appointment as acting Vicar General during the temporary absence of Henry Gregory).

Figure 2: Clerical Appointments

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
Clerical appointments	11/3/1850	Colonial Secretary	Appointment of McEncroe Acting V.G. in absence of Gregory.
Clerical appointments	10/10/1850	Colonial Secretary	Appointment of J. Murray Chaplain at Wollongong & N. Coffey, Chaplain at Bathurst. (Replacing M. Corish and P. Farrelly respectively).
Clerical appointments	27/1/1852	Colonial Secretary	Appointment of P. Young – Chaplain at the Turon.
Clerical appointments	19/2/1852	Colonial Secretary	Appointment of F. Young – Chaplain at the Turon, and allowance of £50 p.a. for erection of temporary residence.

Figures 3 and 4 indicate few schools were built; however, Davis was able to acquire land for future school construction, including Lyndhurst.

Figure 3: School Buildings

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
School buildings	6/5/1851	Colonial Secretary	Permission to build Boys' school at St. Benedict's, Glebe.
School buildings	18/9/1851	Colonial Secretary	Grant of 5 acres for Church, school and Presbytery at Camperdown.

Figure 4: Purchase of Land for Church Use

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
Purchase of land for church use	13/10/1851	Colonial Secretary	Advice re availability of Lyndhurst for purchase of £2,000 from Colonial Treasury.
Purchase of land for church use	24/10/1851	Colonial Secretary	Permission to purchase land for building Church at Sofala on the Turon.
Purchase of land for church use	28/11/1851	Colonial Secretary	Purchase of Lyndhurst.
Purchase of land for church use	18/9/1851	Colonial Secretary	Advance of £2,000 from fund of Church & School Estates to erect residence for Archbishop & successors.
Purchase of land for church use	17/5/1852	Colonial Secretary	Request for payment of £2,000 for Lyndhurst.
Purchase of land for church use	11/6/1852	Colonial Secretary	Approval re purchase of land.

Figure 5 shows Davis regularly applied for the payment of priestly stipends, (including his own salary); including an increase in the remuneration for Polding (from £500 to £800 per annum).²²

²² In 1854, £500 converts to the 2010 sum of £36,600. The 2010 Australian equivalent is: \$56, 815AU. Davis' application for a raise in Polding's earnings would have provided him with the 2010 equivalent of £58,600; an additional £12,000 per annum. Similarly, in 2010, Davis' salary (£350 p.a.) equates to the 2010 equivalent of £29,700. The payment for a priest working in the Australian mission in 1852 was £150 pa; the 2010 equivalent of £12,700, or the Australian equivalent of \$19,714; surprisingly low for the tremendous work commitment required of a Roman Catholic priest at this time. http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/result.php?use%5B%5D=CPI&use%5B%5D=NOMINALEARN&year_early=1854£71=800&shilling71=&pence71=&amount=800&year_source=1854&year_result=201, [accessed 4/1/2013].

Figure 5: Payment of Stipends

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
Payment of stipends	16/1/1852	Colonial Secretary	Payment of Stipends.
Payment of stipends	19/1/1852	Colonial Secretary	Payment of Stipends.
Payment of stipends	9/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Stipend for Daniel O'Connell.
Payment of stipends	12/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Continuance of Archbishop's salary during his absence from the Colony (3-4 months).
Payment of stipends	12/7/1852	Colonial Secretary	Salaries for RC priest at Araluen Gold Fields (£150).
Payment of stipends	17/7/1852	Colonial Secretary	Request that J. Gourbeillon receive £60.14.2 for services to Immigration Barracks.
Payment of stipends	20/10/1852	Colonial Secretary	Salary for Charles Davis – £350.
Payment of stipends	29/10/1852	Colonial Secretary	Appointment of ministers to various gaols throughout the colony & their stipends.
Payment of stipends	12/3/1853	Colonial Secretary	Outstanding salaries for 4 Churches to merge into unexpended Balance for 1852. Claim for £510.10.0 for Church at Queanbeyan.
Payment of stipends	9/1/1854	Colonial Secretary	Increase salary of Archbishop from £500 to £800 p.a.

Figures 6 and 7 provide an overview of extant correspondence relating to Church monies and general correspondence mostly between Davis and the Colonial Secretary.

Figure 6: Church Monies (General)

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
Church monies (general)	8/5/1852	Colonial Secretary	Distribution of Church funds by Government.
Church monies (general)	5/6/1852	Colonial Secretary	Balance of Church monies.

Church monies (general)	25/2/1853	T. P. Heptonstall	Lyndhurst & Subiaco – general costing.
Church monies (general)	27/3/1854	Colonial Secretary	Balance of the Public Worship Fund.

Figure 7: General Correspondence

Category	Date	Recipient	Subject of the Letter
General correspondence	21/8/1850	Society of the Propagation of the Faith - France	Appreciation of donation of £25,000.
General correspondence	15/7/1851	Colonial Secretary	Cannot recommend offer of £2,500 for purchase of Liverpool Hospital.
General correspondence	8/8/1851	Colonial Secretary	Complaint re undue use of stone for additions to St. Mary's Cathedral and the state of the roads cut up by the carts from the quarry.
General correspondence	10/11/1851	Colonial Secretary	Re outcome of abuse of quarry work for additions to St. Mary's Cathedral.
General correspondence	23/3/1852	Colonial Secretary	Illegal purchase of Polding's mare which went missing some months earlier.
General correspondence	9/7/1852	Colonial Secretary	Request for proper transport for priest ministering to convicts on Cockatoo Island.
General correspondence	16/7/1852	Colonial Secretary	Request for interview.
General correspondence	30/9/1852	Colonial Secretary	Attendance of ministers at Darlinghurst Gaol & Cockatoo Island. Defence of their attendance.
General correspondence	17/9/1853	Society of the Propagation of the Faith	Sadness re death of the previous President. General discussion re the state of religion in the Colony.
General correspondence	9/12/1853	Colonial Secretary	Permission to acquire iron from Europe due to cheaper prices compared to Sydney.

General correspondence	20/3/1854	Colonial Secretary	Advice that Polding is travelling to Europe (6-8 months).
General correspondence	2/5/1854	Fr. J. Rigney	Admonishing Rigney re his lack of courtesy to Dean Lynch.

The preceding charts, whilst certainly not complete, provide some clue regarding the volume of business facing Davis. A reading of his letter to the Colonial Secretary and his successes in acquiring most of what he applied forward amply illustrate his diplomatic skills. Moreover, it also says much about the close nexus between the Roman Catholic Church (and other denominations) and colonial government which recognised the contribution the churches could make to building colonial society and influencing their adherents.

Davis' attempts at negotiation are seen in two notable instances. The first example is his unsuccessful intervention in the conflict between Bishop Willson and Fr. John Therry in Tasmania. The second examines his role in the Fr. Patrick Serenus Farrelly polemic which eventually saw Polding travel to Rome in 1854 with the intention of tendering his resignation as Archbishop of Sydney.

The Willson and Therry controversy

This divisive dispute between Bishop Willson (Hobart) and Fr. John Joseph Therry concerning a church debt of £3300 continued for fourteen years. He wrote to Polding confirming the diocese-to-be was debt-free, but went on to accumulate more debt against this property.²³

²³ Timothy L. Suttor, *Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870: The formation of Australian Catholicism*, (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1965), 85-86. Also refer to Polding to Therry, 29/9/1844, see O'Brien, E. M. *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1922), 226-227.

In a letter to Bishop Willson shortly after his arrival, Polding hinted at the possible situation Willson was to expect during his episcopacy: “Your Lordship at starting has stumbled on the same truth I found in my path at the commencement of my career – an Irishman – in confidence be it said – is never comfortable out of debt.”²⁴

Following Willson’s arrival in Tasmania, Therry refused to surrender the accounts to him. Similarly, Willson declined to revoke the debt.²⁷ In 1844 Polding and McEncroe went to Hobart to arbitrate but failed to settle the matter.

Towards the end of 1849 Willson invited Davis to travel to Hobart to mediate. Willson considered Davis’ gentle but firm style of transacting business might help resolve the matter. Polding thought it better not to send Therry “the outline of the plan of adjustment”; an approach Davis agreed with.³⁵

Davis left Sydney for Hobart on 2 January 1850 with Fr. Lucas for “a period of six weeks if not longer.”³⁶ Lucas accompanied Davis because it seemed Therry considered Davis “a partisan of the Bishop.”³⁷

From all he had heard of the “peculiarities of the parties,” Davis advised Willson that it would be better not to let Therry examine any document on the subject until he was able to present it to him personally.³⁸ Davis also wrote a letter to Joseph Wilson, the Prior of Downside before leaving Sydney sharing his own thoughts on the matter.³⁹ Given he was critical of both men, Davis was assiduous in his preparation of what was to become a difficult task of negotiation. Davis considered Willson should “immediately

²⁴ Polding to Willson, 8/6/1844, PF CO, Vol. 5, f. 95.

²⁷ Suttor, *Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870*, 86.

³⁵ Polding to Willson, 3/11/1849, quoted in W. T. Southerwood, *The Convict’s Friend: a Life of Bishop Robert William Willson*, (George Town, Tasmania: Stella Maris Books, 1989), 308.

³⁶ *BJ*, 2/1/1850.

³⁷ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O’Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

³⁸ Davis to Willson, 7/1/1850, quoted in Southerwood, *The Convict’s Friend*, 308.

³⁹ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O’Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

decline having anything to do with [the £3,000 debt] until the Archbishop and Mr. Therry, who had been his grace's V.G. in V. Diemen's Land, should have settled these matters and put all on good footing."⁴⁰ Davis continued: "[Willson] took possession of his Church, got Mr. Therry to make over to him the salary (about £600 a year) which Mr. Therry had hitherto enjoyed as head of the church, and then declined the responsibility of the debt. This appears hardly fair..."⁴¹

Davis contended that since Therry "had been solely instrumental in securing this Government salary to the Church," he thought it appropriate for Willson to give Therry the responsibility of the Church debt. Davis described Therry in colloquial terms as "a *rum un* to deal with",⁴² adding "to be at variance with him is to be exposed to odium from all quarters" because he is one who "is esteemed and loved by all amongst whom he has been labouring during the last 30 years." He considered Therry as "the queerest mixture of good and evil...that ever crossed your path." Of Therry's "good" characteristics, Davis wrote of Therry's capacity to be "benevolent and charitable in the extreme, indefatigably zealous, and of extraordinary devotion; hours will be spent kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament after celebrating Mass, should no duty call him away." Of his so-called "evil" side, Davis advised "[Therry would] not scruple as to the means of annoying anyone that unfortunately comes in contact with him." Even though he would "spend all that he had amongst the poor"; Davis added "[Therry] would niggle with the poor Bishop for a farthing."⁴³

⁴⁰ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 242. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

⁴¹ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

⁴² A "rum un" was the slang description of someone who was liable to take shortcuts with rules; see <http://forum.wordreference.com/showthread.php?t=102270>, [accessed 6/1/2013].

⁴³ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

Davis pointed out that nearly all the laity sympathised with Therry, making Willson's disapproval "proportionate to that sympathy." Accordingly, because of the delay in settling the dispute, he indicated the debt had been accumulating interest at 8% over the past six years.⁴⁴

Davis did not have much confidence in his ability to resolve the dispute, nor did he "contemplate [his] job with much pleasure." Polding, on the other hand, was confident Davis would be effective in ending the conflict.⁴⁵ Davis estimated the cost of travel and living expenses to be about £50, but added "I should be happy to spend ten times the sum (if I had it), to restore peace to that afflicted Church."⁴⁶

When he met with Therry, Davis had to negotiate with one who, for many years, continued to almost singlehandedly keep the Catholic faith alive in New South Wales and Tasmania; and for whom Governors and the Legislative Council held no fears when the rights of the Church were at stake. Therry believed he was right and was determined to stubbornly defend his view.⁴⁷

Davis was unable to resolve the dispute and returned to Sydney on 10 February 1850 "quite unnoticed...proceeding towards his room...being rather fatigued."⁴⁸ He wrote to Willson regretting "his humble endeavours to arrange these affairs [had] proved so unsatisfactory."⁴⁹ The Willson-Therry affair continued until 1857. Davis' failure to effectively mediate frustrated and disappointed him given he sometimes referred to it in later letters. It seems there is no extant correspondence suggesting

⁴⁴ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

⁴⁵ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 243. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

⁴⁶ Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, quoted in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 244. Also refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 155-56.

⁴⁷ Alan Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 18-15-1854: Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop," *Australian Catholic Record* LIX, no. 2, (1982): 215-6.

⁴⁸ *BJ*, 10/2/1850.

⁴⁹ Quoted in Mary Shanahan, "Bishop Davis: 1848-1854," *Manna* 6, (1963): 58.

Davis and Polding ever worked together in an effort to end this problem following Davis' return to Sydney.⁵⁰

Surprisingly, throughout this whole ordeal Polding never removed Therry from Tasmania. Had he been able to act towards Therry as punitively as he had towards Fr. Conolly and Fr. Watkins in an earlier crisis, much distress, frustration and anxiety for the episcopal administration could have been avoided. Doubtless Polding had a deep appreciation of Therry's own great missionary journeys and pastoral care of the Catholic community. Politically, Polding did not want to lose the friendship of the people either by removing "their priest" from Tasmania. Even Davis was worried about how he would be received by Therry. Regrettably, Polding lost the possibility of developing a strong friendship and alliance with Willson. He was about Polding's age and had much experience in the English missions. Moreover, he worked tirelessly to improve social conditions within penal settlements, particularly Norfolk Island.⁵¹

The Fr. Patrick Serenus Farrelly dispute

Between the years 1848 to 1850 the *Benedictine Journal* gives the impression of steadiness and happiness amongst the Sydney monks. In 1848, for example, Sr. Scholastica Gregory described the community as "fervent" and "disciplined."⁵³ The

⁵⁰ In 1857, the Right Reverend Dr. Goold, Bishop of Melbourne, and the Right Reverend Dr. Murphy, Bishop of Adelaide travelled to Hobart and successfully engendered a compromise between both parties. Willson was to become personally responsible for £1,500 and £45 12s 6d in expenses. St. Joseph's and the grounds were legally secured by trustees from a grant from the Crown. Willson appealed to the laity throughout Tasmania to contribute to paying off the remaining debt of £1,545 12s 6d declaring: "It has ever been the practice of the Catholic Church for the faithful of a whole diocese to contribute towards the church used as a Cathedral for their Bishop." Refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 88.

⁵¹ In a March 1852 letter to Davis, Willson wrote on prison reform: "I am making a vigorous effort by letter of forty-eight pages to induce Her Majesty's Government to abandon Norfolk Island as soon as possible. They cannot resist the facts laid before them. I will not rest until it be done." See J. H. Cullen, "Robert William Willson," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/willson-robert-william-2800>, [accessed 6/1/2013].

⁵³ Sr. Scholastica to Reverend Mother, Princethorpe, 22/3/1848, RW:OSB/4-2c.

Dominican historian, Christopher Dowd argues however, that by the late 1840s St. Mary's morale gradually became low and poor discipline began to numb the community.⁵⁴ This decline emerged because of the haphazard recruiting of monks in Australia and overseas, superficial training, personality clashes, management problems and frequent and prolonged absences by Polding or Gregory either on their missionary journeys, or overseas.⁵⁵

Dowd describes St. Mary's as having "reached its apogee of Conventual life around 1850 when there were approximately 45 monks."⁵⁶ By late 1851, it was obvious the morale of the community had become disheartened. Recreation days, for example, had developed into days where the monks were simply "loitering about the garden, or in moody silence or such like." More importantly: "This day [23 October 1851]...was distinguished by a step, which will hold an important place, in the records of Monasticism in Australia, one which will not easily be forgotten by the present inmates of St. Mary's."⁵⁷ The commentator was referring to the question over the validity of the monks' vows. These uncertainties had been fostered by Fr. Patrick Serenus Farrelly, an Irish secular priest who had been received into the monastery at the end of 1843. He became convinced his monastic profession was invalid. Farrelly managed to convince several other aggrieved monks their vows were also null and void. Farrelly attempted to persuade the young Benedictine monks monasticism in a frontier society could not exist in the current situation.⁵⁸ Farrelly and the rebel monks argued the

⁵⁴ Christopher Dowd, *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions, 1834-1884*, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishing, 2008), 168.

⁵⁵ Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 168.

⁵⁶ Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 168.

⁵⁷ *BJ*, 23/10/1851.

⁵⁸ Terence Kavenagh, "The 1855 Declarations of St. Mary's Sydney: Adapting "RB" to Colonial Australia?" *Tjurunga*, 34 (1988): 70; Kevin Livingstone, "Anselm Curtis," *Tjurunga*, 8 (1974): 199; Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 169.

monastic government under Gregory could be barely tolerated. They claimed they had to be “abject, grovelling and slavish” towards him.⁵⁹

Davis was approached by the community and the matter was discussed openly and honestly with him in the absence of Polding and Gregory.⁶⁰ Since the problem was deemed to be “most serious,” it was expected that “long consultation was needed to conciliate” their doubts, leaving them in a “state of most afflicting doubt, apprehension and uncertainty.”⁶¹ Given the significance of the matter, one wonders whether they held chapter often. The period of anticipated “long consultation” between the groups distressed some of the monks because a few days later, some of the recently professed monks were granted dispensation from their simple vows by Davis “in consequence of a serious misunderstanding between them and their superiors.”⁶² Those monks previously dispensed of their simple vows were “no longer considered as belonging to the community.”⁶³ On 28 October 1851, other monks approached Davis and presented a document “containing their reclamation, and setting forth the grounds thereof.”

When Polding returned from the Bathurst District on 17 November 1851, Davis briefed him regarding the complaints and objections, as well as informing him of the previous dispensations. The next day, Polding and Davis met with the “reclaimants” and listened to their grievances. The monks left the meeting “fully satisfied” and with “their doubts” removed, “thus restoring unanimity and good feeling” at St. Mary’s.⁶⁵ This was to prove temporary.

⁵⁹ Moore to Father President, 18/10/1849, quoted in Mary Shanahan, M. *Out of Time, Out of Place*, (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970), 57.

⁶⁰ Polding was visiting the gold diggings of the Bathurst District from 16/9/1851 to 17/11/1851 through Sydney – Bathurst – Carcoar – King’s Plains – Burrowa – Orange – Molong – Wellington – Sofala – Mudgee – Hartley – Sydney. Gregory was in Rome.

⁶¹ *BJ*, 23/10/1851.

⁶² *BJ*, 23/10/1851.

⁶³ *BJ*, 28/10/1851.

⁶⁵ *BJ*, 18/11/1851.

As Prior, Gregory was not expected to have all the answers to questions within St. Mary's monastery, but there was an expectation he should be able to discern the truth of the community and allow the monks to speak truth from their own perspective. By all accounts, Gregory preferred an autocratic style which seemed to deny the monks the chance to open their hearts with honesty and trust. It appears Gregory did not listen to the experiences of the men who brought to the community of St. Mary's their own unique gifts and personalities. Certainly the ideals of the Rule of Benedict set down in the sixth century should never be abandoned, but to become an effective Prior, Gregory needed to re-interpret the Rule and adapt it to a nineteenth century monastic context in colonial Australia.

Davis on the other hand, was sensitive to the members of the community no matter what their length of religious service was. He was approached because he valued every monk for who they were and regarded everyone as equal. Davis endeavoured to hear the Word of God in each monk so the Word of God might be practiced in the Sydney community.

The Monastic Constitution of St. Mary's Sydney

Whilst the problem of the validity of vows was being considered, another issue erupted. Some of the monks at St. Mary's queried the Monastic Constitution (or apparent lack of). As part of his plea in Rome regarding the alleged validity of his vows, Farrelly argued the nonexistence of a formal Monastic Constitution at St. Mary's. The Constitutions became the subject of Polding's supposed inconsistent interpretations.⁶⁶ Farrelly stated Polding's authority at St. Mary's was careless inasmuch as the variations of the Rule of St. Benedict for Australian conditions were not formalised and

⁶⁶ Kavenagh, "The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary's Sydney" 45.

they were being regularly altered by Polding.⁶⁷ A couple of years earlier, Edmund Moore wrote the English Constitutions he experienced at Downside appeared to be irrelevant at St. Mary's. In fact, Moore went so far as to allude to an apparent lack of Rules under Polding's leadership:

In my first letter I remember very well saying that St. Mary's was more of a Monastery than St. Gregory's. These were my sentiments when I had been only a few days on land. Afterwards, when I had had time to (discern?) the internal arrangements of things, my impressions began to be other than those which first came over me. I had left England under the full persuasion that here in Sydney I should find a Religious House in which the Constitutions of the English Benedictines wd. be observed almost to the letter. To my great surprise, instead of the Constitutions, I found not so much as one Rule of any kind by which the House was to be governed. When I had noticed this I went directly to the Archbishop and had an interview with His Grace of an hour, during which time I learnt that there existed a set of Rules which he himself had drawn up before he left for Europe. This was to me information which I had been unable to meet with elsewhere. This tended somewhat to settle my mind, but I was very slow in the recovery from my disappointment of (not) finding English Benedictines here. I even went as far as to tell His Grace that I much regretted having left England. To break the matter short, suffice it is to say that the Archbishop and myself were on very bad terms from the time of my interview with him, until the Easter Retreat.⁶⁸

The "Rules" alluded to by Moore were probably the ones approved by Pius IX in a Propaganda decree dated 15 May 1847 stating:

On account of the need for religious institutes in Australia, that those monks who have the consent of the Superiors, may leave their monasteries and that all of them may follow equally a uniform Constitution in Australia, even

⁶⁷ Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 169.

⁶⁸ Moore to Morrall, 25/2/1849, cited in Kavenagh, "The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary's Sydney," 44. Many of Polding's monks were not born in England, other than the Sydney superiors, which points to the fact most monks were essentially Irishmen by birth or descent. There were however, a number of outstanding secular missionary priests working in Sydney such as John Lynch, John Rigney, James Hanly, Timothy McCarthy, Michael Kavenagh, Richard Walsh and John Kenny who supported Polding and his ideas and were "devoted to him personally." See Christopher Dowd, *Papal policy towards conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions: The relationship between John Bede Polding, O.S.B., Archbishop of Sydney, and the Sacred Congregation De Propaganda Fide, 1842-1874*, PhD diss. Australian National University, Canberra, July 1994, 35. Dowd discusses other examples of ethnic tensions in the Australian missions that were not confined to the English and Irish. In the 1840s and 1850s, for example, Polding did not have good working relations with the Italian and French clergy present in his diocese. Similarly, there were Irish bishops who had a bad record in their dealings with priests not of an Anglo-Saxon-Celtic background. See Dowd, *Papal policy towards conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions*, 36.

though the rules of the Houses where they made their profession may be different...⁶⁹

Polding and Moore continued to clash over matters of authority. Polding described him as a person of a “ensorious, discontented disposition,” probably because Moore questioned him on matters concerning the administration of the monastery.⁷⁰

Following Davis’ arrival at St. Mary’s in December 1848, Moore and Davis became friends. Moore saw in Davis a connection to Downside.⁷¹ This relationship seemed to offer Moore some degree of “protection” from being removed from St. Mary’s by Polding.⁷² Moore suggested the “Rules” drawn up by Polding were known only by a few, and had not been made available to the entire community. Davis supported this view and wrote the following comments a couple of months after his arrival:

The Monastery has hitherto been governed by our Holy Father’s Rule as *interpreted by the Abbot*, - a plan no doubt unobjectionable, being the [way?] our Holy Father lived, who tho’ Abbot was always on the spot to interpret the rule and prevent irregularities and abuses, but I don’t think the plan so practicable and desirable under our circumstances when both the Abbot and the Prior (viz. the ArchBp. and Dr. Gregory) have in addition to their monastic cares, that of their immense Mission.⁷³

⁶⁹ Propaganda decree of 15 May 1847, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 44.

⁷⁰ Polding to Heptonstall, 20/10/1848, DA, M103. In the same letter, Polding discussed his removal of “some of [the] new arrivals” at St. Mary’s, who, in his opinion, caused “discontent” within the monastery. Polding described his actions accordingly: “Well I determined upon a plunge into the midst of them.” Polding had Fathers Ruggiero Emmanuele, Peter, and Caldwell transferred to other parishes. Caldwell’s older brother approached Polding and told him he had no confidence in him and asked to be relocated as well. Caldwell (senior) was granted this request. Terence Kavenagh described Polding’s actions towards the removal of these priests as one that resembled a “divide and rule” approach. See Terence Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” *Tjurunga* 10 (1975): 57.

⁷¹ Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” 51.

⁷² During Davis’ first serious illness when he was close to death (from 25/4/1849 to 14/8/1849), Polding sent Moore back to England in the May. Subsequent to Davis’ recovery, Davis wrote to Prior Wilson of Downside: “You were no doubt astonished at Edmond (sic) Moore’s return from Australia. The affair occurred when my illness was at its height, and all that I heard of it at the time was that he had complained to the ArchBp and had distressed His Grace so much by his manner of complaint that the result was a separation. It is possible that Edmond (sic) was misunderstood as I know that the good ArchBp’s mind was in a greatly harassed state on my account, my death being almost hourly expected. I think that had I been well Edmond (sic) would not have left.” Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849, B Coll, M231, D.A. cited in Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” 52.

⁷³ Davis to Wilson, 29/2/1849, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45.

Whilst Davis approved of an interpretation of the Rule by the Abbot to “prevent irregularities and abuses,” because Polding and Gregory were often absent from the monastery. Davis favoured a structured set of Rules which conformed to the context of nineteenth century Sydney, but realised the ideals of the original Rule should never be abandoned. He began writing his own interpretation of the “Rule” for St. Mary’s; “something like standing and permanent orders.” Davis was satisfied with his “humble endeavours” and was encouraged to know his “Rule” would “ultimately prove beneficial” for the running of the Sydney monastery. He was convinced Polding and Gregory would approve of his suggestions and see the advantage “of having things more defined.”⁷⁴ It is unknown whether Davis completed his “Rule” because six months later Polding wrote to the EBC President stating: “When we are sufficiently numerous to form a separate Body for the Mission we shall be enabled to establish Rules [for] our Government.”⁷⁵

By May 1851, regulations of some kind had been formulated and were being used at St. Mary’s. In a letter to Abbot Pietro Casaretto of Subiaco, Polding described “daily regulations” taken by Gregory to submit a report on the Australian Church to

Propaganda Fide:

I think it will be an excellent thing to establish exact conformity between the discipline at Subiaco and ours in Sydney. Where there exist different disciplines, the customs are different as well as the regulations, and making comparisons is not good. The Prior is taking our general daily regulations with him and, as he knows my ideas, it is not necessary to me to write in greater detail.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Davis to Wilson, 29/2/1849, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45.

⁷⁵ Polding to Barber, 6/8/1849, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45. Interestingly, the community at St. Mary’s numbered about forty-five.

⁷⁶ Polding to Casaretto, c. May 1851, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45.

Whether Polding wrote these “general daily regulations,” guided by the draft prepared by Davis two years earlier will be difficult to ascertain. On 15 February 1856, Polding formally promulgated the new Constitutions for his community. These Constitutions were approved by Rome in 1855 and were referred to as the “Declarations” since they were appended comments to each chapter of the Rule of St. Benedict.⁷⁷

Davis recognised in both Polding and Gregory a style of leadership that leaned towards the imperious. In a letter to Wilson, Davis suggested they should both “suffer the diminution of their authority” if the monastery and the mission were to succeed.⁷⁸ Here Davis was indicating Polding and Gregory should clothe themselves in greater humility by learning to listen to the words, directions and wisdom of those who might be the voice of Christ at any particular time. One is reminded in *The Rule of Benedict* that:

[A] man not only admits with his tongue but is also convinced in his heart that he is inferior to all and of less value, humbling himself and saying with the Prophet: *I am truly a worm, not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people* (Ps 21[22]:7). *I was exalted, then I was humbled and overwhelmed with confusion* (Ps 87[88]:16). And again, *It is a blessing that you have humbled me so that I can learn your commandments* (Ps 118[119]:71, 73).⁸⁰

Davis’ observations bring Polding and Gregory face to face with their struggle for authority. Davis’ desire for objectivity, humility, compassion and even-handedness as a leader in the monastery becomes more evident during this period of instability at St. Mary’s; particularly during Polding’s and Gregory’s absences. Furthermore, the

⁷⁷ Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45.

⁷⁸ Davis to Wilson, 29/2/1849, cited in Kavenagh, “The 1855 Monastic Constitutions of St. Mary’s Sydney” 45.

⁸⁰ Timothy Fry, (Ed.) *RB 1980 – The Rule of Benedict*, “Chapter 7.51 – Humility” (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1981), 199-201.

Benedictine charism becomes more apparent in the person of Davis during his frequent periods of leadership at the monastery.

Meanwhile Farrelly's dispute with Polding over the validity of his vows still required a solution.

Farrelly's dispute with Polding

What caused Farrelly to believe his solemn Profession on 8 April 1845 was null and void? According to Farrelly, he alleged that as a postulant and novice he was frequently harassed by Polding, and as such, his religious profession was invalid. Farrelly added the following reference from the Theological College of Salamanca to support his argument: "The same is to be said of a Solemn Vow made from grave fear; for such a vow has no binding on the one who makes it even if it is entirely and simply left to his free-will (*Salmaticenses*)."⁸¹ According to Farrelly, his harassment stemmed from an alleged sexual relationship he had with a woman in 1845. Both Farrelly and the woman denied any sexual impropriety. Farrelly wrote a letter to Polding describing in detail three separate occasions where Polding allegedly acted with hostility towards him. Firstly, he asserted that Polding pronounced a "sentence of public punishment for a secret frailty" on him. Secondly, he claimed Polding limited his walks in the gardens of St. Mary's and stated that "if he did not submit to [Polding], [Polding] would denounce him from the altar of St. Mary's." Thirdly, at a retreat for deacons, Farrelly alleged he requested a blessing from Polding. Polding supposedly replied, "Begone out of my

⁸¹ Farrelly is quoting the authors of the courses of Scholastic philosophy and theology, and moral theology published by the theological college at Salamanca. See *Salmaticenses and Complutenses*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13401c.htm>, [accessed 6/1/2013].

sight. How dare you stand or appear in my presence.”⁸² Farrelly presented Davis with his letter of allegations who then gave it to Polding.

In a letter to Cardinal Frasoni, Polding outlined his response to Farrelly’s allegations, and provided an entirely different perspective on the circumstances. During Polding’s absence of two years in Europe in 1843, Polding’s Vicar General, the Very Rev. Dr. Murphy reported Farrelly’s behaviour was “extremely unfavourable...mingled with indubitable proofs of great indiscretion.” Murphy removed Farrelly from public life and employed him in the monastery until Polding’s return from Europe. Polding wrote:

Thus employed, the same want of discretion, apparent indulgence of vanity and neglect of duty were evinced to the no small scandal of the Boys; parties composed chiefly of women were frequently invited to his room. In his discourse to the people there were betrayed great self-sufficiency, great want of judgement, in so much as that on one occasion the Vicar General arose and publicly left the Church, and unfortunately admonition was of little use in the case of this young man.⁸³

Polding’s letter continued to describe Farrelly’s lack of discipline and the deplorable state of the Seminary whilst under his direction during Polding’s absence. Polding agreed that he withdrew “him for a time from the exercise of ministerial and even Sacerdotal functions.” He admitted telling Farrelly:

[H]is conduct had been such that [Polding] could not in conscience permit him the exercise of his ministerial duties for a considerable time, in order that he might enter into himself and in prayer, meditation and Instruction, in retirement, atone for the past and fit himself for such duties at some future time, if I found him sufficiently prepared.⁸⁴

⁸² Farrelly to Polding, 17/11/1851, quoted within a letter from Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff 701-11.

⁸³ Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 10 -12/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁸⁴ Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 10 -12/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

In the final part of his letter to Frasoni, Polding believed Farrelly “either [was] not acting with good faith in urging the invalidity of his Profession, or must be labouring under a most grievous mental hallucination.”⁸⁵

Polding requested Davis to convene an Ecclesiastical Council comprising Davis, the Archdeacon of the Cathedral, John McEncroe and the Dean of Sydney, Peter Magganotto to consider Farrelly’s claims. The opinion of the Council was unanimous. They decided Farrelly “had allowed considerably more than five years to elapse after his solemn profession without making any reclamation” and were agreed in deciding they were not qualified to settle the problem of the validity of his vows.

Polding and Farrelly were advised of the outcome of the Council. Farrelly was resolute he should straightaway forward his reclamation to Rome for a suitable decision.

On the advice of Davis, Magganotto spoke with Farrelly as a friend asking him to reconsider sending his reclamation to Rome “and to express his regret to the Archbishop for the pain which his actions had caused His Grace.” He also advised Farrelly to approach Polding for a reappointment to another Mission if “he was really unhappy at St. Mary’s,” because he was confident Polding would approve it. Farrelly’s response to Magganotto was unwavering: “He would detract nothing, that he would go to Rome, and if the Archbishop would not pay his expenses, he would beg them from the people.”⁸⁶

On 28 November, Farrelly sent a message to Davis requesting travelling expenses to Rome. The body of the note suggested he had been waiting for an answer from Davis since 24 November and “if no answer be given to that proposal before Sunday

⁸⁵ Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 10 -12/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁸⁶ Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

next, I will be obliged to appeal to my friends.” Farrelly’s note to Davis smacked of intimidation. Farrelly added: “The impression which such a call on them will produce, both here and at Rome will be so unfavourable, that I for one am willing to avert it.”⁸⁷

Davis response was immediate and business-like: “I was not aware...you had applied for your travelling expenses to Rome. I must at once say that I have no funds at my disposal, for the purpose. If you either have applied or intend applying to the Archbishop for the same, His Grace will, I presume, himself reply to your application.”⁸⁸

On the evening of 28 November, Farrelly advised Polding via brief correspondence that he had decided to travel to Rome, and requested travelling expenses. Polding’s reply was heated, but direct:

I must decline holding any communication with a subject who declares to me his determination to leave my jurisdiction without my permission...And now I give you due notice and warning that should you solicit in any manner pecuniary assistance from any person whatever, for the said purpose, all your Ecclesiastical faculties including permission to celebrate Mass will, *ipso facto*, cease.⁸⁹

Farrelly ignored Polding’s notice not to “solicit in any manner pecuniary assistance from any person whatever,” so Polding placed him under the authority of Davis and severely restricted Farrelly’s movements and community contact within the monastery. Furthermore, Farrelly was confined to the monastery and prohibited from leaving without Davis’ permission. He was “strictly prohibited” from speaking to “any secular person or persons” about his intended trip to Rome or the raising of money for the

⁸⁷ Farrelly to Davis, 28/11/1851, contained in the letter from Polding to Cardinal Fransoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁸⁸ Davis to Farrelly, 28/11/1851, contained in the letter from Polding to Cardinal Fransoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁸⁹ Polding to Farrelly, 29/11/1851, contained in the letter from Polding to Cardinal Fransoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

voyage; nor was he permitted to speak to any Postulants “under any pretext whatsoever.”⁹⁰

Farrelly ignored Polding’s punitive restrictions and left the monastery, withdrawing from clerical duties without the authority or permission of Polding or Davis. Mention of Farrelly’s departure in the *Benedictine Journal* recorded the following: “F. Serenus Farrelly...left St. Mary’s a short time since – he is at present lodging in town – And is about going to Rome, with a Reclamation against his religious profession, which took place April 1845.”⁹¹

Polding and Davis worked together to safeguard the good name of the Church citing Farrelly’s behaviour as a “great disedification and dreadful scandal” to the Sydney Church.⁹² They decided not to publicise Farrelly’s actions in the hope of limiting the opportunities “the bigoted infidel party in this city and country would gladly avail” by attempting to develop clear divisions in the Church. Both prelates were of the opinion that if Farrelly’s appeal to Rome and his conduct was upheld, “the effect on the minds of the clergy in the Diocese [would] be most injurious.” Moreover, they both wrote and co-signed a clear statement to Cardinal Frasoni: “A wound will be inflicted upon the Ecclesiastical Authority in this Church which will prove almost incurable.”⁹³

Bishops Davis, Goold and Murphy co-wrote a detailed address to Pope Pius IX affirming Farrelly was unfit to be a priest and his accusations towards Polding were fabricated and defamatory. They also remonstrated against an emerging practice amongst some clergy who avoided local church authority by communicating directly to the Holy See about projects for diocesan development, as well as making “unjustified

⁹⁰ Polding to Farrelly, late November 1851, contained in the letter from Polding to Cardinal Frasoni, 29/12/1851, PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁹¹ *BJ*, 12/12/1851.

⁹² Polding and Davis to Cardinal Frasoni, 12/12/1851 (co-signed), PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

⁹³ Polding and Davis to Cardinal Frasoni, 12/12/1851 (co-signed), PF CO, Vol. 4, ff. 701-11.

vituperations against the episcopal character.” Similarly, they argued that if the Holy See continued to receive expressions of “republicanism” and “presbyterianism,” Australian bishops would never be at peace with their clergy. By reason of the tyranny of distance, the prelates urged the Holy See to develop appropriate methods to initiate procedures along the lines of a civil government in Australia. This would allow for petitions and complaints to be received by the Holy See only if a copy of the objections had been received by the Australian religious authority, thereby enabling them to respond to the accusations or claims. If the Holy See were to follow this procedure, they would hear both sides of the petition or complaint, and cases could be fairly and accurately resolved.⁹⁴ This submission appears to have been ignored.

Farrelly and Rome

Farrelly’s allegations were listened to in Rome. On the recommendation of Cardinal Frasoni, the Pope released Farrelly from his vows; not because they were considered invalid, but because Farrelly was unable to live by them and Rome intended to prevent a prolongation of the legal proceedings.⁹⁵

Farrelly’s portrayal of St. Mary’s as a community handicapped by division and conflict probably added to the decline of Roman confidence in Sydney Benedictinism. More damaging was the comments Farrelly made to Frasoni in a letter condemning Polding’s New South Wales mission. He described the Archdiocese of Sydney as being in a deplorable situation and called for the arbitration of the Holy See. Farrelly also claimed Benedictine dominance was detrimental to priestly vocations due to the pressure being placed on aspirants to become monks. Moreover, he maintained the

⁹⁴ Address of Davis, Goold and Murphy to Pope Pius IX, n.d. (CC), AAA, 2.301, Murphy papers, quoted in Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 170.

⁹⁵ Shanahan, *Out of Time, Out of Place*, 58; Frasoni to Polding, 3/1/1853 and 12/4/1853, SAA, quoted in Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 170.

English and Australian Benedictines were out of touch with the Irish population in Australia, and their concentration at St. Mary's monastery further isolated them from the parishes and people they were supposed to be serving.⁹⁶

Farrelly seemed to gain some credibility with Rome since his comments mirrored McEncroe's 1851 interpretation of the Sydney Archdiocese.⁹⁷ Even as early as 1850 Davis wondered at the effectiveness of the monastery to provide priests for the needs of the Australian mission:

It will be some years before we shall be able to supply the wants of the mission from the monastery. Nearly all our present young religious we must keep long in the house for purposes of teaching, etc.; in the meantime our Catholic population is rapidly increasing.⁹⁸

Frustrated and discouraged by the unrest in his monastery, Polding wrote a letter to Cardinal Fransoni on 20 March 1854, describing his disillusionment about the leniency shown to Farrelly:

[T]he dreadful misuse which the Priest Farrelly has made of the leniency of the Holy See towards him has overwhelmed me in the deepest affliction... Letters follow letters all declaratory of his triumph... the effects of these communications have been most disastrous. Peace of mind is disturbed – confidence in Ecclesiastical authority is shaken – much is said and done exceedingly injurious to Religion... the Absolution from Censures are deemed no adequate punishment for a Monk, who was guilty of giving most grievous scandal in the City of Sydney, who openly set at defiance the authority of his Superiors, raised money in his disobedience, left his Community, and thus was guilty of the most flagrant breach of his vow of Obedience, Religious and Ecclesiastical, and of his vow of Poverty.¹⁰⁰

Polding continued to show his annoyance at the outcome by describing what he believed Farrelly's exoneration by Rome would achieve:

The effect of leniency towards this man will I fear, render the Establishment of such discipline as ought to be found in a church in the days of her first

⁹⁶ Farrelly to Fransoni, 24/12/1851, APF, SC-Oceania, volume 4, folios 1006r ff, quoted in Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 171.

⁹⁷ McEncroe to Pope Pius IX, 12/3/1851, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 178-182.

⁹⁸ Davis to Heptonstall, 22/8/1850, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 166.

¹⁰⁰ Polding to Fransoni, 20/3/1854, PF CO, Vol. 5, ff. 422-4.

fervour almost impossible. The conduct of this man as detailed by myself and the Bishop Coadjutor...appeared to us so flagitious...we could not imagine he would meet with any favor from the Holy See.¹⁰¹

The final paragraphs of Polding's letter portrayed a man deeply distressed by the outcome and one who ultimately offered his resignation to Pope Pius IX as Sydney's Archbishop in 1854:

The confidence of my clergy in me must be shaken. I cannot enforce discipline. Farrelly's case in itself was founded on calumny and misrepresentation; opposed to it was the representation and explanation of circumstances testified by the signatures of the Bishop Coadjutor and myself to the real state of the case...I would wish to pass the few remaining years of my life, not in idleness, but in giving Missions, and in forming zealous Ecclesiastics to the work of the Ministry. I therefore most humbly and earnestly entreat Your eminence to place at the feet of the Most Holy Father, the Archiepiscopal dignity of the See of Sydney, and to permit me to retire from a situation, the duties of which I cannot fulfil, with usefulness to others and safety to my own conscience.¹⁰²

Polding preferred the work of a missionary, spending over two years travelling to many inland areas while Davis was his Coadjutor. One of the main reasons Davis was selected as Polding's Coadjutor was to allow Polding to preach the Gospel to both the church and the unchurched in the outback of Australia. Australian Catholic Church historian, Patrick O'Farrell identified Polding's main concerns in Australia with missionary activities, and his appointment as Archbishop as subsequent.¹⁰³

Polding left Sydney with Gregory to tender his resignation and defend his Sydney Benedictine plan on 21 March 1854, Davis became the senior prelate of the Australian Catholic Church. Little did Polding or Gregory realise, Davis was to die of heart complications on 17 May 1854 leaving John McEncroe in charge of the Sydney Archdiocese for almost two years.

¹⁰¹ Polding to Franson, 20/3/1854, PF CO, Vol. 5, ff. 422-4.

¹⁰² Polding to Franson, 20/3/1854, PF CO, Vol. 5, ff. 422-4.

¹⁰³ Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church in Australia*, (Melbourne: Nelson, 1968), 41.

Charles Davis: in charge of St. Mary's Monastery

During Davis' residence in Sydney (1848-1854), there were various occasions when he was given the responsibility for the management of the Sydney Archdiocese and St Mary's Monastery during Polding's and Gregory's many absences. The following list presents a summary of Polding's days away from St. Mary's during each year Davis was in Sydney:

1. **1848** – A total of 57 days on the Mission. The final 11 days of Polding's journeys occurred following the arrival of Davis in December.
2. **1849** – 90 days on the Mission.
3. **1850** – 100 days on the Mission - (7 days travelling with Davis).
4. **1851** – 151 days on the Mission.
5. **1852** – 230 days on the Mission.
6. **1853** – 115 days on the Mission.
7. **1854** – Polding travelled to Rome to resign and was absent for 58 days when Davis died on 17 May 1854. Polding did not return to Sydney until 26 January 1856.

These journeys amount to an aggregate of 755 days (two years, three weeks and four days) away from St. Mary's. With Polding (and Gregory) absent, management of the Archdiocese and monastery fell to Davis. There are four significant areas of his leadership style that will be examined. They concern the spiritual dimension of St. Mary's, indigenous affairs, the significant number of appointments at St. Mary's Monastery and some general administrative and pastoral matters.

When Polding and Gregory left St. Mary's on a missionary journey of ninety days to the southern districts of the colony of New South Wales in January 1849, Polding

left Davis in charge of the monastery.¹¹⁰ As temporary Prior, his duties were specific: to focus “only [on] spiritual matters.” According to Moore, “it is very hard to draw the line of distinction between spirituals and temporal...as Prior of a Monastery.” Even Davis “scarcely [understood] what His Grace [meant]” by this appointment.¹¹¹ Common sense prevailed, and Davis supervised the monastery “as he [thought] proper both in spiritual and temporal matters.”¹¹² Davis was aware of the spiritual outcomes of public prayer, especially within the context of the Mass and the Sacraments. Nonetheless, Davis was mindful the power of Christ’s presence offered in the various forms of public prayer could not become a part of the monks’ lives without regular private prayer. He invited his community to listen for the voice of God in their lives to separate them from any constraints or obstacles they may have been experiencing in their own lives.

Silence played a significant role in the Benedictine rule¹¹³ and it was through silence the voice of God could be heard. In addition to the usual occasions when silence was meant to be observed at St. Mary’s, Davis directed the monks to observe extra periods of silence to help them attain a more peaceful communion with God.

In the monastic tradition, silence is an attempt to quieten the voice, the imagination, and the mind in the confidence of God’s presence. It is through silence one can enter into a deeper relationship with God because one cannot contemplate and talk at the same time. *The Rule of Benedict* directs that silence is so important that:

[P]ermission to speak should seldom be granted even to mature disciples, no matter how good or holy or constructive their talk, because it is written:

¹¹⁰ This missionary journey visited the following areas: Feb 1-2: Subiaco; 3-6: Campbelltown; 7-10: Berrima; 11: Goulbourn; March 6: arrive Yass; March 8: Albury; March 13: Queanbeyan; 24: Sydney.

¹¹¹ Moore to Morrall, 25/2/1849, B Coll, M138, D.A., quoted in Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” 49.

¹¹² Moore to Morrall, 25/2/1849, B Coll, M138, D.A., quoted in Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” 49. The Subprior, Fr. Maurus Connell was visiting Tasmania during this time, see Moore to Morrall, 25/2/1849, B Coll, M138, DA, quoted in Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus...,” 49.

¹¹³ Refer to Chapters 6, 7, 38, 42, 44, 48 and 50 in the *Rule of Benedict* for examples when silence is to be strictly observed.

In a flood of words you will not avoid sin (Prov 10:19)...Speaking and teaching are the master's task; the disciple is to be silent and listen."¹¹⁴

Present day Benedictine author Joan Chittester further observes that: "The Word [of God] we seek is speaking in the silence within us. Blocking it out with the static of nonsense day in and day out, relinquishing the spirit of silence, numbs the Benedictine heart in a noise-polluted world."¹¹⁵

Davis' first significant reform of prayer added periods of silence on the day following Ash Wednesday in February 1849. He directed that Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent were to become "Communion days" and "recollection and silence were to be observed on the evenings of Tuesdays and Thursdays."¹¹⁶

Additional periods of silence would help in building a positive sense of community at St. Mary's. It would assist in abandoning gossip and the shallow approach to the spiritual life. In the words of Benedict: "The wise man is known by the fewness of his words."¹¹⁷

On 4 July 1850, Davis directed the community to observe "silence and fasting, for a period of three days to beseech Almighty God, to avert the calamity impending at Subiaco, in the death of Mother Mary Scholastica".¹¹⁸ Regrettably, she died of consumption on 8 October 1850.

The Liturgy of the Hours defined Davis' spiritual core. It enabled him to join with Christ in praying for everyone who was suffering. The praying of the Psalms by Davis expressed his faith in God's mercy, justice, and salvation at the most profound level.

Chittester writes similarly:

¹¹⁴ Fry, *RB 1980*, "Chapter 6 – Restraint of Speech" 191

¹¹⁵ Chittester, *The Rule of Benedict*, 61.

¹¹⁶ *BJ*, 22/2/1849.

¹¹⁷ *RB*, Chapter 7, "Of Humility."

¹¹⁸ *BJ*, 4/7/1850. Between 4/7/1850 and 7/7/1850, the *BJ* reported six Postulants, two Novices and one Brother, and "some of the boys who usually take the leading parts in the Choir" were ill (7/7/1850).

The point is clear: there is to be no time, nothing, that absorbs us so much that we lose contact with the God of life; no stress so tension-producing, no burden so complex, no work so exhausting that God is not our greatest agenda, our constant companion, our rest, our refuge.¹¹⁹

In 1849, during another one of Polding's journeys, Davis observed the large number of people desiring the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a Friday and the small number of priests available to dispense this Sacrament. Davis considered it prudent to adjust the usual length of meditation on Friday evenings after Reconciliation. He directed that "night prayers [Compline] and the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament," should be fifteen minutes earlier than the customary time, "lest the people disappointed of the Meditation, should disperse before the time appointed for the Benediction (7½ o'clock) had arrived."

Davis' decision to change the time for meditation was an attempt to allow the public a deeper experience of prayer by experiencing Benediction and Compline with the monks.¹²⁰ Here, Davis was dispensing with the monastic routine of lengthy periods of prayer and focusing instead on the function of prayer (the establishment of a relationship with God who is in relationship with us) by facilitating the participation of the people in the Liturgy of the Hours..

Davis' directive seems to have remained in effect permanently. The following week, the evening service was "the same as on last Friday."¹²¹ Subsequent to Polding's return, the *Benedictine Journal* reported: "His Grace and the Vicar General returned from their visit to the district of Illawarra. Service in the cathedral this evening the same as usual."¹²²

¹¹⁹ Chittister, *The Rule of Benedict*, 85.

¹²⁰ *BJ*, 7/12/1849.

¹²¹ *BJ*, 14/12/1849.

¹²² *BJ*, 21/12/1849.

Two days after Polding left Sydney (date?) on a two month visit to towns in the south-west area of New South Wales, Davis directed the hymn, “Veni Creator” and the prayers, “Deus qui Corda,” “Defende quaesumus” and “Excita Domine,” be recited each morning before Mass “for His Grace’s intention.” These prayers were in addition to the ones Polding had previously directed the monks to recite on the day of his departure on 13 May for the purpose of invoking the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary upon Prior Gregory “and his undertakings.” According to Polding, these prayers were “to be continued until further notice.”¹²³

During Polding’s absence in June 1851, Davis directed Benediction and Night Prayers would occur in the Cathedral on Thursdays at 7pm.¹²⁴ This would again allow the laity to join with the monks in prayer.

By 1852 there were only a “small number of choir religious in the monastery” because most of the priests were “frequently [away] from home in the mornings” during the recitation of Terce and Sext; customarily at 9am. The monks had been praying Terce and Sext concurrently rather than at the times of 9am and 12 noon respectively.¹²⁵ About a week after Polding left Sydney, Davis directed Terce and Sext to be prayed immediately after Prime (approximately 6am), so “all may be enabled to attend choir” prior to commencing their pastoral duties.¹²⁶ Because Davis’ life was shaped by the Psalms and Scripture, he likewise tried to inspire his monks to live under their influence.

Additional liturgical processions became standard practice at St. Mary’s under the leadership of Davis. The celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi over a three year period demonstrated a different liturgical approach between Davis and Polding. Whilst

¹²³ *BJ*, 13/5/1851.

¹²⁴ *BJ*, 10/6/1851.

¹²⁵ J. H. B. Curtis, “A Day in a Monastery,” *The Austral Light*, 1/3/1902, 173.

¹²⁶ *BJ*, 23/3/1852; Curtis, “A Day in a Monastery,” 172 – 173.

Polding and Davis leaned towards the conventional celebration of Mass, it seems Davis was more audacious in the sense he allowed the laity, to some degree, to become involved in the liturgy while Polding did not.¹²⁷ It appears that in practice Davis may have been trying to more closely integrate the monastery and the diocese. Already we have seen Davis' inclusion of the laity in the experience of prayer with the monks.

The day before the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1849, Polding directed that the Vespers of the Feast of Corpus Christi were to be recited. At Matins the Te Deum and Gospel were sung. At Lauds, "the Altar was decorated in the same manner as at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament," followed by Benediction by the Subprior of the monastery.¹²⁸ On the day of the Feast, Polding led an evening service commencing at 7pm. The service included:

Litany of the Blessed Sacrament & Night Prayers...Short Instruction delivered by His Grace...towards the end of the Lecture, the Candles on the altar were lighted – torches were then distributed to all within the Sanctuary – The 'O Salutaris Hostia' was intoned & whilst His Grace received the Ostensorium from the Deacon, a procession was formed. It moved through the Transept at the Gospel side, along the Nave, & returned by the opposite side – The choir in the meantime chanting the 'Pange Lingua'.¹²⁹

The laity, in this case, played only a spectator role because it was Polding and the other clergy who formed a procession through the Cathedral with lit candles.

During the celebration of the Octave of Corpus Christi a week later, Polding held a service in the Cathedral at 7pm and included "Benediction and Night Prayers." He concluded the Octave by carrying "the Blessed Sacrament in the procession & gave

¹²⁷ The reader must remember this period occurred about eighteen years before Vatican 1 Council was convoked by Pius IX on 29/6/1868 to condemn contemporary errors and define the Catholic doctrine concerning the Church of Christ. It was not until the convocation of Vatican II by Pope John XXIII on 11 October 1962 the roles of the laity in various religious activities were considered and approved (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*).

¹²⁸ *BJ*, 6/6/1849.

¹²⁹ *BJ*, 7/6/1849. This was the first time the Blessed Sacrament had ever been processed in Sydney, causing the congregation to appear "greatly edified" and displaying "much devotion."

Benediction.” Although there are no clear details about who was in the procession, it was probably similar to the one he celebrated on the Feast of Corpus Christi.¹³⁰

The following account of the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1850 provides an insight into Davis’ devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and his unique approach to liturgy on the days leading up to and including the Octave of the Feast.¹³¹

The day before the Feast Day, preparations for a procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the gardens of the monastery occurred. Davis directed work be performed in silence, but made allowances for speaking in case “the nature of the duties to be performed” required some communication.¹³²

The monastery gardens in front of the cloisters and the Archbishop’s residence were decorated with “arches formed of green boughs.” Similarly, the door entering the garden was “decorated in [a] like manner.” A bower had been made in front of Polding’s house. Within the bower “an altar upon which the Sacred Host was to be placed for a few minutes” had been built. Davis invited the laity to become involved in this celebration and invited them into the monastery to donate “flowers for the occasion” and place them “in great profusion on the several arches and doorways – and still more abundantly in the little bower – upon the front and sides of which garlands of the best Flowers were hung in festoons.”¹³³

During the monks’ early morning meditation on the Feast of Corpus Christi, Davis exposed the Blessed Sacrament and celebrated Mass before it. The celebration was described as “very solemn” and directed the Blessed Sacrament remain exposed “during the whole of the morning office.”¹³⁴

¹³⁰ *BJ*, 14/6/1849.

¹³¹ Polding was absent on a missionary journey to the Southern Districts of New South Wales from May 20 – July 16, 1850.

¹³² *BJ*, 29/5/1850.

¹³³ *BJ*, 30/5/1850.

¹³⁴ *BJ*, 30/5/1850.

Mass was celebrated at 11am by Davis and concelebrated by the “Fr. Subprior...The Archdeacon & the Dean...FF Ignatius McClennan & Kavanagh.” To highlight the solemnity of the Mass, copes and chasubles were worn. At the end of Mass, the procession (which included the laity) commenced through the Cathedral to the gardens of the monastery. The following entry captures the grandeur of the final procession led by Davis:

At the end of the Mass the Master of Ceremonies commenced arranging the procession – The order was the following – 1st cleric with two acolytes bearing the processional cross – next the students of St. Mary’s Seminary – Then the Society of the Holy Guild preceded by their cross – After these came the Subdeacons and acolytes with the Cathedral Cross – then the Choir – the boys attending the Sanctuary – the Priests in vestments – Those in Copes – an acolyte bearing the Bishop’s Crozier – two of the youngest boys scattering flowers – Thurifers – The Bishop bearing in his hands the Ostensorium with the Sacred Host – attended by two Deacons – after these followed the Mitre bearer, carrying in his hands the Mitre – and lastly the Congregation walking two by two – The people behaved in a most edifying manner, though the whole of the avenue and the walks about the garden were thronged there was not the least disturbance, each one kept his place, in the order in which he left the church – From the resting place in the garden the procession moved through the cloisters & St. Felician’s chapel, back to the Cathedral where Benediction was given – and the Indulgences published.¹³⁵

Afterwards, Davis directed that exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during Mass in St. Felician’s chapel “will be the case every morning during the octave” of Corpus Christi.¹³⁶ Whilst Davis employed liturgical ritual to its extreme to highlight the sacredness and beauty of the occasion, he made sure the laity was included in the celebration. In fact, this appears to be the first time the congregation were included as active participants in a liturgical procession at St. Mary’s.

On the Octave of Corpus Christi a week later, Davis intended to have another procession of the Blessed Sacrament outside the Cathedral which again included the

¹³⁵ *BJ*, 30/5/1850.

¹³⁶ *BJ*, 31/5/1850.

laity. Unfortunately, the weather had been very inclement and on the morning of the intended procession, the conditions were reported as being “very damp.” Davis’ anticipation of poor weather allowed him to direct the monks to prepare the interior of the Cathedral the evening before with “boughs and flowers – and a throne was formed over the Tabernacle, in which the Sacred Host was to be reposed during the Holy Sacrifice.”¹³⁷ Mass was celebrated by Davis, followed by a procession of the Blessed Sacrament within the Cathedral, again involving the laity who this time held lighted candles. The *Benedictine Journal* entry reveals:

At 7 o’clock this morning service commenced. The Bishop celebrated the Mass – after which a procession was formed which moved through the passages between the seats of the gospel side of the altar, down the nave and then back to the sanctuary, through the opening between the seats on the epistle side – The greater number of the people were provided with lighted candles which they bore in the procession. The altar looked very beautiful.¹³⁸

The celebrations led by Polding the previous year provide a very different approach to liturgy compared to the preparations and ceremony of Davis with the inclusion of the laity in the final procession. Davis appears to have begun de-compartmentalising liturgy at St Mary’s, which previously distanced the laity from the clergy, and instead fostered a greater sense of ‘community’ amongst the local Catholics. Davis understood that all members of the faithful: clergy, religious and the laity all members of the one Body of Christ “for we were all baptised by one Spirit so as to form one body — whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” (1Cor 12:13). Although the laity had no formal role in the celebration of Mass, Davis recognised that every lay faithful possessed adverse yet

¹³⁷ *BJ*, 31/5/1850.

¹³⁸ *BJ*, 6/6/1850.

complimentary charisms and ministries who should be able to participate more actively in devotions and prayer than they had previously experienced.

In 1851, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, Polding was absent from Sydney again, so Davis celebrated Mass at the Cathedral. A couple of days before the Feast day, he announced “great preparations” were to be made in the grounds of the monastery “in front of the Cloisters & the Archbishop’s apartments.” Part of the preparations included the erection of “a handsome canopy...for the occasion.” Perhaps this was similar to the one built the year before. Disappointingly, on the day of the Feast, “the weather was so very boisterous that [a procession] was altogether impracticable.”¹³⁹ The Mass at 11am consisted of Davis as the main celebrant, with “F. Maurus O’Connell Deacon...& Fr. John & Br Felix Sheridan [Subdeacon]. The Archdeacon & The Dean were vested in Copes – FF Bede Sumner, Serenus Farrelly & John Kavanagh in Chasubles.”¹⁴⁰

On the Octave of Corpus Christi, Davis celebrated Mass in the chapel at Subiaco and then processed the Blessed Sacrament through the house and grounds of the convent while “the nuns, with their pupils, and the Lay Brothers belonging to the establishment formed a grand procession.”¹⁴¹ Once again, Davis included the laity as active participants at the conclusion of Mass, rather than as quiescent spectators. Davis also invited laypeople to assist in the preparation of the Liturgy. It appears that Polding did not. Davis understood the layperson’s apostolate needed to be broadened because of the severe limitations placed on them in the nineteenth century, i.e. the priest-congregation relationship was dominant-submissive. Davis saw the clergy and laity as equal by virtue of baptism. As such, laypeople and clergy were all called to

¹³⁹ *BJ*, 19/6/1851.

¹⁴⁰ *BJ*, 19/6/1851.

¹⁴¹ *BJ*, 27/6/1851.

work together in implementing the Kingdom of God. The chart below presents a comparison of Davis’ and Polding’s liturgical approach to the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Figure 11: The Feast of Corpus Christi

John Polding - 1849	Charles Davis - 1850	Charles Davis - 1851
<p>Preparation for Feast Day:</p> <p>Nil</p>	<p>Preparation for Feast Day:</p> <p>Monastic gardens – arches/flowers/and altar constructed by monks in SILENCE. The laity was allowed to assist in part with the flowers.</p>	<p>Preparation for Feast Day:</p> <p>Two days of preparation in the Monastic gardens. Similar to the previous year. No mention of SILENCE in the <i>Benedictine Journal</i>.</p>
<p>Day before: Vespers: Prayers of the Feast of Corpus Christi Matins: <i>Te Deum</i> & Gospel sung. Lauds: Altar decorated, and Benediction by Subprior performed.</p> <p>Night before: Litany of Blessed Sacrament & Night Prayer. Short instruction by Polding. Candles of altar lit. Torches distributed to clergy. <i>O Salutaris</i> intoned. Procession of clergy through Cathedral. Chanting of <i>Pange Lingua</i>.</p>	<p>Day before:</p> <p>Monastic garden preparations.</p>	<p>Day before:</p> <p>Monastic garden preparations.</p>
<p>Feast Day of Corpus Christi</p> <p>Mass at 11 am.</p> <p>No Procession.</p>	<p>Feast Day of Corpus Christi</p> <p>Morning: Mass in the chapel by Davis and the Blessed Sacrament exposed through Mass & morning Office. 11am – Mass</p>	<p>Feast Day of Corpus Christi</p> <p>Morning: 11am – Mass Davis and clergy – Copes and Chasubles</p>

	<p>Davis and clergy – Copes and Chasubles. Procession: Davis, priests, deacons, acolytes, students of St. Mary’s Seminary, Society of Holy Guild and laity process through Cathedral to monastery garden to St. Felician’s chapel. Benediction – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament each day during the Octave.</p>	<p>No mention of a procession – BAD WEATHER</p>
<p>Octave of Corpus Christi Service at 7p.m. Benediction & Night Prayers Procession (clerics & monks only) of the Blessed Sacrament in Cathedral and Benediction</p>	<p>Octave of Corpus Christi Intended Procession – similar to the Feast Day – BAD WEATHER. Procession (clerics, monks & laity) in Cathedral – Cathedral previously prepared with boughs & flowers night before. Mass and Procession – Clerics and laity (provided with lit candles).</p>	<p>Octave of Corpus Christi Davis celebrated Mass at Subiaco. Procession of Blessed Sacrament through the convent and grounds. Nuns, pupils & Lay Brothers in the procession.</p>

Figure 11 reveals Polding’s method of preparing and celebrating a major Feast Day Mass with no participation by the laity. Davis, however, engaged creative preparations and involvement by the laity. There was no public devotion by Davis to the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral until the Feast Day itself. Davis was more concerned with the preparation of the monastic gardens. For Davis, the simple prayerful silence of the monks working in the garden seemed more appropriate in the lead up to the Feast of Corpus Christi than the traditional prayers usually prayed in the Cathedral by the monks. The monks’ manual labour in the garden became their prayer.

Indigenous affairs

John Benedict – Tongan Islander

In 1847, an islander boy from Tonga was “taken into the House by the Fr. Prior [Gregory] whilst His Grace was in Europe in 1847.”¹⁴³ He was baptised in August 1848 and given the name “John Benedict.” Following Polding’s return from Europe on 6 February 1848, Benedict became Polding’s servant.¹⁴⁴ Unfortunately, John Benedict contracted “a severe cold which prevented him from performing his ordinary duties.”¹⁴⁵ He was sent to Subiaco to be cared for by the nuns. Fr. Maurus O’Connell travelled to Subiaco on 5 December 1849 to visit “John the Black Boy, who was...in a very delicate state of health.”¹⁴⁶

Following “dinner” the next day (1pm),¹⁴⁷ Davis called the community together in the Chapter Room and “informed them that he had just received a letter from the Fr. Subprior [O’Connell] announcing the decease of the Boy John, who departed this life this morning.”¹⁴⁸ Davis requested the monks gather in St. Felician’s Chapel “where the Litany & prayers for the dead were recited.” After night prayers, Davis directed “the Priests of the Monastery to offer the Holy Sacrifice [Mass], and the other Brethren their communions, on the following morning, for the repose of the soul of John.”¹⁴⁹

Even though the community had just experienced the death of John Benedict, life at St. Mary’s went on as usual. Bede Sumner, Mellitus Corish, the Italian Passionist, Peter Magagnotto and the Dean of Sydney spent much of their time hearing Confessions at the Immigrant Barracks. This persistent activity of ecclesiastical life at

¹⁴³ Gourbeillon to his parents, 7/2/1848. Quoted in Kavenagh, T. “Distant Echoes: Aboriginal and Islander Boys at St. Mary’s Sydney in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Tjurunga* 76, (May 2009): 68.

¹⁴⁴ *BJ*, 6/12/1849.

¹⁴⁵ *BJ*, 6/12/1849.

¹⁴⁶ *BJ*, 5/12/1849.

¹⁴⁷ Moore to Morall, 18/2/1848, B Coll. M71, DA. Quoted in Kavenagh, “Distant Echoes,” 69.

¹⁴⁸ The *BJ*, 7/12/1849 reported: “A post-mortem examination was made on the body, his heart and lungs were found to be affected...”

¹⁴⁹ *BJ*, 6/12/1849.

St. Mary's is again apparent the day after John Benedict's death: "[Davis] celebrated the Mass of the Sacred Heart. Benediction was not given in consequence of its being part of the service for the evening. The confessionals being very much crowded this evening..."¹⁵¹

Davis celebrated the Conventual Mass at 5.30 am on 8 December. The *Benedictine Journal* entry stated: "The whole community approached the Holy Communion."¹⁵² The fact that all the monks from St Mary's received Communion was a rarity due to the monastery being a disparate and multi-faceted place due to the significant non-Benedictine element amongst its residents, the urgent pastoral needs required of the monks and the frequent absences of Polding and Gregory. Perhaps this was the community's response to Davis' request two days earlier. The recitation of the Litany and prayers for the dead in the evening, and the mass the following morning for the repose of the soul of John Benedict was conducted with due solemnity, thereby expressing the significance of his death and the community's affection for him. It is interesting to observe the various reactions to the death of John Benedict, especially amongst the community at St. Mary's. His death appears to have evoked little emotional response from the monks other than their formal prayers for the dead. John Benedict's death, however, elicited "a great sensation amongst the Lay Brothers and others at Subiaco." Most likely, the Lay Brothers who worked closely with the boy from the time of his arrival in 1847 would have gotten to know him well, and the "others at Subiaco" were probably the nuns who cared for John Benedict during his illness.

¹⁵¹ *BJ*, 7/12/1849.

¹⁵² *BJ*, 8/12/1849.

There was no mention in the *Benedictine Journal* of a Requiem Mass at St. Mary's or Subiaco other than the boy being "interred in Parramatta" on 7 December. Presumably Maurus O'Connell officiated at the funeral, even though there is no comment; although the *Benedictine Journal* does refer to the anxious state of O'Connell following his return to St. Mary's on 8 December.¹⁵³

Due to the shortage of priests at St. Mary's, Davis upheld the community's official mourning period by reciting the Office "for the repose of the soul of John." Additionally, [Davis] "offered the Holy Sacrifice for the same end."¹⁵⁴ Davis maintained dignity, respect and sacredness amongst the community in response to the death of a respected member of the cathedral community.

What kind of relationship did John Benedict have with Polding? Whilst the *Benedictine Journal* records he "acted as servant" to Polding,¹⁵⁵ nothing about John Benedict's relationship with Polding is recorded. It is likely he was treated with the same care and affection as the other indigenous boys who resided at St. Mary's over previous years. Other young indigenous boys who had previously been brought to the monastery regarded Polding with a deep sense of trust and love.¹⁵⁶ On the day Polding returned to the Monastery after an absence of nearly two years, for example, the "small aboriginal boys rushed up in welcome and threw themselves at his feet."¹⁵⁷ After blessing the boys, Polding allowed the other monks in his missionary party to embrace

¹⁵³ O'Connell was described as having "not yet recovered from the effects of the shock caused by [John Benedict's] death." See *BJ*, 8/12/1849. A few days later O'Connell "continue[d] indisposed," apparently remaining in his room since his return. It was not until 15 December he "was able to leave his room today – [taking] a little exercise in the Garden." See *BJ*, 15/12/1849. Two days later he returned to Subiaco to recover from his grief-induced depression. On 22 December we are told "The Rev Mr Lucas arrived from Subiaco, Fr. Maurus not being quite recovered will remain there a few days longer." See *BJ*, 22/12/1849. O'Connell returned to St. Mary's on 24 December, whilst Lucas returned to Subiaco "to resume his duties" there. *BJ*, 24/12/1849. Refer to Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 76, for discussion on what could have brought about the physical and emotional collapse of Fr. O'Connell.

¹⁵⁴ *BJ*, 11/12/1849.

¹⁵⁵ *BJ*, 6/12/1849.

¹⁵⁶ Gourbellion to his parents, 7/2/1848, Solesmes Archives (Sol.A).

¹⁵⁷ Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 61.

the boys, and then according to Gourbeillon, Polding sat them on his knees and caressed them.¹⁵⁸ No doubt Polding considered these boys (and the other indigenous children who occasionally lived at the Monastery) as possible vocations to the Benedictine Order. Regrettably, after 6 February 1848, the *Benedictine Journal* is silent about their outcome.

John David Murra - 'The little black boy'

Another entry in the *Benedictine Journal* relates to the 'fostering' of an indigenous child during Davis' period at St. Mary's. His name was John David Murra, aged about seven or eight years of age. It was the intention of Polding that Murra be sent to Europe to be trained for the religious life in a Benedictine monastery. The *Benedictine Journal* reported:

A short time since, a child belonging to one of the Aborigines, was sent to the Archbishop – he is about 7 or 8 years of age – His Grace intends to have him educated for the sacred ministry. This evening, the Bishop Coadjutor baptised him – he received the name of John David. In a few days he will be sent to England & from thence to Genoa to the Benedictine Monastery there.¹⁵⁹

On the same date Davis wrote to Heptonstall:

The Archbishop has written to you...informing you of his having sent a little aboriginal boy under the care of Captain Jones, to be entrusted to your care by the Captain. His Grace has fully explained to you the object of sending this little black to Europe.¹⁶⁰

Sadly, the letter from Polding to Heptonstall described by Davis appears to be lost.

Davis wrote to Heptonstall the following day, but in more detail regarding the

¹⁵⁸ Gourbellion to his parents, 7/2/1848, Solesmes Archives (Sol.A).

¹⁵⁹ *BJ*, 28/2/1850.

¹⁶⁰ Davis to Heptonstall, 28/2/1850, B. Coll. M 246, DA. Quoted in Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 80. It is interesting to note Captain Jones captained the *St. George* to Australia from England in 1848 with Davis on board.

acquisition and departure of John David Murra. Davis' letter is reproduced in its entirety:¹⁶¹

Mr dear Confrere,

I write another hasty line to say that I have today baptised the little black boy. His name is John David, the former from his Godfather, the Archbishop, the latter from myself, this being the feast of St. David. He has been only a fortnight with us – we got him naked from the bush and we dare not keep him longer, for if the Blacks were to find out where he was, they would be sure to steal him away. His father gave him up to the Archbishop quite cheerfully, but we understand that he is already sorry for having done so, and is longing to have him again. The child is quite happy and has attended with earnestness to the little instructions we have been able to give him during this short time. He is delighted at his being made a [Christian]. He is, I think, exceedingly well disposed, and far superior in intellect to the aborigines in general. The Captain has kindly engaged to take great care of him – I have requested him to keep him employed in any little work that the child is equal to, such as assisting the Steward etc. – He will not allow him to go amongst the sailors. He takes with him a box for his clothes, and in that box you will find several parcels for various parties.

I am my dear Confrere,
Yours affectionately and obligingly,

+ C. H. Davis

The family or tribe name of the little Black is Murra. I have put several parcels into his box for various parties.

Amongst the letters I enclose one for my Mother, and one for my sister, Mrs Thos. Watkins, but as I don't know exactly their address I shall be obliged if you will send them to my Brother at Downside and he will direct them.

I have paid Captain Jones for the little boy's passage.

Did Davis and Polding consider the rights and needs of Murra given they believed they were acting in his better interests sending him to Europe to have "him educated for the sacred ministry"?¹⁶² Regrettably, the same tensions and complexities in balancing the human rights of Australia's Indigenous community in contemporary

¹⁶¹ Davis to Heptonstall, 1/3/1850, B. Coll. M 248, DA. Quoted in Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 80 – 81.

¹⁶² BJ, 28/2/1850.

Australia reappear in Davis' correspondence. Why did Davis and Polding consider they had the authority to impede Murra's right to remain distinctly Indigenous and pursue his own social and cultural development within his clan? Davis acknowledged "we dare not keep him longer, for...they would be sure to steal him away." Even more tragically was Davis' acknowledgement the boy's father was "already sorry for having [given the boy up], and [was] longing to have him again." Davis ignored the father's request to have his son returned, instead sending the boy overseas. This incident tragically underlines the misunderstandings of the time about the Australian Aborigines. In Davis' and Polding's opinion, Murra belonged to the Catholic Church. For that reason, they believed he could legitimately be sent away to live and train in Europe to become a Benedictine monk.

Davis and Polding assumed a life in a Benedictine Monastery would be a time of spiritual solitude, education, refinement and dignity for Murra; free from the apparent disadvantages of living in the Australian bush as a nomadic Aborigine. They ignored his right to be able to take control of his future and decide how he would live it with the support of his community. Unfortunately, Davis and Polding were products of their time and probably would not have considered how the permanent separation from his family might have impacted on Murra.

It seems ironic Davis' letter closes with a request to forward personal letters to his mother and sister at the same time he was about to dissolve Murra's own family links forever.

The last reference to Murra in any of the Sydney Benedictine documents appeared on 28 January 1851,¹⁶³ less than twelve months after his departure from St. Mary's in March 1850. When Gregory was in Italy in 1852, he made no reference of Murra in any

¹⁶³ Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 94.

of his correspondence. Similarly, there was no mention of Murra in the letters of Polding during his time in Rome from June to September 1854 and again in October 1854 to May 1855. Likewise, there was nothing about Murra in any of Davis' surviving correspondence. Was it possible Murra had been forgotten by the Sydney Benedictine community? It appears so. The "little black boy" who Polding intended "to have...educated for the sacred ministry" died in July 1857 at S. Giuliano monastery near Genoa at the age of fifteen.¹⁶⁴ Whilst Polding's silence remains baffling, Kavenagh suggested a possible reason why he failed to mention Murra in any of his correspondence:

Perhaps, the archbishop's expectations had not been very realistic to begin with. How quickly could an eight-year old aboriginal boy, taken straight from the bush, have been expected to master both English and Italian, (speaking, reading and writing), while also having to adjust to an entirely strange new world?

...John David had survived almost a decade of exile, but one cannot imagine what the last two years of his life at S. Giuliano were really like. Still less can one imagine his feelings as he faced death, thousands of miles from his own country and people.¹⁶⁵

Appointments

Polding left Sydney on 13 May 1851 for the south-west area of New South Wales.¹⁶⁷ During the ten weeks Polding was absent, Davis made what appears to have been eight appointments within the Monastery and at Subiaco. Davis appointed a Refectorian, a Supervisor of the Subiaco farm, Lay Brothers in the role of farm hands at Subiaco and a Superior of the Lay Brothers, a Clerk of the Cathedral, a Head of St. Mary's museum, a Cellararius and prefect of the Refectory, and a Master of Postulants.

¹⁶⁴ Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 94.

¹⁶⁵ Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes," 95-96.

¹⁶⁷ Polding's south-west visitation, May 13 – July 22: Sydney – Bungonia – Bungendore - Queanbeyan – Cooma – Braidwood – Goulburn – Collector – Lake George - Ryansvale – Bungonia – Sydney.

On the day of Polding's departure, Davis appointed a new Refectorian to the refurbished Refectory; an appointment "felt by the Brethren, as no small boon from Superiors."¹⁶⁸ Within a week of the new appointment, the *Benedictine Journal* also reported:

The refectorian's department is going on admirably – Improvements daily – each one better than that of the preceding day – When going into the Refectory at supper time, some of the Brethren were surprised to feel an unusual softness in the step of the door, but it was soon discovered that the cause of this was a grand mat, placed there no doubt, in order that each one might purify his feet, before leaving this place of bodily refecton, from the dust, before entering upon the passages leading to the choir.¹⁶⁹

The day after Polding's departure, Davis travelled to Subiaco and appointed Br. Aemilian Fitzpatrick to supervise the running of the farm. Davis replaced Br. Benedict Casey, the former manager of Subiaco farm, assigning him to the position of Clerk of the Cathedral.¹⁷⁰ A few days later, Davis chose Br. Felician Bowler to care for St. Mary's museum; the fourth appointment made by Davis since Polding's departure. Ironically, the *Benedictine Journal* reported "all will soon be 'head men'; each one, as the current phrase has it 'Rises a dignity upon himself' – and gets an office."¹⁷¹

The following day, Davis selected deacon Felix Sheridan, the then chaplain of Darlinghurst Gaol and "visiting clergyman" to Cockatoo Island, to the positions of Cellerarius and Prefect of the Refectory. There was a formal and public ceremony installing Sheridan and investing in him "all the power and authority requisite for the due and right performance of his new duties."¹⁷² The same entry acknowledged the appointment of Br. Laurence "to the dignified position of Master of Postulants

¹⁶⁸ *BJ*, 13/9/1851.

¹⁶⁹ *BJ*, 19/5/1851.

¹⁷⁰ *BJ*, 14/5/1851.

¹⁷¹ *BJ*, 20/5/1851.

¹⁷² *BJ*, 21/5/1851.

extraordinary” a few days earlier.¹⁷³ Davis probably made these appointments in order that the monks might gain more experience within the monastery, as well as receive recognition within the community for their previous accomplishments. Because a significant number of monks were promoted to key positions, the more junior members of the community would have gained some experience in lower positions. Davis knew from his years at Downside about the benefits for a community to witness promotion on a large scale. He demonstrated at St Mary’s that moving ahead in the monastery was a possibility that could motivate the monks to perform better. Moreover, working in the same position for decades could become boring and cause the person to lose interest in, and loathe his job.

The *Benedictine Journal* reported Davis had been “very ill during the last few days” but was still able to travel to Parramatta on the morning of 27 May. The next day, he returned to Sydney having learned that “nearly all the men employed at the farm, Subiaco, [had] left to go to the Gold Mines lately discovered at Bathurst.” Davis appointed some of the Lay Brothers at St. Mary’s “to supply their place” at Subiaco.¹⁷⁴

Nearing the end of Polding’s journey to the south-west region, Davis made his final appointment at St. Mary’s, specifically, Br. Felix Sheridan to the position of “Immediate Superior of the Lay Brothers.” This was Sheridan’s third appointment during Polding’s absence.

The *Benedictine Journal* reported that whilst various appointments were seemingly “springing up every day,”¹⁷⁵ each position was important and essential to the smooth running of the monastery. Davis evidently made these appointments in an endeavour to maintain Benedictine autonomy. To ensure this model became effective,

¹⁷³ *BJ*, 21/5/1851.

¹⁷⁴ *BJ*, 27/5/1851.

¹⁷⁵ *BJ*, 20/5/1851.

Davis began cultivating a more closely bonded and empowered community by delegating additional monks to various positions of responsibility. These appointments aimed to ensure a greater stability within the monastery so that “in all things God may be glorified.”¹⁷⁶ Presumably Polding accepted these new appointments on his return since there is no mention in the *Benedictine Journal* suggesting Polding withdrew any of these positions following his return.

As bishop, Davis had numerous other duties to perform, particularly during Polding’s absence. Whilst celebrating the Queen’s Birthday, it was usual for the postulants to attend the “Government Domain” so they could observe the “review of the Troops.” Davis created “another new dignity” at the monastery by allowing the deacons to attend with the postulants.¹⁷⁷

An example of Davis’ mediation in Benedictine community life is his intervention in a dispute between Br. Laurence Moore, Master of Postulants ¹⁷⁸ and Fr. Maurus O’Connell¹⁷⁹, the Vice-President of Lyndhurst. The disagreement was formally brought to the attention of Davis via a letter from Moore complaining of O’Connell’s “improper conduct” towards him. What is fascinating about Davis’ response was the methodical and logical way he replied to Moore’s allegations, thus allowing another glimpse into his character. The content of Moore’s letter was more or less ‘letting off steam.’ Davis’ reply was candid and pastoral. He counselled Moore regarding his duties and the expected behaviour under a duly appointed superior. Davis also advised Moore he

¹⁷⁶ RB, Chapter 57.

¹⁷⁷ *BJ*, 24/5/1851.

¹⁷⁸ Br. Laurence Moore was born in Dublin on 27/2/1828 and was professed on 17/5/1850 at the age of 22 years. Moore left St. Mary’s after February 1856. Refer to Terence Kavenagh, “Profession Dates (and others) of the Monks of St. Mary’s, Sydney,” *Tjurunga* 48, (May 1995): 69-75.

¹⁷⁹ Fr. Maurus O’Connell was born Daniel Vincent O’Connell in Hobart on 16/1/1825 and was professed on 15/4/1845 at St. Mary’s and later ordained on 16/6/1848. O’Connell remained in the Benedictine Order until his death on 12/9/1901. Refer to Kavenagh, “Profession Dates (and others) of the Monks of St. Mary’s, Sydney,” 69-75.

would need to detail all allegations meticulously if he wanted the incident to be investigated further.

Davis reminded Moore about his vow of “holy obedience” and suggested that “if the fitness of any superior to govern were to be decided by one subject to him, there would, I apprehend, be an end to all authority.” Davis also advised Moore he was “fully justified in representing to higher authority” because of the behaviour of “an immediate or local superior” if he believed he had been unjustly treated. Davis suggested Moore could appeal to a higher authority if he thought his superior interfered “with [his] duties as to lower [him] before those under [his] immediate charge, and render [his] authority over them contemptible.”¹⁸⁰

Davis added, however, that Moore’s allegations were of “so vague a nature that [he could] do little or nothing with it in its present form” because O’Connell would “probably plead innocent of the charge.” Davis was curious as to why Moore failed to advise him earlier of the “improprieties on the part of Fr. M on the occasions of their occurrence.” Given the ambiguity of the allegations, Davis nevertheless offered the following advice: “However it is not too late now, and I must therefore request that you will mention the times and other circumstances, connected with these improprieties in order that I may be able to investigate the evil, and, if possible, correct it.”¹⁸¹

Davis recommended to Moore that since Polding appointed O’Connell as the “immediate superior of Lyndhurst,” part of O’Connell’s responsibility was to make sure everyone under his charge were doing their jobs properly. Moreover, if O’Connell believed it was necessary to bring Moore’s “attention either to a neglect or an inadvertent omission of any of your duties, [Davis did not] conceive that he was guilty

¹⁸⁰ Davis to Br. Laurence, 15/10/1852, DAA.

¹⁸¹ Davis to Br. Laurence, 15/10/1852, DAA.

of uncalled for interference.”¹⁸² Davis’ response reveals a superior who sought to act in a pastoral way towards Moore, but also one who was guided by the Rule. Aspects of Benedict’s Rule emerge in Davis’ reply to Moore:

Let all keep their places in the monastery established by the time of their entrance, the merit of their lives and the decision of the Abbot...Except for those already mentioned, therefore, whom the Abbot has promoted by a special decision or demoted for definite reasons, all the rest shall take their order according to the time of their entrance. Let all keep their places in the monastery established by the time of their entrance. ¹⁸³

Davis closed his letter thus:

I shall be happy to comply with your request to have a private interview with me, if it be for the purpose of giving you counsel and comfort as your Superior and friend – but if complaints or charges against another are to be the subject of your communication with me, I must in common fairness either treat of this in the presence of that other, or have them distinctly and definitely written down in order that I may justly investigate them.

I am, dear Br. Laurence,
Yours devotedly in J.C.

C. H. Davis¹⁸⁴

Davis reminded Moore that because O’Connell was the more senior member of the community and through the “spirit of holy obedience,” Moore should be more respectful towards him. Most likely no further action emerged subsequent to Davis’ reply to Moore. There appears to be no further extant correspondence.

Moore was never ordained a priest. He left the Benedictine Order in 1856, a little over three years after writing his letter to Davis. O’Connell remained a Benedictine priest until his death in 1901.

What has become a common theme throughout the life of Davis thus far was his consistent ethic of life fostered particularly within the convict and orphanage system of

¹⁸² Davis to Br. Laurence, 15/10/1852, DAA.

¹⁸³ RB, Chapter 63

¹⁸⁴ Davis to Br. Laurence, 15/10/1852, DAA.

colonial Sydney. The *Benedictine Journal* is not specific about who wrote the following statement read out at every Cathedral Mass on 19 September 1852. It concerned the public hanging of convict Francis Thomas Green that was to occur at 9am on 21 September 1852.¹⁸⁶ Since Polding had been absent from St. Mary's since March, it was probably written by Davis:

On Tuesday next, the extreme penalty of the Law will be inflicted upon one of our fellow creatures. The faithful are earnestly exhorted to refrain from indulging a gross and unchristian curiosity by being present on the occasion and Parents and Guardians, and others are particularly entreated not to allow their children to witness a scene, which as well on account of its own painful character, as on account of the depravity of those usually attending it, is highly calculated to shock and render callous the best feelings of our nature. Mass will be celebrated on that morning, in the Cathedral, at a quarter to 9, instead of half past 8 o'clock and the Faithful are earnestly entreated to be present.¹⁸⁷

Davis' public stance outlined in this letter must have made a big impact on the local Sydney community, since "notwithstanding the badness of the weather a large portion of the congregation was present [at the Cathedral] amongst whom was the Judge who condemned the unfortunate man."¹⁸⁸ All Roman Catholic churches and convents in Sydney celebrated masses for the soul of Francis Green.¹⁸⁹ Green had reconciled his crimes with God and converted from "the Protestant religion" to become a "fervent disciple of the Catholic Church" under the guidance of Fr. Felix Sheridan, OSB.¹⁹⁰

Pius IX (the then current Pope) and many of Pius' predecessors agreed that a properly constituted State could lawfully put to death one convicted of a serious crime

¹⁸⁶ Francis Thomas Green, alias Francis Thomas Brown, was indicted for having at Buckley's Creek, on the 10th of March last, assaulted and wilfully murdered one John Jones, otherwise called "the Tinker," by shooting him with a pistol, and thereby inflicting a wound on the back of the neck, whereof the said John Jones instantly died. *SMH*, 5/8/1852, 2.

¹⁸⁷ *BJ*, 19/9/1852.

¹⁸⁸ *BJ*, 21/9/1852. This was New South Wales' last public hanging. See *The Sunday Herald, Sydney*, 26/7/1953, 13.

¹⁸⁹ *BJ*, 21/9/1852.

¹⁹⁰ *BJ*, 21/9/1852. For a detailed description of Green's trial refer to *SMH*, 5/8/1852, 2.

both for the protection of society and as a matter of justice. Davis may not have been necessarily opposed to the death penalty but as a decent human being and a Christian he did not want his people gloating over an unfortunate death nor exposing their children to it, instead organising Masses for the repose of Green's soul.

Recreation Days

There are numerous puzzling entries scattered throughout the *Benedictine Journal* regarding the granting of "Recreation Days." Kavenagh comments on the intention behind this institution:

One can understand that, cooped up in the crowded St. Mary's precincts, the younger members of the community, in particular, would feel a strong need for physical exercise, plus space in which to "let off steam", but the frequency of these recreation days also suggests a deep-seated boredom and restlessness.¹⁹¹

His proposition that the monks were probably bored and restless seemed to have spilled over into their outlook on the purpose of recreation days themselves. The *Benedictine Journal* recorded an emerging dullness amongst the community: "[Recreation Days] having become common, they have lost their novelty and therefore it would be superfluous to make a long narrative of the affair."¹⁹² It has previously been noted during the early 1850s the morale of the monks at St. Mary's had become disaffected, particularly in relation to the Serenus Farrelly affair and the effect it had had upon the self-esteem of the community.

Despite the repetitive nature of community recreation days, however, some monks still made use "of any pretext" to secure a day off from their studies.¹⁹³ We are given the impression Davis was mindful community numbers were not always particularly

¹⁹¹ Kavenagh, "Distant Echoes" 71.

¹⁹² *BJ*, 26/5/1851.

¹⁹³ *BJ*, 16/8/1851.

concerned about the significance of a superior's anniversary; rather, they were more anxious about securing a holiday for themselves with any excuse.

The anniversary of Polding's profession to the EBC was 18 July. Tradition dictated the community were to have a recreation day in honour of Polding. On the date of Polding's anniversary in 1851, Davis decided the community were not going to celebrate his anniversary because he was absent. Davis announced instead "the day [would be] spent in the ordinary way, at study." However when Polding returned to St. Mary's at 2pm on 22 July he was:

welcomed, on entering the city, by a peal from the Bells of St. Benedict's and as soon as the carriage could be descried from the top of St. Mary's Tower, the Cathedral Bells, in their usual style, announced his return...As a necessary consequence, studies were laid aside for the rest of the day.¹⁹⁴

In 1853, following his removal to Lyndhurst, Davis made a similar decision regarding Polding's anniversary.. The community at St. Mary's, however, acknowledged Polding's anniversary by celebrating it with a day of recreation.¹⁹⁵

During another of Polding's absences, members of the community approached Davis on 16 August 1851, requesting a recreation day to celebrate the anniversary of Davis' own departure from England to Australia ("as well as Fr. Bede's???? arrival in the colony"). With what appears to be a reluctant response, Davis gave them permission to celebrate this anniversary, but "at the same time remarked that this should be the last."¹⁹⁶

Davis granted another holiday for the postulants on 4 November in honour of his patron St. Charles Borromeo and permitted another "recreation day" the next day "as his feast fell upon a day which was 'de jure' a recreation day."¹⁹⁷ Both days occurred

¹⁹⁴ *BJ*, 18/7/1851.

¹⁹⁵ *BJ*, 18/7/1853. It is not known whether Davis ignored this tradition in 1852 since there is no *BJ* entry for 18 July.

¹⁹⁶ *BJ*, 16/8/1851.

¹⁹⁷ *BJ*, 4/11/1851 & 5/11/1851. "de jure" means: according to rightful entitlement or claim; by right.

during the absence of Polding. The following year at Lyndhurst under Davis' authority, the Feast of Charles Borromeo was celebrated once again as "a recreation day" whereby "the community spent the day...[being] most hospitably entertained by F Mellitus Corish."¹⁹⁸

If Davis was worried too many days were being spent away from study because of "recreation days," he probably should not have encouraged "recreation days" to occur on his own saint's feast day. Surprisingly, Davis seems to have focused on restricting the celebration of milestones in the life of Polding, especially during Polding's absence from Sydney or when Davis was residing at Lyndhurst.

Conclusion

Prominent aspects of Davis' leadership and spirituality have been overlooked by Australian church historians. What is remarkable about him was his ability to assist Polding with the management of the Archdiocese, supervise the monastery in both "spiritual and temporal matters" during Polding's absences, and continue functioning in his other roles. Davis was a prodigious and good-natured leader who gained the respect of everyone he came into contact with. At the same time, it could be claimed he was a liturgical and educational visionary.

Davis was pragmatic in the accomplishment of his episcopal duties. What is distinctive about him was his ability to discern the different rhythms of life not only in the monastery, but also in colonial Sydney. He recognised how God was acknowledged in these rhythms and he identified the beauty of God through prayer and music. At the same time, Davis regularly distinguished the consequence of sin in daily colonial life and was not afraid to acknowledge it.

¹⁹⁸ *BJ*, 4/11/1852.

This chapter is pivotal in the story of Charles Davis. It allows one to observe him grow in his role as Polding's Coadjutor. His loyalty to Polding was apparent, even though he may have disagreed with him on occasions. We see Davis' involvement in the Farrelly dispute, and in particular we see how he worked with Polding and co-signed a letter to Pope Pius IX affirming Farrelly was unfit to be a priest and his accusations towards Polding were fabricated and defamatory.

At the heart of the Farrelly affair was a growing discontent amongst other monks regarding Polding's 'Benedictine Dream.' Even Davis did not think this vision would endure. Firstly, the monastery with its lack of numbers was not in a position to satisfy the growing Catholic demands of the colony,¹⁹⁹ but his allegiance to Polding obligated him to the existing order. Secondly, Davis was powerless to resolve the instability and melancholy that had engulfed the monastery by the early 1850s.

Davis recognised the equality of the laity and the clergy, engaging lay people in significant Cathedral liturgies and community prayer, inviting them to work beside the monks in the grounds of the monastery on at least one occasion. Davis saw 'Church' as a living institution which included all baptised people.

Davis' (and Polding's) treatment of John David Murra, an Indigenous Australian child, saw his permanent removal from his Indigenous family and his involuntary transportation to a monastery in Europe. Sadly, Murra died in Genoa at the age of fifteen. Polding and Davis were products of the society in which they lived and genuinely believed they were acting in the boy's best interests. Despite the pleas of the boy's father, they believed it was their moral obligation not to return the boy to his family for the sake of converting him to Christianity. Regrettably, it seems the boy was forgotten by Polding, Gregory and Davis after leaving St. Mary's.

¹⁹⁹ Dowd, *Papal policy towards conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions*, PhD diss., 33.

The morale at the monastery became low due to a number of factors: the Farrelly affair, the insubordination of some of the monks, and the splitting of the community by Polding following the opening of Lyndhurst College. Polding's self-confidence and energy levels were low and he felt disheartened especially by the increased questioning of his long-term vision for the colonial church and Rome's initial support of Farrelly's case. This resulted in Polding travelling to Rome in 1854 to offer his resignation as Archbishop of Sydney.

Finally, Davis began appointing monks to various positions of leadership at St. Mary's, Subiaco and Lyndhurst during Polding's (and Gregory's) absences and he modified some customary liturgical practices in the monastery and Cathedral.

Chapter 7

Charles Davis and Education

A need for education in Sydney

Two challenges confronting Polding after arriving in 1835 were providing for the spiritual needs of Catholics in the colony and managing their affairs in a way that attempted to guarantee a smooth working relationship with the Government. Education was fundamental in developing both these areas. Polding regarded education as a means of social advancement, beneficial to those “on the lower steps of the social scale.”¹ He wanted a “native race of priests and statesmen, of lawyers and physicians, of solicitors, and sailors, and artists.”² He sought to emulate Downside’s approach to education in Australia; specifically in the field of secondary education that would “transcend the mere bread-and-butter preoccupations of the masses and prepare an *elite* from among whom the offices of Church and state could eventually be filled.”³ Polding’s goal was to create schools which would provide a Catholic education for its students founded on the principles of Benedictine ideals.⁴

¹ A. Prendergast, “The Benedictine Schools of Sydney,” *Talk to the Catholic Historical Society* (unpublished paper), 13 June 1999, 2.

² See Polding’s “Pastoral on a Catholic College in the University of Sydney,” 1857 in Patrick O’Farrell, *Documents in Australian Catholic History*, (Melbourne: Geoffrey Chapman Pty. Ltd., 1969), 199-208. Also quoted in Gregory Haines, “Reflections on Polding,” *The Australian Catholic Historical Society*, Volume 5, Part 1, Sydney 1975, 6.

³ Fogarty, R. *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, Vol. II, (Melbourne University Press, 1957), 312.

⁴ M. Francesca Fitz-Walter, “Benedictinism in Australian Education,” *Tjurunga*, 1974/8, 237.

St. Mary's Seminary - Woolloomooloo

The first Catholic secondary school established in Australia was St. Mary's Seminary, Sydney. The school eventually catered for three types of students, lay pupils, students for the secular priesthood and those considering the religious life.⁶ It was established by Polding in 1836 and was located at his house at Woolloomooloo.⁷ There were four students considering the priesthood who were doing their preliminary studies: "Messrs. Harding, Kenny, Reynolds and Gorman."⁸ In 1837, the Seminary came under the Presidency of the Reverend Charles Lovat – especially selected by Ullathorne – a person "well-grounded in physical science and mathematics; a distinguished classical scholar and a sound theologian."⁹ Lovat was assisted by two theology students from Waterford College in Ireland.¹⁰ Prior to Lovat's arrival, Polding had "fitted up by means of the Australian funds the Chapel House for a school and Seminary on a small scale. As soon as Mr Lovat comes...I shall open the Seminary."¹¹ St. Mary's Seminary was modelled on the English lay-clerical school model for the education of both lay students and candidates for the priesthood.¹²

The 'new' St. Mary's Seminary

In 1845, the 'new' St. Mary's Seminary began construction in the grounds of St. Mary's at the Government's expense¹³ and was "a good large Gothic building with only

⁶ Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney," 1.

⁷ See Appendices No. 37 for a painting of St. Mary's Seminary, Woolloomooloo.

⁸ Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia I*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 269.

⁹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia I*, 270.

¹⁰ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia I*, 269-271 .

¹¹ Polding to Brown, 14/6/1837. Refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia I* 306.

¹² Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney," 1.

¹³ M.J. 8 October and 19-24 November 1845, S.M.A. Quoted in Terence Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary," (unpublished hand written notes), n.d.

one room in it.”¹⁴ Joseph Fowles described its location as “[d]escending the hill at the back of the cathedral, we came to the school; a building erected about four years since, it is in perfect keeping with the cloisters, and deserves a better position than the one it occupies; it is capable of holding about five hundred persons.”¹⁵ Polding visited England in 1846 to obtain funding for its completion. In England, he addressed a circular letter to the leading Catholic clergy and laity and stated:

One of the causes which have impelled me to undertake the long voyage of sixteen thousand miles, with great grief to leave my flock, and at great inconvenience to visit Europe, is the absolute necessity I am under of obtaining means to erect a Seminary for the Australian Missions...In Australia, our Ecclesiastical Establishments are in their infancy – Church Revenues we have none – whilst the necessity of providing a Seminary without delay, presses upon us with greater force from the very circumstances in which we are placed.¹⁶

The cost of transporting missionaries from Europe to Australia was immense and the *Society for the Propagation of the Faith* could no longer afford the necessary level of funding. The provision of priests from England and Europe was unable to match the growing Australian Church. Polding continued:

We have, in consequence, commenced the erection of our Seminary. We have 45 Scholars, who now attend the Day School; 15 Candidates for the Sacred Ministry, who reside with us, and 8 as Lay Brothers...But without a Seminary...the Candidates for the Priesthood cannot be trained to the becoming discharge of the sublime functions of the sacred state to which they aspire.¹⁷

In 1848 student intake at St. Mary’s began with sixty pupils, increasing to about 200 in 1862.¹⁸

¹⁴ Moore to Morrall, 18/2/1848, B.Coll. DA, M71. Quoted in Kavenagh, “St. Mary’s Seminary,” n.d.

¹⁵ Fowles, J. *Sydney in 1848*, (originally published in 1848, facsimile copy, Sydney: Ure Smith, 1973), 72.

¹⁶ Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 125.

¹⁷ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 126.

¹⁸ Moore to Morrall, 18/2/1848, B. Coll. DA, M71 and Polding to Gregory, 20/2/1862, B.Coll. DA, N386, quoted in Kavenagh, “St. Mary’s Seminary,” n.d.

By the late 1840s, Polding had appointed Robert Knox Sconce (1818-1852) and Thomas Cooper Makinson (1809-1893) - both Anglican clergymen converts to Catholicism - as teachers in charge of the lay school attached to St Mary's Seminary. Polding reappointed John Clarke who had retired in 1842 and previously taught mathematics at St. Mary's Seminary.¹⁹ All three teachers were placed on salaries of £150 each.²⁰ French was taught by M. L'Abbe Gourbeillon and elocution by the Rev. Oswald Connery.²¹ George Tucker, an "Old Gregorian," and known to Davis, was appointed in 1849 on a salary of £50 a year.²² Davis wrote that as a teacher, Tucker was "very steady" and gave "much satisfaction" to the students.²³

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in 1848 the school was academically outstanding and managed to create "some of the best scholars and most amiable young men who now move in society." Their success was due, not only to the "superior system of education," but more over to the teachers who were "secured of greater talent than there could be found for any similar institution in the colony."²⁴ In 1849, "additional Masters" were employed "in order to render the Seminary thoroughly efficient as a Commercial as well as Classical School." Sconce assured local Catholics their children would get a good religious education and they should not "be tempted to incur the great risk of sending them to schools where their religious training [would]

¹⁹ AC, 10/5/1842, 2.

²⁰ See *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/makinson-thomas-cooper-2423> and <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sconce-robert-knox-2637>, [accessed 28/1/2012]. 150 in 1849 is equivalent to \$37, 260 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed on 9/7/2015].

²¹ BJ, 7/4/1850. See FJ, 4/7/1850, 8.

²² £50 in 1849 is equivalent to \$12, 418 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed on 9/7/2015].

²³ Davis to Heptonstall, 1/3/1849, B. Coll. DA M155, George Tucker was at Downside from January 1843 to December 1845. See *List of Boys at St. Gregory's*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1972), 38, # 296.

²⁴ SMH, 9/9/1848, 2.

necessarily be neglected.”²⁵ Polding was aware that a classic liberal education was not ideally suited to all students in colonial New South Wales and so he introduced a Commerce strand into the curriculum.²⁶

Problems at the Seminary

A Pastoral Letter from Polding was read in various Catholic churches around Sydney on 7 April 1850 regarding regional reports “unfavourable” to the Seminary’s reputation.²⁷ The letter read in part:

We have heard with pain that reports unfavourable to St. Mary’s Seminary have been circulated amongst you, & that, in consequence of such reports, your confidence in the establishment has been so far shaken as to cause some of you to remove your children, and to place them in Protestant schools.²⁸

The adverse reports were having detrimental effects on the enrolment of students at St. Mary’s Seminary. Polding openly criticised parents who removed their children from the school, stating it would be “injurious to the Faith & Morals of those entrusted by God to your care,” and reminded them of the awful “account which you will have to give should their spiritual welfare suffer from your neglect.”²⁹ Polding investigated the allegations and afterwards reported in his Pastoral Letter of 1850: “no substantial ground of complaint” occurred.³⁰ Polding appointed Davis to “take under his immediate

²⁵ *SMH*, 3/7/1849, 1.

²⁶ Prendergast cites similar examples in Sydney schools during the period where the study of Commerce was deemed more practical than the study of Latin and Greek, i.e. John Dunmore Lang’s Australian College and Timothy Cape’s Sydney College. Refer to Prendergast, “The Benedictine Schools of Sydney,” 1-2.

²⁷ Gregory Haines, *The Eye of Faith: The Pastoral Letters of John Bede Polding*, ed. Mary G. Forster, and Frank Brophy, (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing, 1978), 224-225.

²⁸ *BJ*, 7/4/1850.

²⁹ Haines, *The Eye of Faith*, 224-225.

³⁰ Haines, *The Eye of Faith*, 224-225.

superintendence the general direction of the Seminary” in April 1850.³¹ Davis made immediate changes to the curriculum. Details of these changes are discussed below.

Even though Davis was placed in charge of the Seminary, Polding still exercised his authority by announcing the teaching staff:

There will be three masters, viz. Mr. Sconce M.A., Late of Brasenose College, Oxford; Mr. Makinson B.A. late of St. John’s College, Cambridge; and Mr. Clarke. It will be the duty of these gentlemen to be in continual attendance, from the opening till the close of the school, and to devote themselves entirely to the business of tuition. At stated times, however, they will be assisted by the Clergy of the Cathedral. The French language will be taught by M. L’Abbe Gourbeillon, and Elocution by the Rev. Oswald Connery.³²

Gourbeillon and Connery were the only Benedictines on the teaching staff, albeit on a part-time basis.

It has proved impossible to ascertain exactly what the “unfavourable” reports previously alluded to by Polding may have been. One possible newspaper report appeared twice in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in January 1850.³³ It seems there was concern by some parents about “the mode of instruction” within some aspects of the curriculum. Sconce attempted to alleviate parental concern by stressing “the study of the classics is confined to those boys whose parents express their desire for such a course.” Indeed “the system, with regard to other boys, comprises simply those subjects which are essential to a good English and commercial education.”³⁴

In addition to local newspaper reports, there were some comments reflecting the reliability of some staff members. Edmund Moore wrote about Thomas Fynes’

³¹ *BJ*, 7/4/1850, See Haines, *The Eye of Faith*, 224-225.

³² *BJ*, 7/4/1850.

³³ *SMH*, 19/1/1850, 1; *SMH*, 21/1/1850, 1.

³⁴ *SMH*, 19/1/1850, 1; *SMH*, 21/1/1850, 1.

seemingly relaxed discipline towards students at St. Mary's Seminary: "Father Thomas when teaching there was presented with a neat little watch by the students, but I was told that the means by which he obtained it was by allowing boys to act as they wished. He was liked because he was lenient."³⁵ These comments might be the crux of the "unfavourable" reports described by Polding, so Davis was appointed to manage and direct the running of the Seminary. Once again, Davis gave expression to a Polding initiative.

St. Mary's Seminary under Davis' leadership

With Davis as principal, students woke at 4.30am each day and began studying Latin before breakfast. After breakfast, the boys were lectured on spirituality. Latin was the core subject at St. Mary's Seminary timetabled for eighteen hours and thirty minutes per week. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays the boys studied Elocution and Singing. Singing occurred in the traditional choir formation (soprano-alto-tenor-bass). Davis probably taught elocution and singing given his "training in elocution from one of the leading English Tragedians" at Downside,³⁶ and his musical and choral expertise.

The timetable suggests a rigorous regime of study, allowing for only four hours and forty-five minutes of recreation per day (Monday – Friday) and five hours and fifteen minutes of recreation on Saturdays. Given the boys' day at the Seminary

³⁵ Edmund Moore was born at Corby, Lincolnshire on 20/4/1824 and was professed at Downside in January 1845. On 7/10/1847, Moore accompanied Polding to Sydney. He returned to Downside in 1849 and was ordained priest in September 1853. He died on 19/2/1899. Thomas Fynes studied with Moore at Downside in 1845 but left the novitiate after a year. He travelled to Sydney and was professed at St. Mary's in January 1846 and ordained priest in the same year. Fynes taught at St. Mary's Seminary and served at Wollongong and Campbelltown. After quarrelling with Polding in 1849, Fynes was sent to New Zealand and remained there until his death in 1887.

³⁶ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 210.

equated to about sixteen hours of schooling each day, the few hours of daily leisure would have been welcomed.

Subjects initially studied under Davis' curriculum were Latin, Spirituality, English, French, Elocution, Singing, Mathematics, Writing, History, Geography and the Catechism. The boys likewise attended Mass, prayed and meditated each morning, examined their consciences, visited the Blessed Sacrament, and prayed at night.

For those who preferred a less rigorous education, St. Mary's Seminary adapted itself to one that was "strictly of a mercantile character" comprising English, Reading and Composition, Writing, Arithmetic and Book-keeping, Modern History, Geography and French. Unsurprisingly, in the Australian context, parents had become dissatisfied with the classical education offered.

The higher divisions of the school learnt about Homer and Demosthenes in 1848.³⁷ By 1856, however, students at St. Mary's Seminary struggled with Arnold's "Greek Accidence."³⁸

If parents wanted their child to participate in a "higher course" of education, the student undertook the "usual branches of a classical and Mathematical education." Religious education was compulsory and the boys were "carefully trained in the knowledge and practice of their religious duties." The fees for an "English Course" was £1.1.0 per quarter and the Classical course was £2.0.0 per quarter.³⁹ The two strands of learning suggest recognition by Davis that not all students in the Colony were suited to the rigors of a Classical education. Davis included a 3rd Division of learning by

³⁷ Moore to Morrall, 18/2/1848, B. Coll. DA, M71.

³⁸ Other texts in the curriculum included, "Dr. Lingard's Catechism," Chamber's "Geometry," and Fredet's "Ancient and Modern History," see *BJ*, 22/12/1856, quoting *FJ*. Also see Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary," n.d.

³⁹ *BJ*, 7/4/1850. See *FJ*, 4/7/1850, 8.

1853.⁴⁰ It is not known which Division was specifically relevant to the Seminarians or Lay students. Perhaps the 1st Division were the subjects studied by the Seminarians and the 2nd Division of subjects were studied by the Lay students? The 3rd Division added in 1853 was selected by students who preferred a commercial education.

Figure 1: St. Mary's Seminary Curriculum under Davis

1 st Division	2 nd Division	3 rd Division
Catechism	Catechism	Catechism
Latin	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
French	English Grammar	Arithmetical Tables
Geometry	English Composition	English Grammar
Algebra	History	Geography
Arithmetic	Geography	Spelling
Globes	Writing	Reading
English Grammar		
History		
English Composition		
Geography		
Book Keeping & Writing		

What is notable about Figure 1 is the absence of Religious education, Elocution and Singing. Perhaps these disciplines were regarded as co-curricular activities? Davis introduced three periods of holidays during the school year, totalling five weeks per annum: a fortnight at Christmas and mid-winter, and a week at Easter. The school also closed on Holy Days of Obligation, the Queen's birthday and the "anniversary of the Foundation of the Colony."⁴¹

⁴⁰ *FJ*, 24/12/1853, 1.

⁴¹ *BJ*, 7/4/1850. See *FJ*, 4/7/1850, 8.

Davis regularly examined students from St. Mary's Seminary and the results of the annual examination included the distribution of prizes. Under Davis, the school regained its scholarly reputation, and by all accounts the students had a pleasant and courteous relationship with the teachers.⁴²

Some of the students whose names and results were published in the local newspapers became well known persons in the public domain. In 1843, for example, at the age of twelve, William Bede Dalley was awarded a silver medal in elocution, and a merit in English grammar and catechism. He also won a third class distinction and prize for his efforts in geometry, and a merit award in geography.⁴³ Dalley became a renowned politician and barrister, as well as being the first Australian appointed to the Privy Council. He defended Henry O'Farrell after O'Farrell's attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh at Clontarf. Dalley remained an active opponent of the death penalty.⁴⁴ Louis and Charles Heydon entered law. Louis became a solicitor at Bathurst and Charles a judge at the District Court. Three other names that deserve mention are Samuel Sheehy, Henry Curtis and John Dwyer. All three became Benedictine monks

⁴² Following Mr. John Clarke's retirement from the school, the students of St. Mary's Seminary wrote in part: "We, the students of St. Mary's Seminary, beg leave to convey to you the feelings of deep regret which every one of us must feel at your resigning the situation of mathematical teacher in this establishment. Believe us, sir, your unceasing exertions for the promotion of science among us shall always have a claim on our gratitude, and we venture to hope that we shall never forget the very edifying and praiseworthy manner in which you performed your responsible duties, by your example impressing on our minds a love of virtue as well as of learning." *Australasian Chronicle*, 10/5/1842, 2. In the *Sydney Chronicle*, the students again published a letter praising the efforts of a staff member (Rev. Hallinan) who was leaving St. Mary's Seminary. They wrote in part: "We, the pupils of Saint Mary's Seminary, beg to assure you of our sincere regret at your separation from us, and to express our thanks for the interest which you always manifested in moral and intellectual improvement, and the unremitting assiduity with which you watched over it. In the performance of your duty you sometimes found it necessary to have recourse to rigid measures, it was always done with a due sense of your own responsibility, and the future well-being of those entrusted to your care." *SC*, 15/4/1848, 2.

⁴³ *MC*, 23/12/1843, 3.

⁴⁴ Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney," 2.

in Sydney.⁴⁵ Curtis and Sheehy were outstanding students at the Seminary and were mentioned in the *Benedictine Journal*:

...The annual examinations at St. Mary's Seminary. In every subject save Elocution where Henry Curtis won the Silver medal & William Dalley came second, Curtis or S. Sheehy headed the list, the other being in second place. French – Curtis, Greek and Latin Classics – Sheehy, Arithmetic – Sheehy, Geography – Curtis, English Grammar- Sheehy, History – Sheehy, Geometry – Sheehy, Globes – Sheehy, Algebra – Curtis, Mensuration – Curtis.⁴⁶

The following table provides an idea of the constancy of examinations supervised by Davis:⁴⁷

Figure 2: Dates of Examinations

Exam	Date
Theology	13, 14, 17, 18, 19 & 20 December, 1849.
Theology	28 November, 1849
Theology	2 & 4 May, 1850
(Religious) Theology	5 August, 1850
Novice Exams	18 & 19 December, 1850
Postulant Exams	20 & 23 December, 1850
Exams in Seminary	27 March, 1851
Postulant Exams	28 March, 1851
Information to the Postulants re their grades in the exams.	15 July, 1851
Seminary Exams	15 & 16 December, 1851

⁴⁵ *MC*, 23/12/1843, 3. Also see Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney," 2.

⁴⁶ *BJ*, 23/12/1843 quoted in Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary." Under Davis' leadership, the boy postulants were moved from St. Mary's in January 1852, shortly before the school opened.

⁴⁷ Refer to the relevant chart dates in the *BJ* for greater detail.

Postulant Exams	19 December, 1851
Theology (whole day)	10 September, 1852
Lyndhurst Exams	13 June, 1853
Seminary Exams	15, 16 & 17 June, 1853

Even though Polding regarded education as a means of social advancement and saw it as beneficial to children from economically disadvantaged Catholic families, it was not until 1852 the monks of St. Mary's came to regard school-teaching an important focus of their ministry in Sydney.⁴⁸

The small number of monks teaching at St. Mary's Seminary indicates teaching was not a priority for many of the monks who travelled to the Australian Mission. Davis provided insight into the shortage of Benedictine educators in Sydney:

We are sadly in want of Christian Brothers, or some confraternity for the education of the poor. For the education of the higher classes we shall, I expect, be obliged to keep back the young Religious of the Monastery, which indeed will prove a great inconvenience as far as the Mission is concerned. In [that] at present we are in great want of priests.⁴⁹

It was previously indicated that Benedictine monks at Downside Abbey did not become proficient in their skills as educators because they were usually sent to the Missions for the rest of their lives. Similarly, Benedictine education was not a priority for many of Polding's monks because they were engaged in other fields of ministry in the fledgling colony, such as ministry at the local gaol, Cockatoo Island, and supply to various parish churches in Sydney and other locations in New South Wales.

⁴⁸ Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary," n.d.

⁴⁹ Davis to Heptonstall, 16/9/1850, B. Coll. DA, M268, D.A.

It was not until 1852, with the establishment of Lyndhurst, that the Sydney Benedictines began embracing education.⁵⁰ St. Mary's provided a base where Benedictine aspirants, usually boy postulants, moved into the monastery from the junior divisions of the school.⁵¹ The monks engaged in full-time teaching were usually focused on educating the boy postulants within the monastery, rather than the secular pupils of the school.

In the early 1850s, Polding proposed another Benedictine school that would prepare students for both the church, university and the civil service. This facility was to be made available to the wealthier Catholics of Sydney so their sons might be able to share "in the inheritance of the cultural riches of the Church which was theirs by right."⁵² This school became St. Mary's Lyndhurst and was opened in 1852 and Davis placed in charge. With the establishment of Lyndhurst, St. Mary's Seminary lost Davis as its President, as well as its most experienced master, Thomas Makinson.

St. Mary's Seminary continued to educate boys through the 1850s, but eventually "ceased to exist" as a school,⁵³ even though enrolments remained at a fairly steady level. By 29 January 1853, there were 130 students. By 21 June 1856, enrolments had grown to 150 students, but by 22 December 1856 admissions dropped to 140 students.

In February 1862, Polding wrote the Seminary was now "the model school" with about 200 pupils in attendance.⁵⁴ The following year, however, there were only sixty-

⁵⁰ Lyndhurst was purchased by Polding in 1849 for the classical education of upper-class secular and day students, as well as priests for the ministry. See Appendices No. 38 for a map of the Lyndhurst property.

⁵¹ Moore to Morrall, 18/2/1848, B. Coll. DA, M71.

⁵² Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, 313.

⁵³ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, 325.

⁵⁴ Polding to Gregory, 20/2/1862, B. Coll. N 386, quoted in Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary." During the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s, the building was frequently used for choral concerts, musical performances, and various public meetings.

seven registered students, comprising sixty-three lay and four ecclesiastical.⁵⁵ Whilst there does not seem to be any exact date regarding its closure as an educational facility, St. Mary's Seminary probably closed sometime in 1863. The last mention of St. Mary's Seminary in the *Benedictine Journal* was on 1 September 1857.⁵⁶ Since the *Benedictine Journal* was written at Lyndhurst, it seems its author paid no attention to St. Mary's Seminary at the Cathedral, leaving its history to fade into virtual obscurity.⁵⁷

There seems no evidence as to why student numbers dropped suddenly from 200 students in 1862 to sixty-seven students in 1863. The difficulties in continuing St. Mary's Seminary probably had to do in part with attracting good teachers and dealing with inadequate funding to maintain staff and competitive educational facilities. This abrupt drop in numbers possibly became the catalyst for the closure of the school. By the early 1860s, Polding had begun relocating students from St. Mary's Seminary to Lyndhurst, thereby enabling day students to attend Lyndhurst for the first time. Despite the fact Lyndhurst opened its doors to the students of St. Mary's Seminary, student enrolments at Lyndhurst were never large; probably due to the high fees charged and the lack of classroom space. To have problems maintaining schools during this period in Sydney was not unusual.

Charles Davis and Lyndhurst College

The estate that Lyndhurst College occupied was originally granted to the Church of England by Governor Philip on 20 August 1789⁵⁸ and remained the property of the

⁵⁵ Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney," 6.

⁵⁶ *BJ*, 1/9/1857.

⁵⁷ Kavenagh, "St. Mary's Seminary."

⁵⁸ J. F. Campbell, "R.A.H.S." *Journal and Proceedings* 15, (1929): 298-306. See also, M. Gregory Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part I," *Australasian Catholic Journal* 23, no. 4, (October 1946): 262.

Anglican Church until its sale by auction in 1828. Charles Cowper purchased 25 acres at £12/15/- per acre and T. C. Harrington purchased eighteen acres at £13 per acre.⁵⁹

The estate comprised was eventually bought from Cowper and Harrington by James Bowman, Principal Surgeon of Governor Macquarie's Rum Hospital for £1,500.⁶⁰

The house Bowman lived in was a sandstone brick-rendered Regency villa designed by John Verge and built in 1833. The house may have been named "Lyndhurst" after the Chancellor and close friend of the MacArthur family, Lord Lyndhurst. Alternatively, Verge could have named it after his own property near Dugong, Lyndhurst Vale.⁶¹ The Bowmans only lived at Lyndhurst for about four years, retiring to Ravensworth, Singleton in 1838. Because of the drought and depression of the 1840's, Bowman lost his Ravensworth, Waverley and Lyndhurst properties. All estates were conveyed to James and William McArthur who took over Bowman's liabilities and were given five years to pay off Bowman's debts to the Bank of Australasia. The MacArthur brothers were unable to repay the debt, and therefore the properties were conveyed to the bank in settlement of the account.⁶²

In 1846, the Church of England became interested in leasing part of Lyndhurst as a theological college from the Bank. Bishop W. G. Broughton had already opened a

⁵⁹ Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part 1," 262. In 1828, £12/15/- is equivalent to \$1,815.50 AU in 2015 and £13 is equivalent to \$1,851.20 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

⁶⁰ F. MacDonnell, "Lyndhurst 1: It's History," *Leichhardt Historical Journal*, no. 2, (July 1972): 3. See also, Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part 1," 262. Bowman was also a Member of the Legislative Council and the son-in-law of Australia's wool pioneer John Macarthur (1767 – 1834).

⁶¹ MacDonnell, "Lyndhurst 1," 4. £1,500 in 1833 is the equivalent of \$254, 200 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

⁶² Bowman died of an apoplectic seizure in 1846. See MacDonnell, "Lyndhurst 1," 4.

small cottage at St. James' Parsonage, Sydney and saw Lyndhurst as an extension of St. James. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported the following:

The house, at Lyndhurst, built by the late Mr. James Bowman, has been hired for the temporary use of the College, and will be occupied by the students, under the superintendence of the Rev. R. Allwood, who has been appointed President and Resident Tutor.⁶³

During its lease to the Church of England, four men were ordained to the Anglican ministry. It was a brave attempt by Broughton to establish a core of local Anglican priests in a decade of drought and depression.⁶⁴

Broughton's hope was that Lyndhurst "might not...be considered as exclusively intended for clerical students." His vision was to provide a "liberal education, the object of which was to form and prepare the mind for afterwards devoting itself to any one of the professions, in particular, what the individual might choose to follow."⁶⁵ Broughton's hope that Lyndhurst would become the "germ of a future university" which focused on enabling its students to be educated in "good sound learning and the lessons of truth" mirrored Polding's vision.

Polding's purchase of Lyndhurst

Polding and Davis went to Lyndhurst on 11 December 1851 to have the property surveyed prior to it being vacated by the then present tenant. When Broughton's vision for Lyndhurst did not eventuate, Polding purchased twenty acres, including the mansion, for just over £4,000⁶⁷ with the view of providing a classical and literary

⁶³ *SMH*, 22/12/1846, 2.

⁶⁴ MacDonnell, "Lyndhurst 1," 4.

⁶⁵ *SMH*, 22/12/1846, 2.

⁶⁷ MacDonnell, "Lyndhurst 1," 4. See *BJ*, 11/12/1851 and Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part I," 264. £4,000 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$481,800 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

education for the sons of wealthier Catholics in Sydney. In a letter to the Provincial at Downside Abbey in early 1853, Davis wrote Lyndhurst “would now easily command, were it in the market, £10,000 or £12,000...so extraordinarily has the value of property risen in this Colony during the last year or two.”⁶⁸

It was suggested in correspondence between Davis and the Colonial Secretary in 1851 that “[Polding] (or head of the Roman Catholic Church for the time being),” Davis, and Mr. Justice Therry become Trustees of Polding’s “intended Residence at Lyndhurst.”⁶⁹

In December 1851 there was a clear sadness emerging amongst some of the monks of St. Mary’s monastery caused by the impending opening of Lyndhurst:

This the last day of the year was passed by the Religious in their usual retirement – within the cloister’s walls did they meditate on that separation which is about to take place. In all probability these are the last vacation days which the present inmates of St. Mary’s will spend together. Some are to remove to the new House at Lyndhurst, and of course the others will be employed in the duties of the Mission. However this may be, before a recurrence of these festive times many changes will have taken place and those who partook in the amusements of yesterday seemed to have their gloomy thoughts on account of this separation, as well as their presentiments of a more arduous course of duty for the approaching year. These thoughts cause some to be dejected, whilst others feed their hopes with anticipations of the future.⁷⁰

To add to the gloom of St. Mary’s monastery, Polding was embroiled in a bitter dispute with the Reverend Patrick Serenus Farrelly regarding the validity of Farrelly’s

⁶⁸ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 199. £10, 000 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$1,204,600 AU in 2015. £12, 000 in 1851 is the equivalent to \$1,445,600 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/>[accessed 9/7/2015].

⁶⁹ Davis to The Colonial Secretary, 28/11/1851, SAA, P 43. Polding never lived at Lyndhurst. He lived instead at St. Mary’s until early 1864, after which he moved to Sacred Heart Presbytery, Darlinghurst. See Terence Kavenagh, “Vaughan and the Monks of Sydney,” *Tjurunga* 25 (1983): 202. A later letter from Davis to the Colonial Secretary in 1852 amended the list of trustees, adding Polding’s Vicar General Henry Gregory in place of Polding (due to an objection by the Colonial Secretary), Davis to the Colonial Secretary, 4/2/1852, SAA P43.

⁷⁰ *BJ*, 31/12/1851.

profession as a Benedictine priest. The 'golden period' of Polding's 'Benedictine Dream' was coming to an end.

Charles Davis: Presidency at Lyndhurst

Lyndhurst was opened on 10 February 1852, with Davis as its President and a total of nine students enrolled.⁷¹ The College was certainly elitist. It was to be a school for the boys of the more affluent colonists of New South Wales. From 1852 – 1861, Lyndhurst catered only for boarders. After 1861, however, the school began admitting day-pupils and weekly boarders.

It aimed to “produce the results of a sound and liberal education, but...also to create amongst [their] people the taste and power to appreciate them.”⁷² If these outcomes were to transpire, Lyndhurst needed to offer some kind of higher education “to transcend the mere bread-and-butter preoccupations of the masses and prepare and elite from among whom the offices of the Church and State could be adequately filled.”⁷³

The fees for boarders in 1852 was sixty guineas; the equivalent of £63.⁷⁴ Since Davis was in charge of the College, he probably established the school fees and developed the curriculum. As the syllabus widened over the years, extra costs began to emerge: eight guineas for washing; two guineas for drill and music; drawing and

⁷¹ John Williamson was the first boy enrolled, remaining at Lyndhurst for ten years and later becoming the first President of the Lyndhurst Union. See Forster, “Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part I,” 265.

⁷² From a Letter by the Vicar General Henry Gregory detailing Polding's vision. Raggiaglio della Missione nella Nuova Olanda, cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 173.

⁷³ From a Letter by the Vicar General Henry Gregory detailing Polding's vision. Raggiaglio della Missione nella Nuova Olanda, cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 173.

⁷⁴ This 1852 amount would be the equivalent of approximately \$7,982 AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

dancing fees as arranged.⁷⁵ By 1865, co-curricular subjects were abolished and younger brothers attending the school were given a discount of 10% on the school fees. Marie Forster noted: "In addition, of course, parents had to provide books, stationery, clothing, cutlery and also a bedstead, palliase, hair mattress and bedding, or pay three pounds in lieu thereof."⁷⁶

The supply of personal effects, stationery and bedding is reminiscent of the requirements for the girls attending Subiaco: two pairs of sheets, six towels, a knife and fork, a silver table spoon and tea spoon.⁷⁷ Davis did not want to run the College at a loss, especially given the families could probably meet the additional expenses.

Though many of Lyndhurst's students' emerged as "high-achievers," the College was never popular, nor did it ever have an enrolment exceeding 100 students.⁷⁸ Gradually, the postulants and some members of the monastery were relocated to Lyndhurst. Other monks remained at St. Mary's in Sydney "to serve the church and support the choir."⁷⁹ Lyndhurst combined ecclesiastical and secular students within the same classes.⁸⁰

On 10 February 1852 Polding blessed Lyndhurst, assisted by the clergy of St. Mary's Cathedral and of the Churches of Sydney. The blessing was followed by Pontifical Mass celebrated by Polding. After lunch, Davis processed through the grounds of Lyndhurst carrying the Blessed Sacrament.⁸¹ The next day, Lyndhurst

⁷⁵ M. Gregory Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part IV," *Australasian Catholic Record* 24, no. 3, (July 1947): 207.

⁷⁶ Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part IV," 207.

⁷⁷ *BJ*, 25/3/1851.

⁷⁸ Frances O'Donoghue, *The Bishop of Botany Bay: The Life of John Bede Polding, Australia's First Catholic Archbishop*, (Australia: Angus & Robertson, 1982), 82.

⁷⁹ *BJ*, 27/11/1851.

⁸⁰ O'Donoghue, *The Bishop of Botany Bay*, 83.

⁸¹ *BJ*, 8/3/1852.

“commenced under the patronage of the Bishop and the immediate discretion of Br. Oswald Connery.”⁸² At the end of February, Fr. Maurus O’Connell was appointed vice-president of the College.⁸³ Below is a list of administrative and teaching staff cited by historian Patrick O’Farrell, in addition to those previously mentioned in the *Benedictine Journal*:⁸⁴

Patron – His Grace the Archbishop
President – His Lordship the Bishop Coadjutor
Procurator – Rev. J. F. Sheridan, OSB
Prefect – Rev. J. L. Moore, OSB
Professor of Elocution and English – Rev. J. O. Connery, OSB
Mathematics – T. Makinson, BA
Classics - _____
French – W. Dolman, Esq.
English and Mathematics – J. O’Reilly, Esq.

It is not clear who would teach the ‘Classics.’ What is clear is that Lyndhurst had three fulltime Benedictine monks, one ex-Anglican minister and two lay teachers on the staff, with Davis as the President and Polding as the Patron.

Bishop Davis moves to Lyndhurst

The *Benedictine Journal* referred to the ‘removal’ of Davis by Polding from St. Mary’s to Lyndhurst on 9 February 1852: “The Bishop removed from St. Mary’s today to the College at Lyndhurst, where he will reside in future.”⁸⁵ The author of the Journal continued: “During the last few days, there have been many changes both here and at Lyndhurst – many are the surmises as to their being for better or for worse.”⁸⁶

⁸² *BJ*, 11/2/1852.

⁸³ *BJ*, 8/3/1852.

⁸⁴ Quoted in O’Farrell, *Documents in Australian Catholic History*, 316.

⁸⁵ *BJ*, 9/2/1852.

⁸⁶ *BJ*, 9/2/1852.

Whilst the *Benedictine Journal* gives the impression Davis was to live permanently at Lyndhurst, in all practicality, he spent much of his time residing at both St. Mary's and Lyndhurst. For example, between 15 March and 30 October 1852, Polding spent 230 days away from Sydney visiting Adelaide and Perth. Davis was effectively in charge of the Archdiocese, the monastery and Lyndhurst. Polding spent 115 days away visiting the Bathurst and Southern Districts of New South Wales in 1853, again placing control of the Archdiocese in the hands of Davis. Finally, Polding left Sydney on 21 March 1854 to travel to Rome to offer his resignation to the Pope, once more leaving Davis in charge. In a letter to the Provincial of Downside early in 1853, Davis suggested his residency at Lyndhurst was only semi-permanent, stating: "I have the direction of the College myself and I spend usually two or three days there each week."⁹¹

Effectively the community at St. Mary's were now divided. Polding lived at St. Mary's whilst Davis lived (at least on a semi-permanent basis) at Lyndhurst with a handful of priests, deacons and lay staff. Both places had clear leadership and as Lyndhurst was now the main educational base, Davis as a competent educator was clearly in charge. One of Davis' first duties at Lyndhurst was to devise a curriculum. Reproduced below is a timetable of subjects, presumably developed by him. Education at Lyndhurst was demanding and fundamentally Classical and Literary in content. The subjects and their distribution of time per week have been broken down accordingly: Philosophy/Theology nine hours; Latin seven hours; Greek seven hours; English four hours; History four hours; Geography three hours; French three and a half hours;

⁹¹ Davis to Provincial, 25/2/1853, DA, unnumbered, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 198.

Writing five hours; Mathematics two and a half hours; Spirituality one and a half hours; Elocution one hour; Singing two and a half hours; Spiritual Lectures or Confession one and a half hours; Ecclesiastical History one hour; and Spiritual Lectures half an hour. Based on this timetable, students attended about fifty-three hours a week Monday to Sunday with around eighteen hours of recreation (Monday to Saturday). Recreation also included extended meal breaks.⁹²

⁹² The timetable was located in a box at the Sydney Archives marked; "C. H. Davis" (no date).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>	<i>Mass & Breakfast</i>
6.30 – 7.00	Latin Study	Greek Study	Greek Study	Latin Study	Spiritual Lecture/ Or Confession	Spiritual Lecture/ or Confession	
7.00 – 8.00	Latin Study	Greek Study	Greek Study	Latin Study	Greek History	English Grammar	Half an hour Spiritual Lectures – Catechism.
	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
8.45 – 9.45	Latin School	Greek School	Greek School	Latin School	Greek School	English	One hour Ecclesiastical History at the times found most economical
9.45 – 10.15	Writing	Writing	Writing	Singing	Writing	Writing	
10.15 – 11.15	English	Maths	Latin	English	Latin	Geography	
11.15 – 11.45	Elocution	Break	Elocution	Break	<i>unreadable</i>	French	
11.45 – 12.45	Geography	Geography	French	French	<i>unreadable</i>	French	
	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
3.00 – 4.30	Philosophy Theology	Philosophy Theology	Philosophy Theology	Philosophy Theology	Philosophy Theology	Philosophy Theology	
4.30 – 5.00	Maths	Maths	Maths	Break	Singing	Singing	
5.00 – 5.30	Spirituality	Break	Spirituality	Break	Elocution	Elocution	
	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper
6.00 – 7.00	History	Break	History	Spirituality	History	History	
	Free time and bed						

Figure 3: Lyndhurst's Timetable

Since classes began at 6.30am each morning, students would have had to get out of bed by 4.30am to wash, pray and meditate, attend Mass and eat breakfast before studies began. Studies concluded most days at 7.00pm, but there is no indication as to how much time students devoted to private study, or even the time they went to bed.

The core subjects of this curriculum focused on Philosophy/Theology, Latin and Greek. The timetable also included Singing and Elocution; subjects Davis most likely taught.⁹³

Lyndhurst's link to Sydney University⁹⁴

Lyndhurst under Davis emerged as an institution that linked closed the gap between elementary and higher education in Sydney. Moreover, it enabled its Catholic students to become educated, cultured, and able to enter prominent careers within Sydney society. Below is a list of thirty-three students who matriculated from Lyndhurst and later graduated from Sydney University from 1852 to 1874.

Figure 4: List of Lyndhurst Graduates

Name	Matriculation	BA
CURTIS William Cyprian	1852	1856 MA 1859
CASSIDY John	1853	1856 MA 1859
CURTIS George	1853	1856 MA 1859
DONOVAN John	1853	1857 LLD 1867
EGAN Patrick	1853	1857 LLD 1867

⁹³ From 1852-61 music and art were included in the curriculum. By 1877 the curriculum expanded to include Elementary Chemistry and Physics. See Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part II," 26-27.

⁹⁴ See Appendices No. 41 for an early picture of Sydney University (n.d).

HARNETT John	1853	1857 LLD 1867
MULROONEY Joseph John	1857	1857 LLD 1867
WRIGHT Gilbert Vaughan	1858	1857 LLD 1867
WHITE Peter	1858	1857 LLD 1867
QUIRK John Norbet	1860	1863 (Hons) LLD 1867
QUIRK Daniel Placid	1860	1863 MA 1871
MCNAMARA John Bede	1860	1863
CALLACHOR Hugh Bernard	1860	1863
SPRUSON Joseph Wilfrid	1860	1863
MEILLON Joseph	1860	1863
LYNCH William	1860	1863
GORMON John Rankin	1863	1866
FITZGERALD Edmund	1863	1866
SULLIVAN James	1864	1867
MAHER Matthew Edward	1864	1867
O'MEARA Michael	1865	1868 MA 1877
TOLE Joseph	1865	1868 LLB 1869
DILLON John Thomas	1865	1868 MA 1876
LEHANE William	1865	1868 MA 1876
LYNCH Michael	1866	1870
FARRELL Charles	1867	1870 LLB 1876
MCCARTHY Francis	1867	1870 MA 1872
DONOVAN Henry Gregory	1867	1870 MA 1872
MONTAGUE James Hugh	1868	1871 MA 1877
HYNES William Augustine	1870	1873 (Hons)
BUTLER Edmund Joseph	1871	1874 (Hons) MA 1877
EDMUNDS Walter	1871	1874 (Hons) MA 1879
FREEHILL Francis	1871	1874 MA 1879

Of the thirty-three students listed above who matriculated from Lyndhurst between 1852 and 1874, each was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Three students

gained a Bachelor of Arts with Honours; eleven students a Master of Arts; two students a Bachelor of Laws; and seven students a Doctor of Laws.

Interestingly, of the first six Lyndhurst students (1852-53), to graduate from Sydney University, three were awarded Master of Arts degrees and three Doctor of Laws degrees. They all had been students of Lyndhurst when it was under the presidency of Davis.

According to Ronald Fogarty, during the 1880s half of Sydney's Masters and Bachelor of Arts, and most of its Doctors of Laws matriculated from Lyndhurst. Moreover, the majority had graduated with honours in classics, mathematics, physics and chemistry.⁹⁵ During the 1870's, ex-Lyndhurst students were awarded various different prizes.⁹⁶

Under the leadership of Davis, John Woolley (Anglican clergyman, principal and professor of classics at the University of Sydney and one of the founding members of the Senate) regularly remarked that Lyndhurst produced the best students of Greek at Sydney University: "You Catholic people, especially you Benedictines, have a great advantage over us of the Church of England, in having your young folks under the strict discipline of monastic obedience."⁹⁸

Twelve months after the opening of Lyndhurst, Davis wrote to the Provincial at Downside and described the College as one that was "going on very flourishingly," but also revealed the need for additional accommodation. By this time, enrolments had

⁹⁵ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, 314. Also refer to M. Gregory Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part III," *Australasian Catholic Record*, (April 1947): 119.

⁹⁶ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, 314 (footnotes). Cited in Forster, "Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part III," 119. See Appendices No. 42 for a list of awards to ex-Lyndhurst students.

⁹⁸ Cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 211. Woolley was one of the founding members (with Davis) of the Senate at Sydney University.

increased to thirty-five students. Davis was confident that if there had been more accommodation, “we might have doubled that number.” He estimated the cost of the building program to be about £6,000 and added “we shall have no difficulty in raising money for the purpose.”⁹⁹ In the same letter, he revealed the construction of more buildings could be afforded at a reduced cost due to:

[H]aving plenty of excellent stone both at Lyndhurst and Subiaco...[at Subiaco] we have on the banks of the creek an inexhaustible bed of shells from which we burn our lime...water-carriage from Subiaco to Lyndhurst, both places being situated on our beautiful harbour...[therefore] we may do for £100 what others can hardly do for £300.¹⁰⁰

It seems Davis’ ability to read the real estate market in Sydney and negotiate deals in substantially reduced building supplies overseas was outstanding. To assist in building extensions, for example, he requested “a quantity of slate.” He wrote: “I think I mentioned that we could find ready use for at least 100,000, or 200,000...By getting the slates from England we shall save, I think, 50 per cent.”¹⁰¹ Perhaps he inherited this gift from his father.

By the end of the 1860s, the remaining Benedictine schools – Lyndhurst and Subiaco - were in trouble. Enrolments were fading and it was difficult to attract new students. St. Mary’s Seminary had already closed. Polding attributed the fall in students’ numbers to his own perceived wane in popularity with the Sydney public. He confided in Gregory: “Subiaco and Lyndhurst have great difficulty in holding on. I

⁹⁹ Davis to Provincial, 25/2/1853, DA, unnumbered, cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 198-199. £6,000 in 1853 is the equivalent of \$722,800AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

¹⁰⁰ Davis to Provincial, 25/2/1853, DA, unnumbered, cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 199. £100 in 1853 is the equivalent of \$12,046AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

¹⁰¹ Davis to Provincial, 25/2/1853, DA, unnumbered, cited in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 199.

cannot but attribute the cause to myself, or to prejudice somehow connected with myself.”¹⁰²

Polding’s next Coadjutor, John Bede Vaughan reflected on declining Benedictines favour “in the estimation of the public” and considered “how much they [were] disliked.”¹⁰³ This had much bearing on the decisions he was to make on the fate of Lyndhurst and Polding’s remaining monks.

Despite Lyndhurst’s success in the early 1850s, it never became truly successful in the Australian environment. The general lack of support for Lyndhurst mixed with its financial problems and its rivalry with regional schools and seminaries caused Archbishop Roger Vaughan to question the practicality of keeping it open. He closed the school on 21 June 1877, a little over three months after the death of Polding.¹⁰⁴ On 27 October 1877, Vaughan wrote a report to Cardinal Franchi of *Propaganda Fide* about the Benedictine monks in Sydney and recommended their suppression.¹⁰⁵

Following their suppression, Polding’s remaining monks ministered in Australia as secular priests. One by one they passed away leaving Austin Sheehy, the last of Polding’s monks, to die on 14 September 1910 at Randwick, Sydney of “senile decay.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Polding to Gregory (1869), quoted in Prendergast, “The Benedictine Schools of Sydney,” 6.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Prendergast, “The Benedictine Schools of Sydney,” 6. See Appendices No. 39 for a photograph of Archbishop Roger Vaughan.

¹⁰⁴ John Bede Polding died on 16/3/1877.

¹⁰⁵ “I Benedetti di Sydney. Il Risultato della Visitazione Apostolica fatta Maggio, 1877,” *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi SC, Oceania II, (1877-8): 296-303*, Archives of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples – formerly Propaganda – Rome. For a detailed account of the closure of Lyndhurst and the suppression of Polding’s monks, please refer to Kavenagh, “Vaughan and the Monks of Sydney,” 183-209.

¹⁰⁶ Kavenagh, “Vaughan and the Monks of Sydney,” 209.

Why did Lyndhurst fail?

There are three fundamental reasons why Lyndhurst failed as a viable educational venue and these are discussed in Prendergast's unpublished paper: *The Benedictine Schools of Sydney*.¹⁰⁷

Firstly, there was the anti-English attitude amongst a number of Irish bishops and priests. They continually worked to undermine the Benedictines, particularly following the increase of Irish priests and bishops. Their philosophy regarding the implementation of Catholicism in the Colonies was immensely different to the thinking of the English Benedictines.¹⁰⁸

Secondly, within the Benedictine community itself, there were problems. Polding never had enough monks to implement his Benedictine vision within the extensively dispersed Australian Catholic community. Allegations of corrupt behaviour within the Benedictine community, such as drunkenness and sexual impropriety damaged the reputation of the Benedictines and the good-standing of Lyndhurst.

Lastly, Vaughan's scathing report describing Lyndhurst as a school that was "materially, financially, and morally rotten" contributed to its closure.

Davis and the University of Sydney Senate

William Charles Wentworth (1790-1872), explorer, author, barrister, landowner, and statesman, presented a petition to the Legislative Council on 4 September 1849

¹⁰⁷ See Prendergast, "The Benedictine Schools of Sydney."

¹⁰⁸ For a detailed discussion on the problems encountered by Polding towards his Benedictine Dream, refer to Chapter 3: The Roman Rise and Fall of John Bede Polding, 1842-1855 in Christopher Dowd's Doctoral dissertation: *Papal policy towards conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions: The relationship between John Bede Polding, O.S.B., Archbishop of Sydney, and the Sacred Congregation De Propaganda Fide, 1842-1874*, July 1994, (Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University, Canberra), 87-142.

from a majority of the proprietors of the Sydney College in an attempt to convert the College into a University.¹⁰⁹ After two unsuccessful attempts at getting the University Bill passed, it was reintroduced in August 1850. On 11 September the Second Reading was passed. When the Assent of the Governor was received on 1 October, the *Act of Incorporation 1850* established the University of Sydney.

There had been opposition to Wentworth's Bill from the major religious denominations of Sydney. This resistance was based mainly on the secular character of the institution and on the intended composition of the proposed Senate. In a Pastoral Letter to the clergy and laity, Polding argued the Bill involved "a principle calculated to sap the foundations of Christianity" and invited people to sign petitions against it.¹¹⁰ The intended University sought to exclude "any professedly religious teaching" and would not provide students "with a *liberal education*," instead it aimed to focus on "a certain amount of classical, scientific, and other information."¹¹¹ Amendments to the Bill were made which included increasing the number of the Senate from twelve to sixteen. The qualification eschewing the clergy was dismissed, but a proviso limiting the number of clergy eligible for appointment to the Senate to four was inserted.¹¹² The *Government Gazette* specified "the said body politic and corporate shall consist of sixteen fellows, twelve of whom, at the least, shall be laymen."¹¹³ Below are the names

¹⁰⁹ See Appendices No. 40 for a photograph of Charles Wentworth.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Clifford Turney, Ursula Bygott, & Peter Chippendale, *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney*, Vol. 1 1850-1939, (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1991), 48.

¹¹¹ Quoted in Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 48.

¹¹² Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 51.

¹¹³ *Government Gazette* extract, published in *MM & HRGA*, 28/12/1850, 4; Also refer to <http://sydney.edu.au/senate/fellows1850on.shtml#1850>, [accessed 18/12/2012].

of the founding sixteen Fellows of the Senate nominated and appointed by the NSW Governor Sir Charles Fitz Roy in December 1850:¹¹⁵

The Reverend William Binnington Boyce, (1850-1859)
Stuart Alexander Donaldson, (1850-1856)
The Right Reverend Charles Henry Davis, (1850-1854)
Sir John Bayley Darvall, (1850-1868)
Alfred Robert Denison, (1850-1853, 1856-1860)
Sir Stuart Alexander Donaldson, (1850-1861)
Edward Hamilton, (1850-1854)
James Macarthur, (1850-1860)
Francis Lewis Shaw Merewether, (1850-1875)
Sir Charles Nicholson, (1850-1883)
Bartholomew O'Brien, (1850-1869)
The Honorable John Hubert Plunkett, (1850-1869)
The Reverend William Purves, (1850-1870)
His Honor Roger Therry, (1850-1859)
The Honorable Edward Deas Thomson, (1850-1879)
William Charles Wentworth, (1850-1872)

The Senate comprised three clergymen: Boyce (Wesleyan), Davis (Roman Catholic) and Purvis (Presbyterian). No one represented the Church of England.

The educational backgrounds of the Senate Fellows were varied. Six members had no university background (Boyce, Donaldson, Davis, Macarthur, Thomson and Wentworth); three attended Cambridge University (Broadhurst, Hamilton, Merewether); three attended Trinity College, Dublin (Darvall, Plunkett and Therry); three attended Edinburgh University (Nicolson, O'Brien and Purves); and one was an Oxford University graduate (Denison).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ *Government Gazette* extract, published in *MM & HRGA*, 28/12/1850, 4; Also refer to <http://sydney.edu.au/senate/fellows1850on.shtml#1850>, [accessed 18/12/2012].

¹¹⁶ <http://sydney.edu.au/senate/fellows1850on.shtml#1850>, [accessed 19/12/2012].

None of the Senate members had any experience in the management of a university. The shared university understanding of the Senate emerged from the undergraduate model of the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin and Edinburgh from the 1820s and 1830s. Moreover, the Sydney University hybrid was modelled on various universities from Britain and governed by a Senate whose tertiary backgrounds were from diverse traditions.¹¹⁷

The first Senate Meeting

The first Senate meeting was held in the Chambers of the Speaker of the NSW Legislative Council on 3 February 1851 chaired by William Wentworth. The following eleven Fellows were present:¹¹⁸

The Reverend William Binnington Boyce.

Stuart Alexander Donaldson, Esquire.

The Right Reverend Charles Henry Davis [bold by the author].

Francis Lewis Shaw Merewether, Esquire.

Charles Nicholson, Esquire.

Bartholomew O'Brien, Esquire.

The Honorable John Hubert Plunkett, Esquire.

The Reverend William Purves.

His Honor Roger Therry, Esquire.

The Honorable Edward Deas Thomson, Esquire.

William Charles Wentworth, Esquire.

The meeting resolved to elect a Provost and Vice Provost at the next meeting and determine the period the Provost was to be appointed. It was further moved they

¹¹⁷ Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 56.

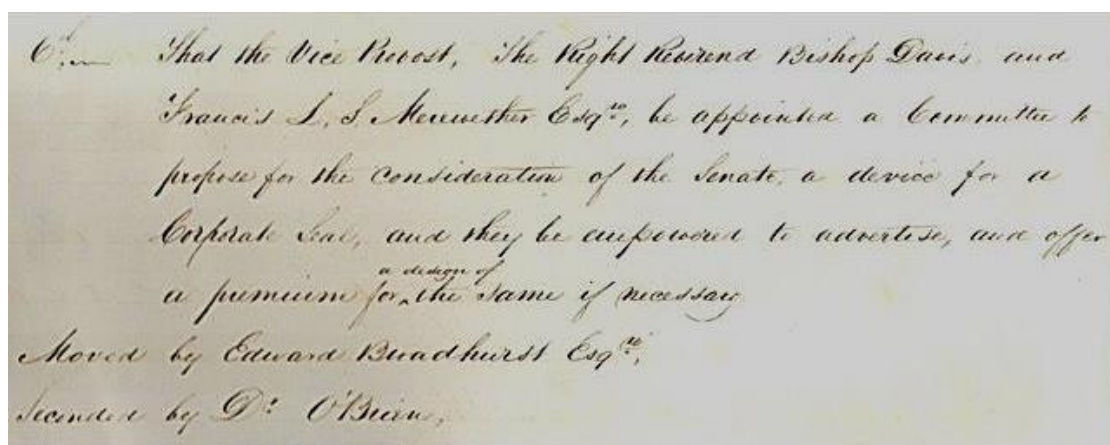
¹¹⁸ *SM*, 3/2/1851.

consider what officer or officers would be needed to carry out the general business of the Senate.¹¹⁹ Other general considerations included the need to adopt a Corporate Seal, appoint a committee to prepare by-laws for the general business of the Senate and consider how the Financial Department of the university should be directed.¹²⁰ At the second meeting held one month later, it was moved by Davis that Wentworth be the chairman of the Senate and the Provost should be elected for three years.

Davis' Sub-Committees

Davis served on numerous sub-committees in the three years of his membership. Some of the Senate Minutes reveal little information about the outcome of some of these sub-committees. For that reason, it is not possible to provide extensive details, other than the fact Davis was a member of these working groups. One of the first sub-committees Davis sat on dealt with the design of "a device for a Corporate Seal."¹²¹

Figure 6: An extract from the Senate Minutes.



¹¹⁹ SM, 3/2/1851.

¹²⁰ SM, 3/2/1851.

¹²¹ http://sydney.edu.au/heraldry/origins_of_the_arms/the_first_seal.shtml, [accessed 28/4/2014].

Figure 7: The Corporate Seal¹²²



It is interesting to observe that the motto of the seal translates as: *May Teaching Promote Virtue*; a statement that reflects something of Davis' educational philosophy. The design incorporates Australian motifs, as well as focussing on the classical figure of Learning bestowing a laurel wreath on the youthful figure kneeling before her.

Information is available concerning the enactment of University By-Laws; the purchase of Library books for the University; the admittance of undergraduates from the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland; as well as consultation with a Church of England College committee with the view of it affiliating with the University of Sydney.¹²³ Davis was responsible for moving two significant motions for the benefit of Lyndhurst. Below is a list of the sub-committees Davis was involved in:

¹²² http://sydney.edu.au/heraldry/origins_of_the_arms/the_first_seal.shtml, [accessed 28/4/2014].

¹²³ See Appendices No. 41 for an early photograph of the University of Sydney (n.d.).

1. To design the Corporate Seal of the University. ¹²⁴
2. To prepare the by-laws of the general business of the Senate. ¹²⁵
3. To examine ways of establishing a College in connection with Sydney University. ¹²⁶
4. To inspect the testimonials and qualifications of applicants for the position of lecturer in Mathematics. ¹²⁷
5. To select and purchase books by Dr. A. MacKaen for the University library. ¹²⁸
6. To purchase additional books for the University library. ¹²⁹
7. To prepare a list of library books and purchases not exceeding £2,500. ¹³⁰
8. To consider the matter of permanent buildings for the University. ¹³¹
9. To draw up a report of all the previous transactions of the Senate. ¹³²
10. To prepare a summary for the Senate in the form of Bye Laws of all its resolutions connected with the discipline and general business of the University. ¹³³
11. To consider and report to the Senate about the admittance of undergraduates from the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland to the University of Sydney. ¹³⁴
12. To consult with a delegation from the Church of England College Committee with the view of affiliating with the University of Sydney. ¹³⁵

¹²⁴ *SM*, 3/3/1851, 3. The sub-committee comprised: Davis and Merewether.

¹²⁵ *SM*, 17/3/1851, 6. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson, Wentworth and Boyce.

¹²⁶ *SM*, 24/3/1851, 9. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson, Boyce, Merewether, O'Brien, Therry and Wentworth.

¹²⁷ *SM*, 11/6/1851. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson and Boyce.

¹²⁸ *SM*, 11/6/1851. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson and Boyce.

¹²⁹ *SM*, 7/7/1851. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson, Boyce, Merewether and Donaldson.

¹³⁰ *SM*, 3/1/1853. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Boyce and Therry.

¹³¹ *SM*, 5/1/1852. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Thomson, Nicholson, Wentworth and Boyce.

¹³² *SM*, 2/2/1852. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Wentworth and Boyce.

¹³³ *SM*, 3/11/1852. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson and Boyce.

¹³⁴ *SM*, 20/6/1853.

¹³⁵ *SM*, 23/7/1853. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson, Boyce, Merewether, Plunkett and Wentworth.

13. To consider the constitution and conditions of the trusts of the four denominational Colleges with the view of securing land and money endowment and suggesting to the Government the best way of obtaining this land and money from the Colleges.¹³⁶

14. To organise a survey of a proposed site for the University and denominational Colleges.¹³⁷

15. To prepare a draft of the University Calendar for 1854-55 and oversee its publication.¹³⁸

At the second meeting of the Senate, Davis' sub-committee was given the task of preparing the By-Laws for the general business of the Senate.¹³⁹ By the next meeting, they had drafted a document for further consideration by the Senate.¹⁴⁰ Davis later presented it "seriatim" [point by point] a week later.¹⁴¹

Davis and two other Senate members were asked to select and purchase books considered "suitable for the University library."¹⁴² Their initial budget was £50 per month.¹⁴³ By the beginning of 1852, the Senate had already paid £523.10.6 for books from England with a further amount of £500 placed at Davis' disposal for the purchase of more.¹⁴⁴ Twelve months later, another committee comprising Davis and two other

¹³⁶ *SM*, 3/8/1853.

¹³⁷ *SM*, 22/8/1853.

¹³⁸ *SM*, 16/1/1854. The sub-committee comprised Davis, Nicholson, Douglas and Boyes. Ironically, Davis died expectantly on 17 May 1854.

¹³⁹ *SM*, 3/3/1851.

¹⁴⁰ *SM*, 17/3/1851.

¹⁴¹ *SM*, 24/3/1851. See the Appendices No. 43 for a copy of the Senate By-Laws.

¹⁴² *SM*, 11/6/1851.

¹⁴³ *SM*, 7/7/1851. Fifty three books had previously been purchased for the library ranging from Language (Latin, Greek, French, and Portuguese), Dictionary-Thesaurus, Grammar, Philosophy and Music. See *Senate Minutes*, 7/7/1851. £50 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$60, 240AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

¹⁴⁴ *SM*, 3/1/1852. £523.10.6 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$63, 060AU in 2015. £500 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$60, 240AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

members prepared a list of proposed library books and purchases for the Senate at “a sum not exceeding £2,500.”¹⁴⁵ At the next meeting, a report with Davis as the head of the other two signatories, provided the following details regarding the purchase of these books:¹⁴⁶

1st ...they requested and obtained the valuable cooperation of the Professor's, and after considerable research and labour, they prepared the accompanying list and agreed upon the purchase of the same.

2nd That Bills have been advantageously purchased upon London, £2673.16 having been procured for the sum of £2,500 voted by the Senate.

3rd That the above sum has been remitted to an accredited and experienced person, through the agency of the Right Reverend Bishop Davis, with directions to him to pay the Booksellers and Publishers, Mrs Burne Lambert and Co. on receiving the invoice and ascertaining the shipment of the same.

4th That they have directed the careful packing of the books in tin, and the effecting of full insurance on the same.

5th That the first of the Bills of Exchange with the orders were sent by the Sarah Sands Steamer which sailed 27 Jan 1853 – the second Bills of Exchange with duplicate of the orders were sent by the Vimcera which sailed 2 Feb 1853.

C. H. Davis
R. Therry
W. B. Boyce

By January 1854 it was reported the library account for “books in hand” totalled £3,124.8.0.¹⁴⁷

Another sub-committee comprising Davis, the Provost and members of the Professorial Board considered and reported to the Senate about the admittance of undergraduates from the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland “ad eundem statum”

¹⁴⁵ *SM*, 3/1/1853. £2, 500 in 1851 is the equivalent of \$301, 200AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

¹⁴⁶ *SM*, 16/2/1853. On the same day as this document was read to the Senate, Davis presented new regulations regarding attendance of sick calls at Lyndhurst. See *BJ* 16/2/1853.

¹⁴⁷ *SM*, 16/1/1854. £3,124.8.0 in 1854 is the equivalent of \$263,600AU in 2015. See <http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/> [accessed 9/7/2015].

[with equivalent status] to the University of Sydney.¹⁴⁸ It was resolved that any person could be admitted to the University as an undergraduate provided the “usual evidence of his residence at or equivalent connexion with, and evident at the former University” was submitted to the Senate for approval.¹⁴⁹

Davis’ vision was to affiliate Lyndhurst with Sydney University so students who had studied at Lyndhurst might achieve degrees at the University. In September 1852, Davis moved that funding from the University endowment to the amount of £500 per annum be granted to each of the affiliated colleges within the disciplines of classical literature, moral philosophy, mathematics and mechanical philosophy. He also moved that a Board be established consisting of the professors of the University and the professors of each affiliated college to examine the candidates for degrees.¹⁵⁰ If Davis’ motion was passed, it would have allowed for an annual award for instruction in affiliated denominational colleges, in opposition to the professorial lectures available at Sydney University. Davis’ motion was rejected by the Senate and he withdrew it.¹⁵¹

In 1853 the Senate considered a report from Davis, Nicholson and Wentworth which highlighted the idea of a central secular teaching University in Sydney.¹⁵² The report offered significant enticements to the four major religious denominations (Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan) to establish

¹⁴⁸ *SM*, 20/6/1853.

¹⁴⁹ *SM*, 4/7/1853.

¹⁵⁰ *SM*, 27/9/1852. Refer to Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia’s First*, 73-74.

¹⁵¹ *SM*, 27/9/1852. Refer to Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia’s First*, 73-74.

¹⁵² Davis’ sub-committee had a survey made of about 120 acres at Grose Farm intended for the University and four denominational Colleges (*SM*, 22/8/1853). Eventually, the Government granted the Senate 126 acres on 18/1/1855. For all the details, refer to Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia’s First*, 97.

colleges in connection with the University, as well as agreeing with the Government's offer of a new University site.

The report observed that under the current University arrangements, students who lived at home or in boarding houses in or near Sydney had the advantage of tuition from the University professors. Those who lived in boarding houses outside of Sydney were deprived from sharing in this aspect of academic life.

The sub-committee suggested a site be acquired in the vicinity of the proposed University site and four Colleges be established nearby so undergraduates could attend professorial lectures "without being exposed to distraction and loss of time necessarily occasioned by a long walk or ride."¹⁵³ This enabled the availability of secular professors for students from all the Colleges, so long as the lecture rooms were large enough. The report claimed:

If the direction of these Colleges so far as moral and religious training are concerned, be committed to the heads of the four principal religious denominations recognised by the State, it is conceived that observations on the score of religion raised against the University, as at present constituted, would be removed, and thus the members of all denominations would unite, in obtaining the great objects of University education for our youth.¹⁵⁴

Funding for the Colleges was a subject "that need not at present be considered."¹⁵⁵ The report further recommended the Government be approached to make a grant of land to the Senate for the University (and the Colleges) on condition the Senate sub-grant areas of land to each of the four churches. It was further suggested the Senate exercise control of the land and Colleges to avoid any mishandling of the grant.¹⁵⁶ The

¹⁵³ *SM*, 21/3/1853.

¹⁵⁴ *SM*, 21/3/1853. Also quoted in Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 82.

¹⁵⁵ *SM*, 21/3/1853.

¹⁵⁶ *SM*, 21/3/1853.

consequence of this proposal was to link the four Colleges geographically to the University of Sydney, thereby eliminating any likelihood of autonomous institutional teaching. It was considered by the sub-committee that the grants of land and inferred offer to the churches to apply for additional support would be sufficient to gain ecclesiastical support.¹⁵⁷

Two Church of England bishops in particular were not persuaded that the Senate's proposal of affiliated Colleges would work. George Selwyn, the bishop of New Zealand who was in Sydney at the time, and the bishop of Newcastle, William Tyrell were opposed to the foundation of a Church of England College. Selwyn wrote to Tyrell:

Something must be done, as the Government are now offering four sites of twenty acres each for Denominational Colleges, and if we do not take some step, the self-constituted body calling itself Queen's College will very likely get possession of the grant for that position which belongs to the whole Church of England.¹⁵⁸

Private discussions were held between Tyrell and the Senate's Provost and Vice-Provost. The result of this dialogue saw the drafting of a document by Selwyn and Tyrell based on an agreement between the Church of England and the University of Sydney.

Davis and five others members of the Senate met with a delegation from the Church of England College.¹⁵⁹ The Senate took into account Bishop's Tyrell and Selwyn's previous memorandum, but indicated the following:

1. That in all those branches of purely secular instruction in which chairs were established in the University, the attendance of all matriculated students whether belonging to affiliated colleges or not would be regarded as indispensable. That the Senate considered the adoption of such a rule necessary for giving effect to the intentions of

¹⁵⁷ Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 83.

¹⁵⁸ Selwyn to Tyrell, 6/7/1853. Quoted in Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 84.

¹⁵⁹ *SM*, 23/7/1853.

the Legislature in the foundation of the University, and that to dispute with its observance would be beyond their powers.

That in enforcing such a rule the Senate are willing to regard lectures on Metaphysics, Ethics and Modern History as subjects in which the attendance of students should not be made compulsory nor will attendance be required on lectures on any subjects which are not in the curriculum prescribed for a Degree.

2. That in order to enable affiliated colleges to carry out the moral and religious discipline and training of these constitutions in the most effective manner the Senate are prepared to adopt a By-Law to the following effect: 'Before any degree or honour be conferred a certificate of satisfactory conduct from the Principal of the College to which the student belongs must be produced'.¹⁶⁰

The principal issue was the Senate's determination that students should attend professorial lectures; a matter in opposition to the 4th condition of the Bishop's memorandum. Although a deadlock on this condition ensued, an agreement eventually emerged based on the 3rd stipulation of the memorandum which allowed the Senate to secure the attendance of undergraduates at divine worship to "produce a certificate of competent religious attainment from the Principal of the affiliated College of the Religious Denomination to which the said student belongs."¹⁶¹ The Anglican committee agreed to the compulsory attendance of students at the professorial lectures, with the exception of subjects on Metaphysics, Ethics and Modern History.¹⁶² The Senate did not consider these subjects significant within the Arts course; so it was deemed that attendance was not obligatory. The Senate, however, viewed the agreement with the

¹⁶⁰ *SM*, 23/7/1853, 'Report of the Committee on the Church of England'. Quoted in Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 85.

¹⁶¹ "Memorandum Proposed by the Bishops of New Zealand and Newcastle, to be laid before the Archdeacon, Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Sydney, as a basis of an Agreement between the Church of England and the University of Sydney," Sydney University and Colleges (1850 + MSS). Refer to Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 84.

¹⁶² *SM*, 1/8/1853. Refer to Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 85.

Anglican Church as a victory for educational authority over its affiliated Colleges by including the attendance of Anglicans at professorial lectures. These new arrangements were written into the University By-Laws.¹⁶³

In September 1853, Davis moved for the temporary suspension of the requirement for the compulsory attendance at professorial lectures: “[I]n favour of students residing after matriculation in any scholastic establishment so situate with respect to the University as to render the regular attendance of such students difficult.”¹⁶⁴ Davis’ motion was again intended to advantage students from Lyndhurst. Moreover, it had the potential to undermine the concept of University cluster Colleges. Woolley objected to Davis’ proposal. He argued that if Lyndhurst was granted this kind of affiliation, other institutions “unfit to prepare candidates for [the University of Sydney’s] degree” could become eligible to become affiliated with the University.¹⁶⁵ According to Woolley, the importance of University teaching would be damaged. In a letter to Deas Thomson, Woolley expressed the opinion that Davis’ motion was an attempt to dispense with the concession of compulsory attendance at professorial lectures. The effect of Davis’ motion was that “a new church college [Lyndhurst] will be founded *just out of range* of the University.” Woolley described a similar example which occurred in Oxford:

The same plan [as Davis’] was suggested in Oxford, by the High Church party, as a means of staving off the Dissenters’ claim to admission...The conclusion however of the commission came to this – that granting the possibility of some institutions to teach up to the Oxford standard, this would not be Oxford education – that is that the mere acquisition of certain knowledge is not the sole even principal thing sought for at the University – it is the indirect effect produced by the collision of many minds together, and by the influence not less *real* because difficult to appreciate of the ‘genius loci’. Many men leave Oxford and Cambridge with little positive

¹⁶³ SM, 5/9/1853.

¹⁶⁴ SM, 5/9/1853.

¹⁶⁵ Woolley to Deas Thompson, 1/9/1853. Deas Thompson Papers 3, 471-4; cited in Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950* II, 314.

addition to their scientific requirements – but not without *real* and considerable benefit. No man looks back to his reading for the degree as to *the* benefit which he derived from his academic life.¹⁶⁶

Like Davis' earlier motion designed to benefit Lyndhurst,¹⁶⁷ this motion failed to gain the support of the Senate.¹⁶⁸

Davis' final Senate undertaking

Davis was given the responsibility of preparing a draft of the University Calendar for 1854-55 and overseeing its publication in January 1854.¹⁶⁹ Regrettably, Davis died unexpectedly on 17 May 1854. Although his death will be considered later in this study, the reaction of the Senate to Davis' passing should be briefly mentioned.

The Senate meeting of 22 May 1854 reported Davis' death and "as a mark of respect to their deceased colleague, the Fellows, Professors and other members of the University should officially attend the funeral of the deceased Prelate." The Minutes reported their "desire to record their deep sense of the liberal spirit evinced, and of the zealous services rendered by him in the establishment and conduct of the University and to record their profound regret at the melancholy event which has removed from amongst them their learned and universally respected colleague."¹⁷⁰ Francis Merewether summed up Davis' effectiveness and skill as a member of the Senate.

Obviously Davis had helped him grow analytically:

[T]he university was indebted more deeply than to any other individual. The sound views, the liberal opinions which he had ever advocated had

¹⁶⁶ Woolley to Thomson, 1/9/1853. Quoted in Turney, Bygott, & Chippendale, *Australia's First*, 86. Refer to Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950 II*, 314.

¹⁶⁷ *SM*, 27/9/1852.

¹⁶⁸ *SM*, 5/9/1853.

¹⁶⁹ *SM*, 16/1/1854.

¹⁷⁰ *SM*, 22/5/1854.

done very much to promote that cordial co-operation on behalf of the objects of the university amongst all sects and parties on which its beneficial operations so mainly depended.¹⁷¹

What is clear from scrutinising the Senate Minutes was Davis' continuous effort? to offer his skills and expertise to the many sub-committees of the Senate. His attendance at every Senate meeting, except one due to ill health¹⁷² - he died a few days later, embodied a robustness and diligence that gave little indication to other members of his poor health. Davis' strengths were in administration, transacting business and attention to detail. Most of the sub-committees on which he worked, deals with eminently practical matters: the acquisition of library books, buildings, the construction of finance transactions and Senate by-laws.

Conclusion

In three significant areas Davis made a significant contribution to education: St Mary's Monastery, Lyndhurst and the University of Sydney all benefited from his diligent commitment.

Following a series of difficulties at St. Mary's Seminary, he was placed in charge of the school and given the task of reviewing its curriculum. Due to his practical abilities, Davis recognised that not all students were suited to a classical education. Instead, he instituted two strands of learning; classical and "mercantile." Davis later reviewed the curriculum and included a third strand of subjects. Under his leadership and

¹⁷¹ Daly, R. A. "Charles Henry Davis (1815-1854)," *The Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/davis-charles-henry-1963>, [accessed 20/12/2012].

¹⁷² Davis to the Senate, 6/5/1854: "Dear Sir, I regret that I shall be unable to attend the meeting of the Senate tomorrow. I am dear Sir, yours faithfully, + C. H. Davis." [No. 26, G3/82 Sydney University Archives].

supervision, examinations at St. Mary's monastery were conducted each alternate month and the results were published in the local newspaper.

The second area of contribution to education by Davis was his presidency at 'Lyndhurst' from 1852 until his death in 1854. Here Davis designed the curriculum and provided a Classical and Literary education for the sons of wealthier Catholics enabling them to matriculate for entry to the University of Sydney.

There was a hint of a possible tension emerging between Davis and Polding, perhaps caused by Davis' frustration with Polding's poor administration and his myopic vision of an Australian Benedictine Church in a colonial environment.

The final area of Davis' involvement with colonial education was his position as a Fellow of the Senate at the University of Sydney. He was nominated as a representative of Roman Catholics along with two other clergymen representing the Presbyterians and the Methodists. Davis was an active member of the Senate attending every meeting (except one due to ill health) and enacting significant change in the area of tertiary education.

What becomes evident was Davis' remarkable energy and enthusiasm for education which spurred him to contribute constantly at each meeting of the Senate, often volunteering to represent various sub-committees and to present proposals to the Senate to further the presence and participation of Catholic students in University life. Catholics were not admitted to Oxford and Cambridge until 1871, so clearly Sydney and Davis were well ahead of the times. It should be noted that in 1852 - 53 Polding was absent from Sydney for a total of 345 days during which time Davis had the additional responsibility of managing the Diocese of Sydney, St. Mary's Monastery and the school at Lyndhurst.

Chapter 6

Charles Davis: His Ministry to the Convicts and Orphan Children

Three significant locales scenes of Davis' ministry during the early years of his appointment to Sydney were: Cockatoo Island, the Roman Catholic Orphan School, and the Irish Orphan girls at Hyde Park.

Whilst he was concerned with the spiritual lives of the monks at St. Mary's, Davis was also attentive to the spiritual needs of the convicts on Cockatoo Island and the Irish Orphan girls at Hyde Park, Sydney where he catechised and administered first Holy Communion and Confirmation. He was also responsible for recommending and managing orphaned Catholic children for admission to the Roman Catholic Orphan School in Parramatta. Whilst he did not directly visit this institution, the Government appointed Davis to the 'Committee of Management of the Institution' for destitute Roman Catholic children. This appointment enabled him to apply directly to the Government for funding and other appropriate assistance.

Despite the fact Davis was bound to his desk as an administrator for much of the time, he was able to serve several Catholic Institutions personally, albeit briefly, and exert an influence on the lives of the underprivileged through his continual correspondence to the Government.

Cockatoo Island

Cockatoo Island is the largest of eight principal islands in Sydney Harbour located at the junction of the Parramatta and Lane Cove rivers, about three kilometres west of

the present Sydney Harbour Bridge.² It measures about four acres in size. Whilst the island was very rocky, the intention of the Government was to mine the rock “for the erection of the New Circular Wharf.”³ A prison was built on Cockatoo Island by the Governor of New South Wales, Sir George Gipps, in 1839 “for the reception of prisoners withdrawn from Norfolk Island”.⁴ Prisoners were relocated to alleviate overcrowding on Norfolk Island.⁵ The position of Cockatoo Island on the harbour enabled the prisoners to be seen from shore.

Sixty prisoners “chained together” from Norfolk Island in February 1839 were sent to Cockatoo Island under a military escort.⁶ Another fifty-eight convicts from the Sydney jail were sent to the Island in 1841 to be supervised by a “party of 50 of the military.”⁷ In the same year, Cockatoo Island was “constituted as the penal establishment of the colony of New South Wales.”⁸

By 1842, the Island had a population of about 365 prisoners; most of whom were from Norfolk Island.⁹ The prison population consisted of men from diverse backgrounds such as invalids, lunatics, the lame, the blind and those of ‘doubtful character.’¹⁰ The problem with sentencing convicts from disparate backgrounds to the one compound required they live together. Moreover, they were “compelled to eat and sleep with individuals of the most abandoned description, who [had] been sentenced to spend the

² See Appendices No. 33 for a 19th century painting of Cockatoo Island viewed from the Sydney mainland. http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/system/files/styles/slideshow-scale/private/promo/8d9f53d3-c3e8-41fe-b75d-92846a6328bf/images/wide.jpg?itok=H_jnB46C, [accessed 15/4/2015]

³ *SG & NSW*, 23/2/1839, 2.

⁴ *SMH*, 28/2/1935, 23. Originally, the convicts were housed in tents until the prison was constructed. See *SG & NSW*, 23/2/1839, 2.

⁵ <http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/about/history>, [accessed 9/7/2015].

⁶ *SG & NSW*, 23/2/1839, 2.

⁷ *CO*, 28/10/1841, 30.

⁸ “Old Time Gaol to be Pulled Down,” 1/8/1908, *Newspaper Cuttings*, Mitchell Library, Q991/N, 6 – 10, [85-87, Vol. 9]. Refer to “Cockatoo (Biloela) Island,” *Royal Australian Historical Society*, Journal 18, (1932) [991R Mitchell Library]: 338-343.

⁹ *LE*, 3/12/1842.

¹⁰ Colonial Secretary, Correspondence received from Cockatoo Island 1848, 4/2794.4 (State Records NSW).

remainder of their existence at Norfolk Island, for the most atrocious crimes." All received "the same treatment" and were considered "the most daring desperadoes."¹¹

Only a few weeks after his arrival in Australia, Davis travelled to Cockatoo Island with other members of the Benedictine Community in January 1849 and attended to the spiritual needs of the Roman Catholic prisoners.¹²

The Bishop of Hobart, Robert Willson, visited the Island in 1849 and found the prison and cells were "constructed on the plan of...Norfolk Island." It was a place of "hard labour" where the prisoners were shackled in iron chains and forced to quarry sandstone. Willson described the severity of sentences at Cockatoo Island in the following terms:

The sentences carried out in these living tombs range, from seven to twenty eight days, the law not permitting a longer period of incarceration at one time and twenty-eight days, I think, must intervene before a repetition of that punishment can take place. I learnt on Cockatoo Island the men pass the whole twenty-eight days without exercise in the open air - and are only permitted to come up from their dungeon abode once in seven days to wash. One pound of bread per diem and water is the food allowed. The cells are visited twice in the week by the medical gentleman who attends the station, from Sydney, there being no one properly qualified resident on the Island to do so. By direction of this gentleman, a convict may be allowed to be in the open air for a time.¹³

The barracks were overcrowded and disease became a recurrent aspect of prison life. Sometimes, up to 500 convicts were crammed into the barracks at night.¹⁴ To add misery to their punishment was the fact "they [were] constantly in view of civilized life and tantalized with the sight of the blessings of freedom, yet [found] themselves shut

¹¹ AC, "Extraordinary Case of a Prisoner at Cockatoo Island," 21/10/1841, 2.

¹² BJ, 2/1/1849, 5/1/1849, 6/1/1849, and 18/1/1849.

¹³ Willson, R. W. "Parliamentary Paper - On Prisons," QA & GA, 20/8/1863, 3.

¹⁴ P. Fletcher, "Cockatoo Island,"

http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/cockatoo_island#page=3&ref, [accessed 10/1/2012].

out from the one and denied the other.”¹⁵ It is in this context Davis ministered to the men and it was these conditions which caused him to later complain to the Colonial Secretary in mid-1850’s regarding the “insuperable difficulties which we at present experience in effecting any moral or Religious good among the R. C. Prisoners on Coackatoo Island.”¹⁶ The barracks were exceptionally overcrowded. Each prisoner received a space of 45cm in width to sleep. Due to the stench, especially in the summer months, warders avoided going into the barracks and some never ventured near them, choosing to leave the prisoners alone. A contemporary reported:

Sometimes when I visit the dormitories on a summer’s evening at 8, 9, 10 or 12 o’clock the smell is intolerable ... I do not know what it must be like in the inside. The sentries complain very much of having to go to the wards, and they only go in the hall. There are tubs placed down the wards, and the prisoners all make use of these tubs, and in hot weather, when these have to remain in the dormitories ten or twelve hours, the smell must be dreadful. I wonder how the men live there ... when I have gone round at ten or twelve o’clock I have seen twenty men breathing, as it were, out of the bars of the prison.¹⁷

Davis’ Ministry on Cockatoo Island

Davis and Frs. McClennon and Farrelly travelled to the Island in January 1849 to “give a retreat to the prisoners.”¹⁸ On 5 January, “[Davis] celebrated Mass & having spent the day Catechising – the duties of the Confessional etc. – [Davis and Farrelly] returned to Sydney in the evening.”¹⁹ The following day, Davis celebrated Mass on the Island where “[a]bout 60 of the prisoners approached the holy communion.”²⁰ On 18 January Davis and Farrelly returned to the Island to say Mass for the prisoners again.²¹

¹⁵ SG 23/5/1839, 2.

¹⁶ Davis to The Colonial Secretary, 6/7/1850, SAA, P43, pp. 27-30.

¹⁷ <http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/system/files/pages/a186ca72-f8a5-4ee9-8418-986f964e52a2/files/educationkitfeb2014.pdf>, 21, accessed 24/4/2014.

¹⁸ BJ, 2/1/1849

¹⁹ BJ, 5/1/1849.

²⁰ BJ, 6/1/1849.

²¹ BJ, 18/1/1849.

Davis led two retreats, catechised, heard confessions, and celebrated Mass for the prisoners. Unfortunately, there is no extant correspondence regarding the retreat. A letter to *Propaganda Fide* by Polding in 1842 gave some insight into how Davis probably conducted his retreats. Polding ministered regularly to newly arrived prisoners “each month, or more frequently at certain seasons of the year.”²² Therefore, he probably mentored Davis regarding the most pragmatic ways to work with the convicts. The following model was most likely followed by Davis:

They were divided into classes, according to their condition or the time that they had approached the Sacraments, and the students of the seminary each took charge of a class to instruct them in preparation for the Sacraments....[T]he instructions began with the simplest truths, as the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, etc...At the same time [Polding] and assistant priests gave formal instructions and heard the Confessions of the prisoners. The Retreat closed with a General Communion, and those who were not confirmed received the Sacrament of Confirmation.²³

Under Davis’ guidance the prisoners would have been divided into groups based on their knowledge of the Catholic faith or what Sacraments they had previously received. Basic catechesis probably occurred, followed by Confession, Mass and Communion. Davis would have taught the prisoners how to prepare for the Sacraments on the first Sunday of each month. He attempted to teach them how to approach “the Holy Sacraments” spiritually and make “a spiritual communion” even when a priest was unavailable. The prisoners learnt other spiritual exercises, as well as a devotion to the Blessed Virgin, “the Refuge of Sinners and the Comfortress of the Afflicted.”²⁴

²² Polding to Propaganda Fide, “Report on the Mission in New Holland,” 12/3/1842, cited in Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, (Coffee & Co. Sydney & Melbourne, 1896), 231-240.

²³ Polding to Propaganda Fide “Report on the Mission in New Holland,” 12/3/1842, cited in Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, 231-240.

²⁴ Polding to Propaganda Fide “Report on the Mission in New Holland,” 12/3/1842, cited in Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, 231-240.

The prisoners, who came into contact with Davis and the other Benedictine priests, undoubtedly benefited spiritually from their visits. If Davis' results were anything like Polding's, the men were "induced to enter on a new life," by inviting them "by word and example to return to God."²⁵

Before this system of allowing ministers of religion to catechise the convicts, there had been little chance of any moral improvement in the prisoner's behaviour. Polding claimed a general development emerged in the prisoners' character throughout the colony as well as a reduction in the number of public executions.²⁶

The convict population had increased substantially over the years and they had little separation from each other during "the hours of Rest." Although the spiritual dimension of the convicts may have improved under the influence of Polding and the Benedictines, Davis questioned the moral practice of some of the prisoners. He wrote: "[T]he due separation of the Prisoners from each other...is indispensably necessary, not merely to reform vicious habits already acquired but also to prevent contamination of the grossest and most fearful description."²⁸

Davis' language to the Colonial Secretary was code for sodomy; comparable to descriptions used in previous anti-transportation campaigns.²⁹ Those against convict transportation focused on the hardened criminal living or sleeping next to a "new chum or smooth-faced boy" resulting in "sodomy on a grand scale."³⁰ In 1848, for example,

²⁵ Polding to Propaganda Fide "Report on the Mission in New Holland," 12/3/1842, cited in Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, 231-240.

²⁶ Polding to Propaganda Fide "Report on the Mission in New Holland," 12/3/1842, cited in Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, 231-240.

²⁸ Davis to Colonial Secretary, 6/7/1850, SAA, P43.

²⁹ Catherine Gilchrist, *Male Convict Sexuality in the Penal Colonies, 1820-1850*, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2004, 54-65, 229-30.

³⁰ Frank Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians: a History*, (Collingwood, VIC: Black Inc., 2012), 19. Also refer to John Ritchie, "Towards Ending an Unclean Thing: the Molesworth Committee and the Abolition of Transportation to New South Wales, 1837-40," *HS* 17, no. 67, (October 1976): 144-64; John B. Hirst, *Convict Society and its Enemies: A History of Early New South Wales*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 26-7.

the Visiting Magistrate had the three cells in the main barracks divided by a wooden partition, with the purpose of removing six prisoners who were “supposed to be most addicted to unnatural and filthy practices.”³¹ In general terms, the 1840s witnessed an increase in the supervision of male prisoners, especially at Norfolk Island and Van Diemen’s Land. Physical inspection of convicts by doctors, sleeping quarters lit by lamps designed to burn all night, and large inspection holes in doors were implemented by Government authorities in an attempt to curtail immoral convict behaviour. Many prisoners resisted these intrusions on their “freedom and dignity” with some continuing “to have sex with one another - much as they always had.”³²

As an advocate of the separate system, Davis’ criticisms reveal the moral concerns prevalent on Cockatoo Island among various authorities. He observed the accommodation was defective, and noted that, there was a lack of proper religious guidance. Davis suggested that prisoners be separated. Like Davis, Bishop Robert Willson, was horrified by the sleeping conditions at Norfolk Island and sailed to England in 1847 to appear before a committee of the House of Lords.³³ On his second visit to the island in 1849 Willson noted "a marvellous change" had emerged. The "revolting immoralities and crimes which in earlier days had debased the prisoners were now totally unknown". What caused this change in their moral behaviour? According to Willson:

I found in certain wards partitions of wood...between the berths and so constructed that it was impossible for men to come into contact with each other. In other wards furnished with hammocks, the hammocks were so arranged as to

³¹ “Reports of Visiting Magistrate 1848-1853,” *Cockatoo Island*, 4/1149.3 (Reel 608), (State Records NSW).

³² Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians*, 20. See Timothy Causer, T. J. *Only a Place for Angels and Eagles: the Norfolk Island Penal Settlement, 1825-1855*, PhD thesis, King’s College London, 2010, 275-6 and Catherine Gilchrist, “Space, Sexuality and Convict Resistance in Van Diemen’s Land: ‘The Limits of Repression,’” *Eras Journal*, Edition 6, 2004.

³³ J. H. Cullen, "Bishop Willson and Norfolk Island," *Tasmanian Historical Research Association, Papers & Proceedings* 1, no. 2, (1952): 4-10.

prevent...any irregularities. I found good, efficient lights in each ward, and that watchmen, under the direction of superior officers patrolled the wards during the whole night.³⁴

Davis recommended the construction of a large building “with a plain open roof” to serve as an ecumenical Church with folding walls to separate the Protestants from the Roman Catholics. He suggested the Church be used as a school which taught reading, writing, spelling and mathematics “to the exclusion of anything of a Religious or controversial nature.” Davis argued that Bishop Willson had witnessed positive results from a similar “school system” instituted in Tasmania and Norfolk Island. The convicts in Tasmania and on Norfolk Island felt “great pleasure in attending, and thus two hours usually ill spent in any evening under the old system [was] now passed in a profitable manner.”³⁵ There is no evidence his building proposals were followed, although in 1851 the mess house was converted into another dormitory in an attempt to accommodate the population of prisoners that had increased to nearly 500 by 1852.³⁶

Whilst the Legislative Council withdrew a £25 per annum allocation for the attendance of a Roman Catholic priest on the Island in 1852, Davis argued the need for a priest for the pastoral care of the prisoners. The frequency of priestly attendance continued “once each week” for prayers and instruction, “and all calls to the sick [were] attended to.”³⁷ Davis drew attention to the “great difficulty in procuring a boat to convey [a priest] to and from the Island.” He had already advised the Colonial Secretary about the lack of a boat, stating he was happy to receive one “at any stated hour in the early part of the morning to convey the Clergyman from Sydney to Cockatoo.”³⁸ Davis later

³⁴ R. Willson, “Report on Norfolk Island, 10 December 1849,” in *British Parliamentary Papers, Crime & Punishment, Transportation*, 8, 1847-50, (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 441; cited in Gilchrist, “Space, Sexuality and Convict Resistance in Van Diemen’s Land”.

³⁵ Davis to Colonial Secretary, 6/7/1850, SAA, P43, pp. 27-30.

³⁶ *New South Wales Returns of the Colony*, 1851 (Mitchell Library).

³⁷ Davis to Colonial Secretary, 20/10/1852, SAA, P43, pp. 171-172.

³⁸ Davis to Colonial Secretary, 9/7/1852, SAA, P43, pp. 172-173

wrote that Catholic inmates at other prisons were receiving the “respective attention compatible with their assigned positions,” yet the prisoners at Cockatoo Island were not. Davis wrote to the Colonial Secretary and stated quite clearly that whether the £25 per annum was reallocated or not “the Clergy under [Polding’s] direction should devote themselves as much as possible, without reference to any special remuneration for these services, to the moral improvement and spiritual welfare of the unfortunate class of persons alluded to.”³⁹

Since there does not appear to be an extant reply to Davis’ statement, it is uncertain whether the Sydney Benedictines were reimbursed for pastoral services on Cockatoo Island. As far as Davis was concerned, however, the need for urgent pastoral ministry of the prisoners was uppermost in his mind whether the priests received reimbursement or not.

Roman Catholic Orphan School⁴⁰

The problems of teaching the doctrines of the Church of England to Catholic children began to be overcome with the establishment of Catholic Orphan Schools built specifically for Catholic children due to demands by the Catholic community. Governor Bourke thought that schools of a different character from the standard Anglican parochial school should be established. The schools were supported by the Government and regulated after the manner of the Irish schools “which since the year 1831 receive[d] aid from Public Funds.”⁴¹ Bourke’s vision was for children of all faiths to receive a Christian-based education in an undenominational school, using a book of

³⁹ Davis to Colonial Secretary, 20/10/1852, SAA, P43, pp. 194-195.

⁴⁰ See Appendices No. 35 for a map of the Roman Catholic Orphan School. <http://www.parragirls.org.au/roman-catholic-orphan-school.php>, accessed 24/4/2014.

⁴¹ D. C. Griffiths, *Documents on The Establishment of Education in New South Wales*, (Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, 1957), 33.

Scripture passages. Separate religious instruction was to be given to the children by visiting clergy of different denominations once a week.⁴²

The early colony of New South Wales had difficulties providing adequate care for children who were either orphaned, neglected or from families who were unable to provide for them due to personal hardship. Government institutions established to care for these children were minimal during the first few decades of the colony. On 3 July 1836, a petition by a lay committee from St. Mary's was presented to the Governor of the Colony requesting the following:

[T]hat provision might be made for the support and education of the orphans of Catholic parents, and for other Catholic children without protectors, and more especially for the children of female convicts newly arrived in the colony of those who in state of servitude had children born to them; and of those who, on decease of their husbands, were returned to Government, and who, by these circumstances, were placed beyond the means of maintaining and educating their own offspring.⁴³

A school for Roman Catholic destitute children was established by Polding in 1837. The school was originally opened at "Waverley House," Waverley, housing twelve or thirteen orphans under the care of "Miss Burke," the matron of the orphanage.⁴⁴ The sum of £600 was granted to "Waverley House" by the Government. This was raised to £1,000 in 1839 and to £1,500 in 1840.⁴⁵

As the number of orphans increased, the Governor of the Colony authorised the construction of the Roman Catholic Orphan School at Parramatta in the latter part of

⁴² Whilst there was Catholic acceptance of Bourke's plan by both clerics and laymen, there was Protestant resistance from Bishop Broughton and the Rev. Dr J. D. Lang. See Bubacz, B. *The Female and Male orphan schools in New South Wales, 1801–1850*, PhD Thesis, (University of Sydney, 2008), 287 – 288.

⁴³ *SMH*, 26/8/1886, 4.

⁴⁴ Waverley House was built in 1827 by Barnett Levey often described as the 'father of Australian theatre.' Levey never lived in Waverley House. It was always leased to individuals and to organisations, including the first Catholic orphanage and a series of private schools. The building was demolished in 1904. See Appendices No. 34 for a photograph of Waverley House.

⁴⁵ *SMH*, 26/8/1886, 4.

1843, thus: “[U]pon the order of Sir George Gipps, the key of the building was handed to Mrs. Martin, who took possession as matron of the establishment, and 113 children were removed from Waverley on the 8th March, [1844].”⁴⁶

Until 1844, the children of deceased immigrants, passengers, or the orphans of free people who died on the voyage to Australia were received and cared for. The intention was to provide accommodation for female orphans only, though male orphans were also admitted.

After a few years, funding for the Roman Catholic Orphans School decreased. In 1849, for example, the orphanage received £345.⁴⁷ The following year it was given £355, whilst a donation of £1,145 “exclusive of the establishment” was made available to the Catholic orphanage in 1850.⁴⁸ The Protestant orphanage received a payment of £2,100 in the same year, likewise “exclusive of the establishment.”

Figure 1: Orphanage Funding

Roman Catholic Orphan School		Protestant Orphan School	
1849	£345	1849	£360
1850	£355	1850	£594
1850 – exclusive of Government funding	£1,145	1850 – exclusive of Government funding	£2,100

The numbers of both schools were relatively similar in 1850, however, in 1851 the Catholic orphanage outnumbered the Protestant orphanage by eleven girls and six

⁴⁶ *SMH*, 26/8/1886, 4. Also refer to Dowd, B. T. (Editor), & Foster, W. (Co-editor), *The History of The Waverley Municipal District*, (Published by The Council of the Municipality of Waverley, 1959), 17-19.

⁴⁷ *MM & HRGA*, 25/8/1849. The Protestant Orphan School, located in Parramatta received the sum of £360.

⁴⁸ *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, 31/8/1850. The Protestant Orphan School in Parramatta received the sum of £594 and £2,100 exclusive of the establishment.

boys respectively, and in 1852 the Catholic orphanage outnumbered the Protestant orphanage by eight girls but equalled the intake of boys. During 1852, 332 orphans were placed in Government care, costing a total of £3354.6s.7d, or about £10 per child per annum.⁴⁹

Figure 2: The annual reception of orphans (1850-52)⁵⁰

Roman Catholic Orphan School			Protestant Orphan School				
	Girls	Boys	Total		Girls	Boys	Total
1850	79	79	158	1850	82	77	159
1851	91	90	181	1851	80	84	164
1852	88	82	170	1852	80	82	162

In 1851, the Governor, Sir Charles Fitz Roy appointed Davis to the *Committee of Management of the Institution for Destitute Roman Catholic Children*.⁵¹ The Committee was responsible for the administration and care of the Roman Catholic Orphanage. Archdeacon John McEncroe had previously written to the Colonial Secretary requesting Davis' admission to the Committee, probably because of his administrative skills. The Colonial Secretary responded:

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 24th...that the Right Reverend Bishop Davis may be appointed a member of the Committee of Management of the Roman Catholic Orphan School...I do myself the honour to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to accede to your request.⁵²

⁴⁹ SMH, 9/7/1853, 2.

⁵⁰ Empire, 31/8/1852, 2, 3.

⁵¹ Empire, 3/5/1851, 8

⁵² Thomson to McEncroe, 6/5/1851, Colonial Secretary's Office, 51/18.

Almost immediately, Davis applied to the Government for the sum of £1,000 for the erection of additional buildings since the number of orphans had increased. One correspondent suggested in the *Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser* that “the health of the children might [be] endangered” if they were denied this application.⁵³

The Colonial Secretary, Sir Edward Deas Thomson argued in favour of the £1,000 grant by proposing an ethical dimension to the orphans’ education. He placed the responsibility of religious education in an orphanage on the State especially since the children had already been “deprived of their natural guardians.” Thompson argued:

[T]hat if there was to be any exception from the National system, it should be in the case of persons who being deprived of their natural guardians, and having no one to superintend their religious education, had a demand upon the state to educate them in the faith of their fathers.⁵⁴

In Thomson’s opinion, the State had the responsibility to care for its orphans appropriately, which included their religious and moral education. He also argued the Government needed to ensure the continued care of the children by providing the necessary funding for building programs; otherwise the Government would be negligent in their responsibilities. After considerable public debate, the sum of £500 was granted.⁵⁵ Davis was informed by the Colonial Secretary’s Office:

In compliance with the request contained in your Lordship’s letter of the 16th instant...the Auditor General has been instructed to prepare a warrant for the issue to the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Orphan School at Parramatta of the sum of £500 for the purpose of being expended in the erection of additional buildings at that Institution.⁵⁶

Davis was responsible for recommending orphaned boys and girls to the Colonial Secretary for admission to the Roman Catholic Orphan School. Even though Davis’

⁵³ *MM & HRGA*, 17/8/1850.

⁵⁴ *MM & HRGA*, 17/8/1850.

⁵⁵ *MM & HRGA*, 17/8/1850.

⁵⁶ W. Elyard, Jun. to Davis, 26/5/1851, Colonial Secretary’s Office, 51/26.

appointment to the Committee took effect in May 1851, he was already recommending children to the care of the Catholic Orphanage as early as June 1850.⁵⁷ Orphaned children, many under the age of ten years, were regularly coming to the attention of Davis. Figure 3 presents a snap-shot of applications for Catholic assistance for orphaned children that came across Davis' desk over the period of three months.

Figure 3: Orphaned children: April 1851 – June 1851

Date	No.	Name	Age	Reasons for abandonment
9/4/1851	51/12	William Boyd	6 years	Father deserted the children – no mother.
		Elizabeth Boyd	19 months	ditto
17/4/1851	51/13	Mary Carmody	4 years	Mother dead – father poor and cannot afford the whole of his family (6 children).
26/4/1851	51/14	Mary Saunders	5 years	Father dead – mother deserted the children.
		Julia Saunders	4 years	ditto
29/4/1851	51/16	Mary Anne O'Donnell	11 years	Father & mother deserted children.
		Bridget O'Donnell	8 years	ditto
		Elizabeth O'Donnell	5 years	ditto
6/5/1851	51/19	Rosetta Smith	9 years	Father dead – mother cannot afford to support the children.
		John Smith	7 years	ditto
		Catherine Smith	5 years	ditto
31/5/1851	51/29	James Rey	3 years	Father dead – mother unable to support the child.
9/6/1851	51/32	William Bentley	10 years	Father dead – mother is an inmate of the Magdalen Asylum.
9/6/1851	51/35	Mary Ann Curran	6 years	Father deserted children – mother is insane.
		Margaret Curran	5 years	ditto
		James Curran	4 years	ditto
10/6/1851	51/36	Mary Fisher	5 ½ years	Father dead – mother unable to support children due to extreme poverty.
		Joseph Fisher	4 years	ditto

⁵⁷ Thomson to Davis, 12/6/1850, Letter 73, P15 Index SAA.

24/6/1851	51/43	Elizabeth Sullivan	7 years	Father & mother dead.
		Ann Sullivan	5 years	ditto
		John McDonald	5 years	Mother dead – illegitimate.
		Mary McDonald	3 years	ditto
		William Riley	4 years	Mother dead – father a convict.
		Mary Riley	3 years	ditto
		Bridget Dunbar	5 years	Mother in gaol – illegitimate.
		Robert Dunbar	4 years	ditto
		John Dunbar	3 years	ditto
		John Ryan	6 years	Mother dead – father deserted the children.

There were many destitute children in need of care because they were living in terrible conditions. Many had been abandoned by one or both parents and relied on the compassion of the Church to provide food, shelter, basic education and clothing. Most of the children named in the statistics suffered the death of at least one parent. In three instances, the mother was either in gaol or in an asylum and on one occasion, the father was a convict. In some cases, the economic circumstances of the sole parent prevented them caring for the child and so relied on the charity. Each letter written by Davis to the Colonial Secretary revealed the social predicament of each family. Limited employment opportunities and low wages, as well as the lack of Government financial support placed undue strain on families during this period in Sydney, especially on those whose spouse had either left them or was dead. Emotionally, the effect on the husband or wife would have been traumatic.

The extant letters from Davis reveal a profound concern and a deep sense of anxiety for the fate of “thousands of children,” either orphaned or otherwise, being born in Australia and growing up in “infidelity.” He described this “distressing spectacle” in

terms of being unable to “offer any remedy except a very partial one” to the care of underprivileged children. He was deeply disturbed that these children would grow up uneducated, without any religion and with little or no idea of morality.

Education had become a dominant concern in Davis’ life. This feature of his ministry focused on the need to educate the poor so that the social and economic disparity of classes would be significantly reduced and the child could achieve his or her full potential in life. He expressed a feeling of personal inadequacy regarding the lack of funding for Catholic teachers who taught destitute, struggling or orphaned Catholic children. Davis’ hope was for the Australian Church to “establish a class of Catholic teachers...and maintain them while they taught the children of the poor in the far-flung districts.” According to Davis, these children did not have the opportunity to study their faith, “except on the occasion when the priests [visited] these distant regions – visits which can only be rare ones.”⁵⁸

As far as Davis was concerned, the Government merely helped to foster the growth of Sydney’s transforming colonial society based on their own political values and needs. Similarly, he believed it applied its own Protestant religious thinking in ways that were anti-Catholic. Davis regarded Protestants as “emissaries of Satan” similar to the “different heretical sects transplanted from England” who wanted to introduce a national education “opposed to our Holy [Catholic] Religion.” He labelled teachers in Public Schools “teachers of infidelity or at least indifferentism’ with regard to religious education.⁵⁹ Moreover, Davis fully expected the Government, “with the added attraction of free instruction [would] try and entice our Catholic children from our Holy

⁵⁸ Davis to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith – France, 7/10/1850, cited in *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: Relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding OSB*, Vol. 1, (2000, Sisters of the Good Samaritan’s), 208.

⁵⁹ Davis to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith – France, 21/8/1850, cited in *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material*, 205.

Religion.”⁶⁰ His comments present a side of Davis which reflected the festering issue of sectarianism in Australia during the nineteenth century.

The Hyde Park Immigration Barracks

The Hyde Park Barracks were built by skilled convict labour between 1817 and 1819 to a design by the convict architect Francis Greenway.⁶¹ The Barracks provided accommodation for male government-assigned convicts. By the 1840s, however, Convict transportation to Sydney had ended which meant the original function of the Barracks gradually became redundant.⁶² In mid-1848 the Barracks closed as a place to house prisoners. The remaining prisoners were moved to Cockatoo Island.⁶³ Hyde Park Barracks became an Immigration Depot for single female Irish immigrants seeking work as domestic servants or awaiting family reunion. These women were one result of successive failure of potato crops across Ireland that brought devastating famine, economic ruin and widespread evictions.

Thousands of females aged no more than fourteen years were identified as “Irish Orphans” and sailed from Ireland to Sydney. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in July 1850 “[t]here are at present three hundred and fifty of these girls in the Hyde Park Barracks (all but four of them Roman Catholics), and the *Tippoo Saib* is daily expected with about three hundred more.”⁶⁴ Many had been removed from county workhouses in Ireland to travel to Australia and most of the girls lacked basic domestic training.

⁶⁰ Davis to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith – France, 7/10/1850, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material*, p. 208.

⁶¹ See Appendices No. 36 for a drawing of Hyde Park Barracks, c. 1848.

⁶² Crook, P., Ellmoos, L. & Murray, T. *Assessment of Historical and Archaeological Resources of the Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney*, (Volume 4 of the Archaeology of the Modern City Series, A Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales Publication, 2003), 13.

⁶³ http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/hyde_park_barracks, [accessed 9/7/2015].

⁶⁴ SMH, 8/7/1850, 2.

Eventually, between the years 1849 and 1853, a total of 2,253 orphan girls were lodged at the Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney.⁶⁵

Heated debate emerged in the local newspapers regarding the alleged “conduct” of these girls. Some described them as “the worst class of emigrants that could be sent to this colony.”⁶⁶ Others argued that since many were eighteen years of age and their term of “apprenticeship” would expire on their nineteenth birthday the girls would conclude “their term of compulsory servitude.” Given they were “brought up in a workhouse,” it was claimed they would be unable to become “even decent domestic servants” following the expiry of their period of service.⁶⁷ Another wrote that some locals seemed to “take a peculiar pleasure in finding out and publishing every fault or defect of character that may appear in these helpless victims of a “national calamity,” arguing the girls “ought to be objects of compassion and kind consideration.”⁶⁸ Someone even suggested because the girls were “exclusively Roman Catholic,” their main reason for immigrating to Australia was “to get married.” Being “naturally wed with our shepherds”:

The result of such a match is, that if the children have any religion at all, they will be Roman Catholic to an individual; the mother will dictate the religion and every one of these girls will someday be the centre of a Roman Catholic circle...and we stand upon no ceremony when we assert that we should look with very deep grief and dread upon the probability of the majority of our community ever being composed of Roman Catholics. It must be a prejudiced mind, or one that skims but lightly over either history or European politics of the present day, who does not agree with us that that religion is unfavourable to the development of liberty, of safety, of public happiness, or progress... But, at the same time, we cannot but look upon the present system of extensive orphan immigration as an underhand and

⁶⁵ Crockett, G. “Irish Orphan Girls,” http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/articles/irish_orphan_girls, [accessed 18/1/2012]. Between 1819 and 1848, the Hyde Park Barracks housed about 15,000 male convicts in government employment.

⁶⁶ *SMH*, 29/12/1849. See also, *SAR*, 13/3/1850, 4.

⁶⁷ *GH*, 26/1/1850. See also, *SAR*, 13/3/1850, 4.

⁶⁸ *SMH*, 19/2/1850, 3.

insidious attack upon our dearest interests. As such we denounce it; as such we urge prompt measures for its discontinuance.⁶⁹

Whilst some readers advocated tolerance for the Irish Orphan girls, many comments were disparaging to say the least, with some choosing to use these girls as a pretext to rationalise their anti-Catholic invective.

Davis became actively involved in ministering to these girls. The *Benedictine Journal* provides a summary of the kind of help Davis provided. The dates and activities relevant to Davis and the “Irish Orphan Girls” between 1849-53 are as follows:

Figure 4: Davis’ ministry to the female orphans: 1849-1853⁷⁰

Date	Location	Number of girls	Activity
21/2/1849	Immigration Barracks	Not recorded	Retreat
28/2/1849	St Mary’s Cathedral	100 orphans	Administered Eucharist and Confirmation
4/12/1849	St Mary’s Cathedral	‘a number’	Administered Confirmation
11/12/1849	St Mary’s Cathedral	‘large number’	Administered Eucharist and Confirmation
9/7/1850	Immigration Barracks	Not recorded	Prepare for Eucharist and Confirmation
10/7/50	Immigration Barracks	Not recorded	Prepare for Eucharist and Confirmation
12/7/50	St Mary’s Cathedral	70 orphans	Administered Confirmation
5/8/50	Immigration Barracks	90 orphans [?]	Prepare for Confirmation
13/2/53	St Mary’s Cathedral	30 orphans	Confirmation
13/2/53	St Mary’s Cathedral	140 orphans	‘Total abstinence pledge’
26/6/53	St Mary’s Cathedral	‘large number’	Confirmation

On different occasions, Davis’ spent time at the Barracks preparing the girls for Eucharist and Confirmation with the Sisters of Charity and other Benedictine priests.

⁶⁹ SAR, 13/3/1850, 4.

⁷⁰ See relevant dates from the chart in the BJ.

Davis also presented at least one Retreat. Whilst the details of the Retreat are not known, it was probably conducted in a similar way to those he led on Cockatoo Island. The orphans were possibly divided into groups based on their knowledge of the Catholic faith or what Sacraments they had previously received. Basic catechesis probably occurred, followed by confession. To conclude the Retreat, the *Benedictine Journal* recorded that Mass was celebrated by the Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral at the Barracks the next day.⁷¹

Confirmation ceremonies were also conducted by Polding on separate dates not mentioned on the Table above. Figure 4 reveals that Davis attended at the Barracks to help prepare the girls for the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation, whilst on at least seven occasions the girls visited St. Mary's Cathedral to receive the Sacraments from him. A remarkable number of children received these Sacraments. Whilst estimated figures were not recorded, one can assume anywhere between thirty and one hundred young girls received these Sacraments at any one time.

First Communion

Detailed descriptions in the *Benedictine Journal* regarding Communion and Confirmation celebrations for the Irish orphan girls are negligible, so it is difficult to determine their nature. On one instance, nevertheless, the author of the *Benedictine Journal* wrote in great detail describing a First Communion ceremony of local children led by Davis in September 1850 at St. Mary's Cathedral.⁷² These afford a snapshot of the kind of solemnity adhered to by Davis which almost certainly echoed the way First Communion was experienced by the orphan girls. Prior to Mass, Davis gave a "short

⁷¹ The *BJ*, 22/2/1849.

⁷² *BJ*, 1/9/1850.

lecture” to the communicants on the importance of the Eucharist.⁷³ It seems Davis was more or less reinforcing their previous catechesis which taught them that First Communion is considered one of the holiest and most important occasions in their life. He also reminded them about how they should live their lives and continue to worship within the Catholic community.⁷⁴ A later entry in *Freeman’s Journal* described another First Communion Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral presided over by Davis including the translated Latin uttered by Davis at the Communion Rite:

Behold the Lamb of God! Behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world!
O Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, say but the
word and my soul shall be healed, – another minute and [the communicants]
joy was full.⁷⁵

After the Mass, a formal breakfast for the children held in the Seminary became a customary part of the formalities and highlighted the important milestone reached in their spiritual life:

About 300 sat down to table, several of the children, who had previous to the present occasion made their first communion, but who were to be confirmed today, were at the breakfast. It was a fine sight to behold such a number of children, the girls enveloped in their white veils, the boys in their holiday attire, after having partaken of the bread of life, with countenances beaming with joy and delight, doing ample justice to the dainties which had been provided for them.⁷⁶

Later that morning, the children who had received their First Holy Communion received crosses and medals from Davis and Polding.⁷⁷

Given this was a typical ceremony experienced by local children, a similar ritual probably took place including a “short lecture,” a communion breakfast, and the issuing

⁷³ *BJ*, 1/9/1850.

⁷⁴ Polding likewise gave a lecture to the recipients of First Holy Communion and Confirmation prior to giving Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. See *BJ*, 1/9/1850.

⁷⁵ *FJ*, 7/10/1852, 4.

⁷⁶ *BJ*, 1/9/1850. See *FJ*, 7/10/1852, 4.

⁷⁷ *BJ*, 1/9/1850.

of medals and crosses after the “Irish Orphan Girls” received the Eucharist for the first time.

Confirmation

The “orphan girls” were confirmed at St. Mary’s Cathedral by both Davis and Polding. The *Benedictine Journal* did not provide details specific for the Confirmation ceremonies, other than comments such as: “[A]bout 100 of the orphans approached the Holy Communion for the first time – After Mass [Davis]...administered the sacraments of Confirmation to the same number.”⁷⁸

Some understanding as to how Davis conducted Confirmation with the “orphan girls” is provided in the local newspaper. He followed a comparable format to his practice before First Communion: delivering a pre-Confirmation talk to the children. His speech focused on “the meaning and importance of that high sacrament which they were about to receive.”

Then his Lordship, with affectionate earnestness, went on to speak to them of the duties which must speedily devolve upon them, of the trials they were to meet with, of the safeguards and supports, and comforts which would be within their reach – of the disgrace or the honour which they might bring upon their Christian profession. Above all, he exhorted them to often think upon, and carefully to correspond with the motions of the sevenfold Spirit, that holy gift of the Saviour’s love which was to be entrusted to them, to abuse or to cherish. If they would not grieve that Spirit, no trial, he assured them, would be too severe, no temptation too great or subtle, no Christian progress nor happiness, such as Christians may hope for in this world, would be too large for their hope.⁸⁰

One wonders whether the girls fully understood the theological language of Davis when he advised them of their Christian duties after they received the Sacrament.

⁷⁸ *BJ*, 28/2/1849.

⁸⁰ *FJ*, 18/7/1850, 4.

On another occasion Davis “commenced to instruct the children and people” prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Davis again reminded the children and congregation about the “nature and effects” of the Sacrament and “the blessings conferred by God on those who were about to receive through the ministry of the Church a Sacrament so necessary to enable man to resist faithfully the enemies of salvation.”⁸¹

Davis drew on the intercession of Mary to care for those who were about to become “temples of the Divine Spirit, and cherish them with affection and love like unto that with which she embraced her infant Son Jesus.”⁸² It appears these pre-Sacramental lectures were a usual occurrence with Davis and Polding.⁸³ Davis’ comments provide an indication of his spirituality. He was a man of deep faith who was both pragmatic in the sense he was aware of the choices people made in life; yet was somewhat narrow in some aspects of his faith. Another point about Davis’ apparent dogmatism which is worth commenting on was his stand in regard to the consequences that befell someone who refused to practice his or her Christian duty.

Besides administering the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation to the children from the Hyde Park Barracks, Davis also encouraged 140 young girls from the orphanage to swear a pledge of total abstinence from alcohol. Given colonial Australia was a place of high alcohol consumption, with rum sometimes used as currency during the early nineteenth century, Australia also became a place where temperance societies thrived.⁸⁴ It was not an unusual practice in Colonial Australia to have children

⁸¹ *FJ*, 312/1853, 9. Davis used the following text in his instruction to the children: “The night is passed, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light” (Romans 13:12), taken from the Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible.

⁸² *FJ*, 312/1853, 9.

⁸³ See *BJ*, 1/9/1850.

⁸⁴ Blocker, J. S., Fahey, D. M., & Tyrell, I. R. *Alcohol and temperance in modern history: a Global Encyclopaedia*, (ABC-CLIO, 2003), 75.

take the pledge, even before reaching their teenage years.⁸⁵ An extant copy of a “Van Diemen’s Total Abstinence Society” pledge from the 1850s, provided an example of the kind of pledge the orphan girls more than likely made with Davis in 1853:

We the Undersigned do agree that we will not use intoxicating liquor as a beverage, or traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of entertainment, or for persons in our employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.⁸⁶

Davis forwarded a letter to the *Society of the Propagation of the Faith* thanking them for their allocation of 25,000F (£3,179) to the Australian mission.⁸⁷ It appears Davis allocated these monies directly to the orphans at the Immigration Barracks “to assist these poor children in their spiritual and temporal needs.” The Barracks had received large numbers of “quite destitute” Irish orphan girls over the period of eighteen months. Whilst he attended the orphanage on different occasions during his episcopacy in Sydney, his letter focused on the weekly ministry of the Benedictines monks and Sisters of Charity. Both the priests and sisters taught the children spiritual exercises and attempted to preserve them “from influences which either would have alienated them from [the] Holy [Catholic] Religion or lead them away from the path of virtue.” Davis complimented the “valuable assistance” of the nuns who helped the Benedictine clergy in their caring for the orphan girls:⁸⁸

On the arrival of each ship, we have held for these poor children, generally about two hundred in number, a week of spiritual exercises, during which they were instructed by the clergy and the good Sisters of Charity, admitted

⁸⁵ The Rev. Dr. Fullerton, a Presbyterian minister in Sydney during the middle decades of the 19th century, delivered a lecture on the virtue of Self-Denial in connection with the Sydney temperance movements. During his speech he suggested “the young, should be encouraged to take the total abstinence pledge, and to form themselves into Bands of Hope, so that in the next generation...this great evil may be banished from our land and nation.” See, *The Australian Band of Hope Review, and Children’s Friend*, 15/3/1856, 15.

⁸⁶ “Van Diemen’s Land Total Abstinence Society” membership card with pledge; see <http://eprints.utas.edu.au/1995/>, [accessed on 23/1/2012].

⁸⁷ 1F (franc) = £0.13

⁸⁸ Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 21/8/1850, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material*, 205.

to Holy Communion and to Confirmation, and, what is above all consoling to us in this land where there is so much disorder and dissipation, all of these poor children except a few (about 30 out of 3,000), have taken the pledge of total abstinence.⁸⁹

The thousands of women and children who passed through the Immigration Barracks were offered a basic training in domestic duties, moral management and religious instruction; residing in the barracks until they were hired out to work.⁹⁰

What relationship, if any existed between Caroline Chisholm and Davis? Whilst both cared for orphaned children in their own way, did Chisholm ever make contact with, or work in conjunction with Davis whilst he ministered to these Irish orphan girls, or even the Roman Catholic Orphan School? The answer is most likely 'no.' There does not appear to be any extant correspondence between the two. Furthermore, Chisholm left Australia for England in 1846 and did not return to Australia until 1854 – the year of Davis' death. Prior to her departure, however, Chisholm was living and working in Polding's Archdiocese, caring for the thousands of destitute female immigrants who arrived in Sydney. Polding lacked the capacity to work in conjunction with her, possibly because she was a lay woman ministering to an apostolate that was beyond the vision of his Benedictine dream. Historian Timothy Suttor argued:

Polding was caught up in his own struggles, many involving upstart laymen challenging his vision. [Chisholm's] concerns with social justice issues such as a family wage; private ownership of family farms; freedom to migrate; were yet to be articulated by the Catholic Church.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 21/8/1850, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material*, 205.

⁹⁰ Australian Government – Department of the Environment and Heritage, Australian Heritage Database, Places for Decision: Hyde Park Barracks, File No: 1/12/036/0105, Place ID: 105935, Date: 30/01/2007.

⁹¹ Timothy L. Suttor, *Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870: The formation of Australian Catholicism*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).

Even though Polding established the Good Samaritan Congregation for women who wanted to minister to the poor, these nuns lived in community under his authority. Polding possibly felt uncomfortable dealing with a married Catholic lay-woman who worked autonomously, ministering to women in need outside of the constraints of an institutionalised Church. Chisholm responded pragmatically to whatever needs emerged, without needing to seek the approval of Polding, or any other Church leader of the time. She was working within the parameters of a lay ministry which the Roman Catholic Church was yet to officially recognise. Would Davis have had the capacity to work with her had Chisholm remained in Sydney during his six years as Coadjutor? Possibly not. Even though he administered the Gospel message to the community through his actions and words, Davis was particularly conservative in some aspects of his faith and he lived in a monastery answerable to Polding. Davis worked within the church's traditional understanding of charity and social justice and had lived in a male environment since he was eleven years old. Moreover, he had many other areas of social justice to minister to besides the orphan girls in his role as bishop.

Conclusion

During his Sydney years Davis undertook numerous pastoral responsibilities. He served the prisoners of Cockatoo Island and the thousands of Irish Orphan girls at Hyde Park, albeit briefly. He also undertook management and placement of orphaned boys and girls into the Roman Catholic Orphan School. He was a man of his time.

Davis led a number of retreats on Cockatoo Island, probably fashioned on Polding's model which involved fundamental catechesis to the prisoners. Moreover, Davis heard their confessions and provided Eucharist. Even though he ministered

directly to the prisoners for only a few days, he continued to petition the Government seeking justice and basic human rights.

Davis was responsible for recommending and managing orphaned Catholic children for admission to the Roman Catholic Orphan School at Parramatta. A chart showing a three-month snap-shot of orphan children who depended on Davis' to somehow find care for them was provided. Whilst Davis did not visit this institution, his letters to the Colonial Secretary revealed an intense concern for the fate of these children. He was acutely aware the Church could only provide a 'band-aid' solution to their care and was deeply distressed not being unable to learn about their Catholic faith, and being exposed to potential immorality.

Davis' sacramental involvement with the Irish orphan girls who immigrated to Australia and lived at the Hyde Park Barracks was explored, and much of the catechising of these children was conducted by the clergy of St. Mary's and the Sisters of Charity. It was shown Davis led at least one Retreat at the Barracks and sometimes prepared the children for Eucharist and Confirmation followed by administering Eucharist and Confirmation to them at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Even though Davis was an exceptional administrator, he was also inspiring spiritually. Given the massive job of rectifying the business affairs of the diocese, Davis was able to serve the public directly by influencing the lives of underprivileged children while transacting business with Government authorities in a calm but firm manner.

Chapter 5

Subiaco: Charles Davis the Chaplain

In 1842, Polding wrote to Heptonstall from Sydney stating his desire “to have our own dear [Benedictine] Sisters if I can procure them” and considered establishing an Australian Order of nuns as a ‘pilot model’ to educate both the “better, and the poorer classes.” There was already one Benedictine Sister “most desirous” to work in the Australian mission, so Polding asked Heptonstall to attend at Princethorpe Priory to speak to her. He counselled Heptonstall to be guarded in his approach with the purpose of determining whether the Princethorpe nuns were “the right sort” to become missionaries in Australia.¹

Polding advised Heptonstall that “a Lady with her three daughters intend to accompany me for the purpose of taking to Religion.” Two of the daughters aspired to become Sisters of Charity, whilst the mother and the other daughter wanted to join the Benedictines.² The mother and daughters were to go to New South Wales with Polding with the intention of entering the convent. Each daughter had about £1,000 in their own right, whilst the mother had an income of about £600 per annum:

[The mother] proposes placing £500 at my disposal for any purpose. I think, as she and her daughter are disposed to embrace the Benedictine Institute, it is an opportunity, not to be neglected, of introducing it. But it must be as a means of providing the better, that is, the richer classes of Society with the means of education... Now I want you to enquire, without mentioning particulars, if this family could be domiciled in the Convent of Hammersmith during the days or weeks which may elapse before we actually sail, and at what expense.³

¹ Polding to Heptonstall, 10/4/1842, DA L143.

² Polding to Heptonstall, 10/4/1842, DA L143.

³ Polding to Heptonstall, 18/5/1842, DA L152.

Polding's correspondence regarding the mother and daughters ceased after his letter to Heptonstall on 18 May 1842. It is not known whether the women travelled with Polding to Australia. In any case, neither the mother nor daughters entered the Benedictine convent at Subiaco. In further communication with Heptonstall, Polding inquired about how he was proceeding with the acquisition of "proper candidates" for the Australian mission. He wrote: "How have you succeeded about the Nuns?...be sure you have them of the right sort – accomplished, religious, energetic souls."⁴

While Polding was still in England, he considered inviting both the Superior of the Irish Branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Frances Ball, and the Foundress of the Religious Sisters of Charity, Mary Aikenhead with the view of asking for sisters to go to Australia with him. He thought if he could not obtain Benedictines, it would be more practical to "make strong our Sisters of Charity and select from the number, sufficient to form an educational Convent." Polding even considered approaching the Benedictine Sisters of [Caverswall],⁵ "as a last and, I must add, faint resource."⁶

By July 1844, Polding had selected two Benedictine candidates to travel to Australia, namely: Scholastica Gregory and Benedict Edgar. Both had been "in the religious habit" nearly one year and were considered ready "to take [their] flight across the vast ocean – on the wings of Divine Love." Polding described some of the practices of the Sydney monastery to the women, explaining his "house [was] the Convent...but,

⁴ Polding to Heptonstall, 22(?)5/1842, DA L 155.

⁵ During the French Revolution, Caverswall Castle was home to Benedictine Nuns who fled France. The Castle was purchased by Matthew Cradock in 1615. Cradock, a wealthy merchant and the Mayor of Stafford decided the original manor house was in too poor of condition to repair and had it razed and built a Jacobean manor house to replace the original Saxon one. He restored the walls and turrets as well as the great tower. See <http://www.helium.com/items/2201085-a-brief-history-of-caverswall-castle-uk>, [accessed 28/12/2011].

⁶ Polding to Gregory, 16/8/1842, DA L 178.

propose[d] to move up to the house near the Church very soon.” He continued to soften the ordeal of a permanent shift away from England by writing:

What a delightful thing it is to contemplate the institute that civilized and Christianized the North of Europe more than 1,000 years since, now taking its flight into the Southern Hemisphere for the purposes equally noble and good and how humble we ought to be if we are used as instruments in this great work...Humility-humility-humility-be our motto.⁷

Since some years had lapsed without either of them hearing any more about the Australian mission, Benedict Edgar changed her mind and decided to remain at Princethorpe.⁸ Polding advised Luke Barber, the then President-General of the English Benedictine Congregation “she [had] no desire whatsoever to come” to Australia.⁹ He noted that Sr. Scholastica “cannot come alone,” so he applied to Stanbrook for another aspirant.¹⁰ Dame Magdalen Le Clerc offered herself to Polding and was chosen to travel to Australia. Barber granted approval for both nuns to leave their convents and accompany Polding. Polding made the following comments about Le Clerc’s missionary vocation to the Lady Abbess of Stanbrook:

My dear Sister, we must enter into the designs of Providence...You will hear of your children and grand children. You will rejoice that the pain of the sacrifice has been the means of bringing so many to God – to sing his praises, and follow the same holy Rule under the same Constitutions which have sanctified ourselves and those that went before us...Your Sisters are my Sisters – their happiness is mine, out of my cup they will drink, of my bread they will partake...so let us take courage and be submissive to [God’s] adorable will...Dame Magdalen is quite well, and appears to be so fully impressed that her Vocation comes from God that peace and happiness follow of course.¹¹

⁷ Polding to Srs Scholastica Gregory and Benedict Edgar, 30/7/1844, SAA, typescript.

⁸ “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, Volume 1, 1849-1899, n.p. Courtesy of the Benedictine Congregation, Jamberoo Abbey, NSW.

⁹ Polding to L. B. Barber, 6/12/1844, DA L343

¹⁰ Polding to L. B. Barber, 6/12/1844, DA L343

¹¹ Polding to The Lady Abbess, Stanbrook, 6/10/1847, SbAA

Sister Mary Scholastica Gregory

Mary Scholastica was Henry Gregory's sister and had known Polding from an early age.¹² She studied at Princethorpe for her novitiate and made her profession on the proviso that if Polding wanted her to travel to Australia with him, she would be available.¹³ To help with her skill and experience, she had been entrusted with various responsibilities in the convent with the purpose of being considered appropriate for a new foundation.¹⁴

Sister Magdalen Le Clerc

Magdalen Le Clerc was an older nun from Stanbrook Abbey¹⁵ and was more suited to a long-established community than to a new foundation such as the one Polding envisaged.¹⁶ Le Clerc entered the novitiate at the age of 16 and spent her religious life focussing on spirituality and needlework. By the time she moved to Subiaco at the age of about fifty she "knew nothing of the practical details so necessary for a foundress."¹⁷

Subiaco

Polding's Benedictine nuns

Sister Scholastica Gregory (St Mary's Priory, Princethorpe) and Dame Magdalene Le Clerc (St. Mary's Convent, Stanbrook) sailed from Liverpool on the *St Vincent* with

¹² "Subiaco," *Chronicles*, n.p.

¹³ Princethorpe Priory was the first Monastery built in England since the Reformation of the sixteenth Century when all Monastic Communities were suppressed. See "History in Australia," <http://www.jamberooabbey.org.au/html/aboutus/history.htm>, [accessed 28/12/2011].

¹⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 399-400.

¹⁵ This community was originally English, but resident in Europe during the period of the Counter-Reformation onwards. See "History in Australia," <http://www.jamberooabbey.org.au/html/aboutus/history.htm>, [accessed 28/12/2011].

¹⁶ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 400.

¹⁷ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 400.

Polding on 7 October 1847. Accompanying them were a number of priests, deacons and monks from Solesmes, Monte Cassino, All Hallows Dublin, St Edmond's Douai and St Gregory's Downside.¹⁸ Polding's intention was to begin a female branch of the Benedictine Order in Sydney, working conjointly with the Benedictine monks in the field of education. The focus of the Sisters would be on the education of young women from the local Catholic community.¹⁹

The Benedictine community was established by Polding following his purchase of 'Subiaco,' Parramatta in 1848.²⁰ Tradition within this community, now located at Jamberoo Abbey, New South Wales firmly regards Bishop Charles Davis as their first Chaplain. Davis made regular visits to the convent, assisted in the administration of the school, prepared and led retreats, cared for Scholastica Gregory spiritually during her terminal illness, celebrated Mass as often as time would allow, administered the Sacraments to the children and blessed the newly built school buildings. He was nursed back to health by the nuns after two life-threatening illnesses and was eventually buried in the convent graveyard following his death in 1854.

St Mary's Monastery: a temporary convent

Gregory and Le Clerc arrived in Australia with Polding on 6 February 1848. Gregory was thirty and Le Clerc was forty-nine years of age.²¹ Both women had to live at St. Mary's for nearly a year "as no residence had been remembered for them."²² In a letter to St. Mary's Priory, Princethorpe, Scholastica referred to life in Sydney with

¹⁸ Polding to Society for the Propagation of the Faith (Lyon), 7/10/1847, (SPF, Waldersee), located in M. Xavier Compton, *The Letters of John Bede Polding, OSB* 2 ed., Terence Kavenagh, Pam Pullen, Marie Gregory Forster, Doreen Dyson, Clare Condon, M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Ursula Trower, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 1996), 101.

¹⁹ Birt, H. N. *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, Vol. II (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 141.

²⁰ "Subiaco" convent was named by Polding after the site of St. Benedict's first monastery in Italy. It will henceforth be referred to as Subiaco.

²¹ "Subiaco," *Chronicles*, n.p.

²² "Subiaco," *Chronicles*, n.p.

Polding and his monks. By all accounts she was happy and described the community as “fervent” and “disciplined.” Community prayer and Eucharist echoed the same times and structure as Princethorpe. She described Polding’s Palace as “large and monastic” and wrote his cell was austere, containing only a “little iron bedstead, a table and chair, a wardrobe and book case.” Polding spent much of his spare time which, according to Scholastica, was not very long in his cell; intimating that Polding constantly made himself available to others each day.²³ In another letter, Scholastica described the Catholicity of Sydney as “flourishing” and “practiced in all its fervour.” She was confident “[Australia would] become entirely Catholic” due to the “zeal of all, both clergy and people” who all seemed to be “labouring for one end – the salvation of their neighbour.”²⁴ Whilst Scholastica was satisfied with life at St. Mary’s, Polding was frustrated that a suitable residence could not be acquired for the two women. In a letter to Heptonstall, Polding had assumed “it would have been a very easy affair to place the two Sisters who accompanied me in a proper domicile. It has been a very difficult job. Many places offered, but from one cause or another would not suit.”²⁵

Subiaco: its beginnings

Acquisition of the property

Polding described details about the acquisition of a property on the Parramatta River called “The Vineyard” writing: “a community of 120 persons might be easily accommodated [and] [t]he large House etc. will be the Convent of our good Sisters.”

²³ Sr. Scholastica to Reverend Mother, Princethorpe, 22/3/1848, RW: OSB/4-2c.

²⁴ Sr. Scholastica to Reverend Mother, Princethorpe, 13/8/1848, RW: OSB/4-3c. For an overview of Sydney’s Catholicity at the time of Polding’s arrival in 1835, and the challenge of his mission, see Waldersee, J. “The Colony Polding Found,” *Tjurunga* 16, (1978): 41-47.

²⁵ Polding to Heptonstall, 20/10/1848, DA M103; see also, Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 141.

He advised Heptonstall the property's new name would become "Subiaco" (after the solitary cave dwelling of St. Benedict in Italy), describing the property thus:

The entire estate consisting of this house, a large range of out-houses including a large range of buildings in which the family lived formerly, a very fine Vineyard of several acres, Gardens, a most excellent Farm House and building which cost £1,800 some years since, with 700 acres, became the property of your humble servant for the sum of £5,000...Plenty of fishing, wild dogs abound, bandicoots may be found – capital land for orange trees and vine groves and peaches.²⁶

Polding had "three years given for payment" with a "rent or interest [of] £200 per Ann." Borrowing for the first year was "free of interest," which was sufficient for the first instalment of £1,100, whilst the sale of another property would pay off the remaining portion of the loan over two instalments: £3,000 and £2,500 respectively. Since interest on borrowing money in Sydney was between 8% and 10%, Polding requested Heptonstall to "borrow something at 5 per Cent," with the view of returning the principal quickly so he could be released from debt sooner.²⁷

Polding intended Subiaco to become the convent for the nuns and a monastery for the education of Benedictine missionaries. The latter aim did not eventuate.

Subiaco: a short pre-history

Hannibal Hawkins MacArthur, the nephew of John MacArthur - soldier, entrepreneur and pastoralist - bought 'The Vineyard' for £160 in 1813. It was situated on the northern bank of the Parramatta River in what is now the western Sydney suburb of Rydalmere.²⁸ The property was 320 hectares in size and was purchased as a residence with his wife Anna King, the eldest daughter of the former governor, Philip

²⁶ Polding to Heptonstall, 20/10/1848, DA M103.

²⁷ Polding to Heptonstall, 20/10/1848, DA M103.

²⁸ Nairn, B. "Macarthur, Hannibal Hawkins (1788–1861)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macarthur-hannibal-hawkins-2388>, [accessed 27/12/2011]. See Appendices No. 27 for a map of the property purchased by MacArthur. The location of the Vineyard Cottage is circled in red.

Gidley King.²⁹ It was used in the running and administration of MacArthur's uncle's merino flocks in Parramatta and Camden.³⁰

As the family got larger, the residence became too cramped and MacArthur approached local architect John Verge to design a suitable house.³¹ The home was designed in 1833 and built between 1835 and 1836 in the Greek revival style.³² It comprised two-storeys, including a colonnade of sixteen Doric columns, each fashioned from a single stone block. The principal rooms on the ground floor were designed in a rough L-shape. Tall French windows ran along the eastern and southern terraces, whilst the main staircase which led to the first floor was flanked by two wooden Ionic columns. On the first floor were eight large and three smaller bedrooms. The basement housed wine cellars on the eastern side of the building, whilst two large cold stores were situated along the northern side. Much of the materials used in the construction of the house were locally obtained, except for the New Zealand kauri pine floorboards for the ballroom and the Belgian glass.³³ MacArthur's home was one of opulence and extravagance.³⁴

Due to the economic depression during the early 1840s, the Bank of Australia crashed and was later liquidated in 1843. MacArthur lost a large part of his property and never fully recovered his financial status.³⁵ "The Vineyard" was mortgaged to the

²⁹ David, Latta, *Lost Glories: Memorial To Forgotten Australian Buildings*, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1986), 85. See Appendices No. 28 for portraits of Hannibal and Anna MacArthur.

³⁰ Latta, *Lost Glories*, 83.

³¹ See Appendices No. 29 for a portrait of John Verge.

³² Harley Preston, "John Verge (1782-1861)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/verge-john-2757>, [accessed 27/12/2011]. See Appendices No. 30 & 31 for architectural drawings of the house.

³³ Latta, *Lost Glories*, 85.

³⁴ Many of the colonies prominent dignitaries were entertained at "The Vineyard": the Reverend Samuel Marsden; the explorers Ludwig Leichhardt and Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki; Patrick Leslie who opened up the Darling Downs to settlement; and the Governor Sir Charles Fitz Roy who either visited, or temporarily resided at the home. See Appendices No. 32 for a painting of Subiaco, c. 1851-56.

³⁵ Bede Nairn, "Macarthur, Hannibal Hawkins (1788-1861)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macarthur-hannibal-hawkins-2388>, [accessed 27 December 2011].

Australian Trust Company for £5,000 and eventually leased to Thomas Icely for three years at an annual rental price of £200 with an option to purchase the estate for £4,000. Icely sold his rights to the lease for £1,100 and the property was bought by Polding.

Subiaco: a Benedictine convent

Polding divided the property into two sections. The first sub-division of 150 acres, which included the house, was later distributed to the nuns and named "Subiaco." The remainder of the property was used as a farm and was known as "Monte Cassino." Gregory and Le Clerc moved into their new house on 29 January 1849 together with "two choir postulants and four Lay Sister Postulants from the foundation."³⁶ Le Clerc wrote: "At present the house is more than large enough, but as we increase, and especially when we begin our school, it will be necessary to add another storey." In the same letter she adds: "the situation could not be better calculated for a Convent, so quiet and retired and completely cut off from all intruders."³⁷

Subiaco was officially opened by Polding on 2 February 1849. The ceremony included the convent being proclaimed together with the opening of the novitiate.³⁸ The following day the Divine Office was celebrated for the first time.³⁹

Gregory and Le Clerc were appointed equal administrators of the convent, but with absolute authority reserved for Polding. Gregory was placed in charge of domestic affairs and temporalities, whilst Le Clerc became mistress of the novices and spiritual affairs.⁴⁰ Polding reserved "supreme authority to himself, as Founder." His self-

³⁶ Polding to Heptonstall, 31/1/1849, DA M136. 'It seems another female "with a fortune of £1,000 will offer herself in a short time." See Polding to Heptonstall, 31/1/1849, DA M136. The *Chronicles* write that only three lay postulants were received: Srs Mary and Martha Diamond and Angela Guilfoyle. See "Subiaco," *Chronicles*, n.p.

³⁷ Le Clerc to Barber, 14/2/1840, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 163.

³⁸ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 400.

³⁹ "Subiaco," *Chronicles*, n.p.

⁴⁰ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 400.

appointment was not autocratic. It was pragmatic. Gregory had only a limited number of years as a nun, and Le Clerc lacked the confidence to be a leader. Birt, however, suggested Polding's governance of the nuns was imprudent due to some of the more problematic choices needed to be made concerning the administration and supervision of a convent: "The arrangement was not a good one, as experience was to prove, for the want of a proper monastic Superior with power to act and decide made itself often keenly felt."⁴¹ Polding perceived his self-appointment as the Sisters' superior as to be expected. Even though Davis described Gregory as "an excellent person,"⁴² Davis endorsed Polding's overall authority given the inexperience of both nuns. His thoughts echoed Polding's decision to have complete authority over them. Davis saw leadership qualities in Gregory, but due to her youth, did not believe she had the experience at to manage a convent.⁴³ Davis wrote: "[Polding] is quite right as D. Magdalene is not at all suitable for such a position and under the circumstances Sister Schol [sic] should not be Superioress – in 2 or 3 years she will make a first-rate Superioress."⁴⁴ Sr. Marie Forster writes of Davis' friendship with Gregory:

Unfortunately we have no account of what was most probably the first meeting of Sister Scholastica with Bishop Davis [18 December 1848] who was to become a great friend and supporter of Subiaco and who shared Polding's high opinion of the young nun.⁴⁵

Since the nuns lived at St. Mary's with Davis and Polding for nearly twelve months, both bishops spent time with Gregory and Le Clerc learning their quirks and personalities at a deeper level.

⁴¹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 400.

⁴² M. Xavier Compton, *Life of John Bede Polding*, OSB, MA Hons thesis, University of New England, 1977, 217.

⁴³ See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 401.

⁴⁴ Davis to the Prior of Downside, 28/2/49, DA M136.

⁴⁵ Marie Gregory Forster, "Subiaco: The Arrival of Benedictine Nuns in Sydney," *Tjurunga* 54/98, 51.

Polding undertook the maintenance of the convent until the school could suitably provide the monetary returns to support itself. Polding's administrative arrangements regarding income derived from the school was described by Davis as a "muddle." It seems the earnings from Subiaco were paid to the procurator of St. Mary's which continued to affect the administration of Subiaco until 1856.⁴⁶

Before the school at Subiaco was opened, the Sisters' work consisted of laundering and mending the religious habits of the monastic community at St. Mary's and washing the altar linen of the Cathedral. Polding assumed the upkeep of the nuns until a school could sustain them. By all accounts the work was demanding: "This state of things involved an amount of labour and poverty which the Archbishop never intended and never learnt."⁴⁷

The health of the nuns began to deteriorate in time, culminating in the death of Gregory at Subiaco on 8 October 1850 from consumption, and aged thirty-three.⁴⁸ Sydney's Catholic newspaper, the *Freeman's Journal* published an account of her death:

After a protracted and painful illness, endured with truly religious patience and resignation, [Gregory] had the consolation of being assisted in her last happy moments by our revered Archbishop and her beloved and afflicted brother. Though for some weeks previous she had at intervals, on account of the severity of her sufferings and her great bodily weakness, experienced delirium, the few days immediately before her death were passed in a state of perfect recollection of spirit and calm repose.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 401-402. In 1856, three nuns from Princethorpe arrived at Subiaco and one was appointed sub-prioress of the convent. She was proficient in business and advised Polding of the problems. Subiaco severed its business dealings with St. Mary's and managed its own income.

⁴⁷ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 401.

⁴⁸ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 401. Polding appointed Le Clerc Superior of Subiaco following Scholastica's death, but with very limited authority.

⁴⁹ *FJ* 10/10/1850, 10.

Tradition holds that in 1850 Polding dispensed his authority to Davis and appointed him Chaplain and Vicar of Subiaco.⁵⁰ Davis was already one who was valued and respected by the nuns, as the following comment from Le Clerc in 1849 attests. His appointment as Chaplain, therefore, seemed appropriate given Polding and Gregory's frequent absences from Sydney:

Dr Davis is, I understand, much liked, and I believe he will here be esteemed according to his due worth; dear Downside has made a very great sacrifice and you, dear Father, in parting with him. At present he is everything at St. Mary's Monastery, his Grace and Dr Gregory being absent on a long missionary excursion. His Grace talks of spending the next four or five years in going over his vast diocese, only paying visits now and then to Sydney; so you see Dr Davis is really necessary here.⁵¹

By the time Davis commenced his role as Chaplain to the community the school at Subiaco had already begun and was receiving an income from school fees; albeit meagre in earnings. The *Benedictine Journal* never indicated that Davis assumed an authoritarian role over the nuns. In fact, both the *Benedictine Journal* and the nuns' *Chronicle* suggested Davis was a person of great humility and compassion who focused on the spiritual care and welfare of the nuns and children. The spirit of the *Benedictine Journal* and the *Chronicle* points towards an autonomous self-management of the convent by the nuns. Le Clerc's previous comment that Polding and Gregory were depending on Davis to administer the diocese during their frequent absences emphasises Davis' managerial and leadership abilities.

⁵⁰ M. Gregory Forster, "Magdalene le Clerc," *Tjurunga* 8 (1974): 286-287. Forster provided no footnote, and the author has been unable to locate any other sources that account for Davis' appointment. General discussion with current members of the Benedictine Order at Jamberoo, NSW reveal a deep-seated tradition that Davis was their Chaplain, appointed by Polding. In fact, the relationship with Davis and the Sisters was so unique that Davis bequeathed his heart to the convent, which now rests in a glass jar on top of Davis' portable altar located at the convent. See Forster, "Gregory, Magdalene le Clerc," 289.

⁵¹ Le Clerc to Barber, 14/2/1849, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 163.

The numerous visits to Subiaco by Davis and Polding suggest the convent became a sanctuary for them to spend time in prayer and contemplation.

The running of the convent

Polding celebrated Mass at the convent on 2 February 1849 and placed it under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the “Convent of the Presentation of our Lord.”⁵² During this Mass, two postulants and two lay postulants were received by Polding before he began a two month visitation of the diocese with Henry Gregory the next day.⁵³

The convent adapted the Constitutions of Princethorpe but on account of the Australian climate conditions, they were adjusted in some instances. Cotton garments and sheets were substituted for serge: a much thicker twill fabric used in making military uniforms, suits, great coats and trench coats. Enclosure was rigorously observed and Mass was celebrated each Sunday. Depending on the availability of priests from St. Mary’s, Mass was celebrated as often as practicable during the week.⁵⁴ Music was supplied by a small harmonium (formerly from St. Patrick’s Church, Sydney), and motets were sung at each Sunday Mass, as well as hymns composed expressly by Davis for the community. Vespers were also sung. Due to the many lay workers and lay-brothers who worked there, a sermon and series of devotions were included in Mass.⁵⁵

⁵² This title was changed in 1877 by Pius IX to: “The Purification of our Blessed Lady,” since the previous title was not a feast observed by the Church. See “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, n.p..

⁵³ *BJ*, 2/2/1849. See “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, n.p. The women received were: Miss Lett and Miss Burrows as postulants, and sisters, Misses Diamond as lay postulants.

⁵⁴ The “Subiaco” *Chronicles* reveal: “Until further arrangements are made, Fr. Mellitus (Corish) leaves Sydney every Friday, says Mass at Subiaco on Saturday – thence proceeds to Liverpool; returns to Subiaco on Sunday evening – celebrates Mass there on Monday and then returns to Sydney.” See “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, n.p.

⁵⁵ “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, n.p.

Given Davis' hectic schedule, the *Benedictine Journal* revealed frequent journeys to Subiaco, particularly in 1851 where he celebrated Mass on eighteen different instances during the year, usually on a Sunday, and sometimes after presiding at Good Shepherd in Pitt Street, Sydney in the morning. Davis probably said Mass on other occasions, but these instances were omitted from the *Benedictine Journal* of 1852-53 since the author of this Journal seemed to prefer brevity.

Charles Davis: Chaplain to Subiaco

The *Benedictine Journal* from 1848-1851 is by far the longest of the series, recording specific information about the context of monastery life. It enumerates the many visits Davis made to Subiaco and ministered to the nuns and students. The *Benedictine Journal* of 1852-53, on the other hand, was completed by a different author who provided scant information, acknowledging only "principal facts and occurrences deserving of remark."⁵⁶ Details of local parish Masses and daily community life were ignored and a more unimaginative and pedestrian style of writing was employed. It is difficult to assess the times Davis (and others) attended Subiaco during this period in comparison to the entries between 1848 and 1851.⁵⁷ The author of the *Benedictine Journal* (1852-53) did not believe the celebration of Mass at Subiaco was newsworthy, given Davis was only mentioned saying Mass for the nuns twice in two years. Following his death on 17 May 1854, the details of his final Mass in May 1854 were only revealed in the nuns' *Chronicles* and private letters. The *Benedictine Journal* stops abruptly in August 1853 and there is no record of life at St. Mary's Sydney or Lyndhurst during 1854.

⁵⁶ *BJ*, 8/3/1852.

⁵⁷ For detailed discussion on the *BJ*'s, please refer to Terence Kavenagh, "The Sydney Benedictine Journals," *Journal of the Australasian Catholic Historical Society* 6, Part 1, (1978): 3-7.

Most probably Davis continued travelling regularly to Subiaco during 1852-54 in his role as Chaplain and spiritual advisor to the community. The chart below indicates his recorded visits and celebration of Masses at Subiaco from 1849-1854.

Figure 1: Masses celebrated at Subiaco by Davis.

1849	8 times (including reception of the habit for two candidates 20/9/1849). (illness for 4 months)
1850	6 Masses 7 other times
1851	18 recorded Masses 3 other times
1852	1 recorded Mass (possibly during his 2nd illness)
1853	1 recorded Mass 3 other times
Jan – May 1854	1 recorded Mass Davis' burial

As Chaplain, Davis' spiritual guidance of the nuns and students was gentle and caring. The following statement attests to the affection shown by Davis at Subiaco: "Dame Magdalen was personally happy under [Davis'] spiritual guidance and in his friendship...Subiaco was happiest from 1850-54 when Davis exercised an overall supervision of nuns and children by whom he was greatly loved."⁵⁸

This rapport with the nuns could not have emerged as warmly as indicated had Davis only visited Subiaco periodically. Davis administered spiritual guidance, celebrated Mass, heard confessions and provided a genuine friendship to the community. Furthermore, he supported Le Clerc's efforts to "initiate Sister Benedict Lett into the field of education."⁵⁹ As a musician, Davis fostered in the nuns a "love for

⁵⁸ Forster, "Magdalene le Clerc," 286 and 287.

⁵⁹ Forster, "Magdalene le Clerc," 286.

music and the liturgy.” As a guest at their school concerts, he always expressed his appreciation at the children’s “little concerts” which inspired Le Clerc to do more in the area of the arts, since it seemed the children were “not very fond of study.” Davis likewise stimulated the study of drama at Subiaco; a subject that became a popular feature of the school.⁶⁰ Again, we see time-honoured aspects of Downside - music and drama - becoming transplanted into the emerging community of Subiaco by Davis. In a letter to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, Sr. M. Walburge described Davis’ personality:

Everyone, Catholic, Protestant, revered him; whatever he said and did was right. He was constant amiability, and his sweet and gentle manners, to all the same, endeared him to all; no distinction, no preference, he seemed to breathe for God, denying his body the slightest recreation; never going anywhere for his mere personal gratification, or unless he had a prospect of benefiting others.⁶¹

The opening of the school

The school opened “for the education of young ladies” on 25 March 1851 (the Feast of the Annunciation); the first of its kind in Australia.⁶² At its opening, there were only four students. The *Chronicles* reveal the “cottage” was “given up to the pupils and each room was blessed by the Archbishop who placed the school under the patronage of Our Lady, St. Joseph, St. Aloysius, St. Angela and St. Ursula.”⁶³ According to the *Chronicles* the opening was ceremoniously restrained. The only mention in the *Benedictine Journal* was the comment: “The nuns are about to open a school at Subiaco.”⁶⁴ Nothing of substance regarding the opening of the school appears in the *Benedictine Journal* or in Polding’s surviving correspondence. This seems odd, given

⁶⁰ Forster, “Magdalene le Clerc,” 287.

⁶¹ Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854, M.458 (a).

⁶² *BJ*, 25/3/1851.

⁶³ “Subiaco,” *Chronicles*, n.p.

⁶⁴ *BJ*, 25/3/1851.

Polding's desire to create a school for girls under the guidance of his Benedictine nuns. Since there were only three professed nuns and three novices present⁶⁵ and only four students enrolled, perhaps he thought it sensible to remain modest in ritual and formality. Interestingly, there was no mention of Davis attending the opening at Subiaco nor of doing anything of significance at St. Mary's which may have prevented him attending.

The Prospectus

The school was founded as a boarding school for young women from the local Catholic community and was typical of the "culture and accomplishments" curriculum of the nineteenth century.⁶⁶ Davis probably wrote the first Prospectus and curriculum with cooperation from Le Clerc offering: "Christian doctrine, English, French, and Italian; Penmanship, Arithmetic, Epistolary Correspondence, Needlework of every description, Drawing, Dancing, and Music."⁶⁷ According to Fogarty, the course hardly changed over the next twenty years, except with the addition of history, geography and "the use of the globes," and needlework was described as "plain and ornamental."⁶⁸

The annual fee was 40 guineas [approximately £42] but allowed for a deduction of five guineas per annum in the case of two or more sisters' attending the school. Figure 2 offers a list of extra subjects and fees: singing, piano or harp, additional languages, or drawing and dancing.⁶⁹ Given the overall annual cost of sending a child to Subiaco,

⁶⁵ *BJ*, 17/1/1851.

⁶⁶ Ronald Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950 II*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1957), 376.

⁶⁷ Advertisement in *Catholic Almanac and Directory*, 1854, 96. Quoted in Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*, 376.

⁶⁸ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*, 376.

⁶⁹ *BJ*, 25/3/1851.

the school aimed at educating girls from affluent families, rather than from the poor, and providing a variety of subjects to study.

Figure 2: A list of additional subjects and fees.

Piano Forte	8 guineas per annum
Harp	12 guineas per annum
Drawing	8 guineas per annum
Dancing	8 guineas per annum
Singing	12 guineas per annum
Italian	8 guineas per annum
German	8 guineas per annum
Latin	8 guineas per annum

Fogarty noted nearly all schools in the mid-nineteenth century offered an “English education” which included grammar, history, geography, and astronomy, the use of globes, writing and arithmetic. Foreign languages were listed as extra subjects, whilst Latin was less often taught.⁷⁰

The uniform

The uniform was simple. It consisted of a plain blue cotton top for summer and a dark blue merino top for winter with a white dress. Whilst the fees could be considered expensive, each student was required to bring two pairs of sheets, six towels, a knife

⁷⁰ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*, 377.

and fork, a silver table spoon and tea spoon.⁷¹ Remarkably, there is no mention of public examinations in the prospectus. Perhaps the girls were examined by Davis in a similar way he oversaw the examinations at St. Mary's Seminary: within a school context. Interestingly, there is no mention in the *Benedictine Journal* or local newspapers of any examinations for the girls either privately or publicly.

Student numbers had grown to twenty by March 1852. With more nuns, Polding was sure the school could house forty students.⁷² The tone of Polding's correspondence to Princethorpe and extracts from the *Freeman's Journal*, suggest that there seemed to be resistance from the local population concerning his desire for a Benedictine school providing education for affluent girls in Sydney. Because Subiaco catered for a limited clientele, the schools' influence in the wider Sydney community was restricted.

Even though Sydney's Catholic population was increasing, correspondence published in the *Freeman's Journal* indicates Subiaco was considered too expensive by many local Catholics:

It will not do to be praising the Collegiate establishment for the education of the children of a very small minority of our more fortunate Catholics. Two pet establishments, like 'Lyndhurst' and 'Subiaco,' will never satisfy the urgent and growing demands of the Catholics of this colony for more Catholic school accommodation and more numerous and competent teachers than are provided at present. It is well known that it will cost the extravagant sum of over £120 per annum to keep a boy or a girl either at Lyndhurst or Subiaco, and...how few Catholic parents there are in this colony whose pecuniary circumstances can afford this outlay on the education of their children.⁷³

Another letter criticised the “hopelessness” of a Catholic man of “limited means” to have his daughter educated in a Catholic school; particularly at Subiaco:

⁷¹ *BJ*, 25/3/1851.

⁷² Polding to de Chastelat, 6/3/1852, FPA transcript only. Located in *The Letters of John Bede Polding*, *OSB* 2, 178-179.

⁷³ *FJ*, 13/6/1857, 2.

[T]here is one portion...which pre-occupies the mind of nearly every Catholic father in the interior — and that is the hopelessness to a man of limited means to give his daughter a Catholic education. Subiaco is beyond, his reach; and if he sends her to some of our boarding schools, she returns home a helpless dawdle, taught indeed to dress, and polka, and torture a piano, but totally unfit to manage a household, or assist her mother in any of the unromantic but extremely trying cares of every-day life.⁷⁴

Whilst praising the work of Davis and Polding, thus: “witness the universal veneration for the memory of dear Bishop Davis, and the anxiety to place our daughters with the good nuns of Subiaco, under the immediate superintendence of the Archbishop,” the author of the article observed the need for more priests in New South Wales to serve the educational and spiritual needs of the growing Catholic population:

[Whilst] the clergy have done much towards the education of youth in the colony...what are forty-five or fifty priests to the spiritual wants of 79,000 Catholics, scattered over an immense diocese, extending over a space of more than 1,000 miles, from the River Murray on the South, to Wide Bay on the North?⁷⁵

Not only did debate emerge regarding the cost of Catholic education, particularly Subiaco and Lyndhurst, but comments concerning a growing apathy amongst Catholic parents not supporting local Catholic education for their children.

Parents and guardians betray their sacred trust, by sending their children to schools where no religion is taught, but where, on the contrary, their religion is made a subject of ridicule. I cannot sufficiently deplore the apathy and indifference which is here shown by Catholics to any movement set on foot for their education.⁷⁶

According to Fogarty, poverty amongst Catholic families in Australia was sufficiently real to make secondary education for most difficult to achieve.⁷⁷ While

⁷⁴ *FJ*, 27/6/1857, 4.

⁷⁵ *FJ*, 13/6/1857, 2.

⁷⁶ *FJ*, 27/4/1857, 4

⁷⁷ Even by the early twentieth century, the cost of Catholic education in many Catholic colleges was high. Rather than jeopardize their religious education, “Catholic parents preferred to forgo the advantages of a secondary school altogether.” See Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*, 334.

Polding was very aware of the material and spiritual needs of poor Catholic children and founded the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, Polding and Davis were more concerned that Catholic middle and upper class students receive an education at the hands of religious. It seems the needs of children from poor Catholic families “were being adequately provided for, so it was considered, in the denominational schools taught by lay teachers under the Board.”⁷⁸

Community Retreat

The week following the school’s opening, Davis conducted a retreat for the nuns on 1 April 1851.⁷⁹ Because the retreat was scheduled for an entire Tuesday, one wonders if school was cancelled for that day. Presumably, a more suitable time could have been chosen given it was the week after the schools opening.

The *Benedictine Journal* provided no details about the retreat format given by Davis. A study of the retreat lead by Polding (see Figure 3) at St. Mary’s on 2 April shows a retreat comparable in parts to the two-day retreat led by Davis for the postulants of St. Mary’s on 14 April, with the exception of Mass and the recitation of the Divine Office during the prescribed canonical hours.⁸⁰ Davis’ retreat focused on individual meditation, prayer, group singing, recitation of the rosary, an examination of conscience and individual resolutions, as well as time for manual work. It is conceivable that Davis used a similar, if not condensed format for the nuns at Subiaco.

⁷⁸ Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*, 291- 292.

⁷⁹ Polding conducted a Retreat for the community at St. Mary’s for the entire week, beginning on Wednesday 2/4/1851 and ending on Saturday 5/4/1851. For details of the format of Polding’s Retreat, see *BJ*, 1/4/1851.

⁸⁰ *BJ*, 2/4/1851. Please see other examples in the *BJ* of Retreats led by Polding: 27/7/1849 and 12/11/1849.

Figure 3:

The order of the Retreat led by Polding

Rise at the usual hour.

Mass

Prime, etc. as usual.

Examination on resolutions of the preceding day.

Walk – part of the rosary to be recited, and a second mass heard before collation.

8am – Collation⁸¹ or breakfast.

8.30am – Spiritual Lecture

9am – Little Hours

9.30am – Meditation

10am – Examination on Subject of Medn. Resolutions etc.

10.30am – work in the library for a quarter of an hour.

10.45am – Walk – 2nd part of Rosary to be recited.

11am – Ad libitum.

11.15am – Meditation.

12pm – Examination on subject of Medn. – Resolutions.

12.30pm – Vespers – Visit Blessed Sacrament.

1pm – Dinner.

2pm – Work.

3pm – Ad libitum.

3.15pm – Meditation.

4pm – Examination of subject on Medn. – Resolutions, etc.

4.30pm – Walk – 3rd part of Rosary to be recited.

5pm – On Wednesday and Friday - Matins & Lauds.

Thursday – Singing.

Saturday – Preparation for Confession.

6pm – Wednesday & Friday – Collation or Supper – after which private devotions till Church service.

On Thursday & Saturday, Spiritual Lecture till 6.30pm.

6.30pm – Collation or Supper. After Collation on Thursday & Saturday, examination & resolutions on Meditation of the day. The same after church service on Wednesday & Friday.

N.B. When the duties do not require attendance in the chapel or the chapter room, they may be performed in the open air.⁸²

⁸¹ “Collation” is a light, informal meal.

⁸² *BJ* 2/4/1851.

Figure 4 below presents the postulants retreat which focused on meditation, recitation of the rosary, an examination of conscience, personal resolutions and lectures in Benedictine spirituality with two hours dedicated to singing on the final day; the latter clearly bearing Davis' influence.

Figure 4:

The order of the Retreat – for Postulants led by Davis

7:30am – Examination of conscience and private devotions in the study or oratory.
8:00am – Breakfast – walk
8:45am – Meditation – walk saying 1st part of Rosary – write good resolutions.
10:00am – Spiritual Lecture & prayer
10:45am – Walk in Recollection
11:00am – Meditation – walk – 2nd part of Rosary
12:00pm – Examination of conscience – Resolution
12:20pm – Prepare for Vespers & Dinner – After dinner recreation – manual labour, etc.
2:00pm – Singing
4:00pm - 4:15pm – Meditation – Examination of conscience – Resolutions
5:30pm – Walk – 3rd part of Rosary – Private Devotions
6:00pm – Spiritual Lecture till Supper – After supper quiet recreation
7:45pm – Night Prayers & Office.

The following day:

12:20pm – Prepare for Vespers & Dinner – After dinner recreation – manual labour, etc.
2:00pm – Singing
4:00pm - walk in Recollection
4:15pm – Meditation – Examination of conscience – Resolutions
5:30pm – Walk – 3rd part of Rosary – Private Devotions
6:00pm – Spiritual Lecture till Supper – After supper quiet recreation
7:45pm – Night Prayers & Office

As far as spiritual resources are concerned, a check of Davis' surviving book collection reveals an array of books ranging from Theology, Philosophy, History,

Ethics, Sermons and Spirituality. Davis had four books by St. Alphonso Liguori (1696-1787), the famous author of spirituality, moral theology and sermons.⁸³ One of Liguori's well-known books on spirituality was *The Great Means of Salvation and of Perfection* which included discourses on Prayer and Spiritual Exercises for a retreat. Although this book was not in Davis' own collection, it is possible it may have belonged to any one of the members of the community, or indeed, even in the monastery library as a reference book.

Another spiritual author located in the Davis collection was the French Jesuit Jean Croiset (1656- 1738): *Réflexions chrétiennes sur divers sujets de morale: utiles a toutes sortes de personnes, & particulièrement à celles qui sont la retraite spirituelle un jour chaque mois*. This book would have been an excellent resource for leading retreats, meditations and spiritual exercises and was more than likely used as a reference by Davis. Similarly, two of Croiset's renowned books were *Retreats for each day of the month* and *The Lives of the Saints for each day of the year*. These books focused on meditative and contemplative spiritual exercises. Whilst these books were not located in Davis' extant library, they were probably in the monastery library.

Conclusion

Polding's foundation of the convent at Subiaco provided another sphere in which Davis excelled as pastor and Benedictine presence. Polding envisioned a female branch of the Benedictine Order in Sydney working with the monks from St. Mary's in

⁸³ Liguori's extant books in the Davis collection: (1) *Le confesseur des gens de campagne, ou abrégé de la théologie morale / par Saint Alphonse de Liguori; traduit de l'italien*; (2) *Preparation for death: or, considerations on the eternal maxims, useful for all as a book of meditations, etc.*; (3) *Theologia moralis illustrissimi...domini Alphonsi de Ligorio: adjuncta instructione ad praxim confessoriorum una cum Joannis Dominici Mansi epitome doctrinae moralis et canonicae ex operibus Benedicti XIV*; (4) *Directorium ordinandorum dilucida, brevique methodo complectens quidquid ad sacras ordinationes pertinet / auctore Alphonso de Liguori; adcedit epitome sacrorum rituum ab Josepho Cabrino*.

the field of education. In both cases, the children from the more affluent Catholic communities of Sydney were given educational opportunities.

Gregory and Le Clerc resided at St. Mary's with the monks for nearly twelve months before the convent at Subiaco was opened in 1849 followed by the opening of the school in 1851.

The prospectus and curriculum was probably written by Davis with some collaboration from Le Clerc. The curriculum focused on core subjects such as: English, French, Writing, Arithmetic, Geography and History, with the opportunity to learn other European languages, needlework, singing and piano, harp, drawing and dancing.

Enclosure in the Benedictine tradition was strictly observed at the convent, following the slightly modified "Constitutions of Princethorpe." Initially, the nuns were answerable to Polding, but this responsibility was later relinquished to Davis. By all accounts, the nuns appeared to live autonomously under Davis' leadership.

Various priests from St. Mary's celebrated Mass at Subiaco as often as possible, whilst Davis travelled to Subiaco regularly in his role as Chaplain. Not only did he make frequent visits to the convent, he assisted and guided them in the administration of the school. Davis prepared and led retreats, celebrated Mass, administered the Sacraments to the students and officiated at different liturgical functions such as the blessing of newly built school buildings.

Chapter 4

Charles Davis' Musical Contribution to the Early Australian Catholic Church

Charles Davis was recognised as an outstanding musician amongst the public and his peers. He was an accomplished organist, multi-instrumentalist, choir-master and vocalist. He was also a gifted composer who wrote hundreds of sacred works and brass band marches. A fundamental aspect of his musicianship was his ability to improvise; a talent central to Davis' spirituality, since extemporisation became his deep expression of public prayer. Because he was an accomplished improviser, questions emerge regarding how he most likely approached this aspect of his musicianship. There were two streams of improvisatory musical practices he became involved in both at Downside and St. Mary's, specifically: the Anonymous and Approved genres.¹ These methods provide a glimpse into his musical world.

A Definition of Terms

The following historical examples capture 'improvisation' during the early to mid-nineteenth century and demonstrate how Davis may have approached improvisatory performance on the piano or organ.

Many early nineteenth century piano tutor books recommended performing written models of improvisatory material. They included broken chord patterns in every key

¹ John Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, (Sydney: Currency Press, 1999), xvi-xix.

and models for variation technique.² The 'short prelude' or 'flourish' was an improvisatory technique usually played at the beginning of a composition. Many of the piano method books demonstrated examples in every key so musicians could "fall back on these memorised prelude models when required to improvise an introduction."³

The English organist, Isaac Nathan, who settled in Australia in 1841, published a musical theory method in 1823. It described the use of extempore ornamentation in performances as something that "should correspond with the character or genius of the piece in which they are introduced...[so that]...the best effect should be produced."⁴ Nathan wrote: "it is understood, and indeed expected" that singers too should include "fanciful and graceful ornaments...[to] heighten, instead of lessen the effect of the composition during repeated passages."⁵

The tables below highlight examples of Nathan's approach to ornamentation. Figure 1 shows the original melody by Brahms and underneath, three possible improvisations to perform.

² Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 3.

³ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 7. Examples of two popular publications were Clementi's *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano Forte* (1801) and Czerny's *Fantasy Playing* (1836), cited in Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 3.

⁴ Isaac Nathan, *An Essay on the History and Theory of Music; and on the Guidelines, Capabilities and Management of the Human Voice*, (London: Whittaker, Ave Maria Lane, 1823), 78.

⁵ Nathan, *An Essay on the History and Theory of Music*, 79. See Appendices No. 22 for a painting of Isaac Nathan, c. 1820.

Figure 1: Ornamentations by Nathan on a melody by Brahms.

Figure 1 displays a musical score for four voice parts. The lyrics are: "re - ceived his death wound". The score shows the original melody and three variations with ornamental flourishes. The first voice part is the original melody. The second voice part has a simple ornament on the word "his". The third voice part has a more complex ornament on "his". The fourth voice part has the most elaborate ornament, featuring a series of sixteenth-note runs and grace notes.

Figure 2: Examples of melodic ornamentation on a theme by Nathan.

Figure 2 shows a musical score for two voice parts and a piano accompaniment. The score features a melodic theme with various ornaments, including grace notes and sixteenth-note runs. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and a simple bass line. The score is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat.

Figure 2 provides another example of extemporised variations by Nathan above a given melody. In Figure 3, the original melody is provided on the top line, whilst variations appear above the piano part.

Figure 3: Examples of melodic ornamentation on a theme by Nathan.

The musical score for Figure 3 consists of four staves. The top three staves are for Voice, and the bottom two are for Piano. The time signature is 2/4. The lyrics for all voice parts are: "Sor - - - row sure / Plea - - - sure". The top voice part shows the original melody. The middle voice part shows a variation with a slur over the second measure. The bottom voice part shows a variation with a slur over the first measure. The piano part shows a simple accompaniment with chords and a bass line.

Nathan suggested “free scope may be given to the imagination” during the repeated strain of an “air,” and provided examples of ornamental variations of original melodies to be memorised for future performances.⁶

According to Melbourne historian and musicologist John Whiteoak, musicians in the nineteenth century “only had to internalise a relatively small range of familiar models to be able to create variations that were stylistically acceptable.” Moreover,

⁶ Nathan, *An Essay on the History and Theory of Music*, 80, 97. In a later series of lectures published in 1856, he presented a range of simple piano accompaniments besides the “introduction of every possible combination of harmony with which the Diatonic scale may be treated, focusing on the memorisation of accompaniment patterns. See Isaac Nathan, *The 1st, 2nd and 3rd of a Series of Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Music*, (Sydney, no publishers, 1856), 33.

Whiteoak suggests they “had the opportunity to refine the improvisatory application of these models over several decades of their career.”⁷

The orthodox musical training Davis received as a student at Downside would have equipped him with the basic building blocks of improvisatory practice including scales, arpeggios, transposition, accompaniment patterns, harmonisation of the melodic line, broken chords, and theme and variation practice. Besides memorising accompaniment patterns in every key to create a series of apparently spontaneous variations, Whiteoak suggested “all live performance of music is to some degree improvisatory” since musicians make personal choices affecting a musical performance, even though they are faithfully following a score:

Music-making is improvisatory when the choice allowed or required during performance – or even over repeated performances – is exercised so as to significantly shape, alter or add to the musical outcome, and thereby the expressive outcome.⁸

The term ‘improvisation’ needs to be evaluated in a way that allows for a much broader and open-ended schema, particularly when considering Davis’ approach to improvising. Rather than relying on a perceived set of criterion focusing on the performance practice of a musician, improvisatory practice needs to include factors like natural and learned abilities, as well as intuitiveness, experimentation and creative insight.

Whilst some people may disagree, ‘improvisation’ in the context of Davis’ musicianship, is used in a liberal context, regardless of whether his performances were highly skilled spontaneous inventions or not. For the purposes of this discussion,

⁷ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 3.

⁸ John Whiteoak & Aileen Scott-Maxwell, eds., “Improvising Music,” *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*, (Sydney: Currency House Inc., 2003), 324.

improvisation also includes musical 'fills,' the inspired rendition of a detailed musical score, and the simple embellishment of a melodic or harmonic line.

Defining a Performance Context

Whiteoak explored improvisatory musical practices in Australia within a secular perspective from the 1830s to 1970, examining many musical genres which emerged during Australia's colonial period and beyond. He classified them into two genres: "lowbrow" and "highbrow" performance.⁹

The more "highbrow" or "Approved genres" of musical practice, embraced "professional concert-hall and salon recitals, opera, organized amateur musical activities such as choirs and bands, and the systematized teaching or learning of performance practice."¹⁰ It focused largely on orthodox musical conventions.

"Lowbrow" or "Anonymous genres" were associated with "less socially approved, or more 'irrational' forms of entertainment such as street or hotel entertainment, circus, variety or blackface minstrel shows, silent cinema, public dancing and so forth."¹¹ It often looked to unconventional or 'non-legitimate' performance practices, performed in informal contexts. Similar practices emerged in the performance of colonial church music in Australia and in Davis' approach to music making.¹²

This study will examine the musical world into which Davis came: a world in which spontaneity and improvisation at Downside Abbey emerged.

⁹ Whiteoak, J. *Playing Ad Lib*, (Sydney, Currency Press, 1999), xvi-xix.

¹⁰ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, xvi.

¹¹ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, xvii.

¹² See Graeme Pender, *Improvisatory Musical Practices in Melbourne Colonial Christian Churches: 1835 – 1914*, MTheol diss., Melbourne College of Divinity, November 2004.

The Downside brass band

Since there are no recordings, one must rely on extant descriptions as to how the local village band probably sounded during their accompaniment of dramatic plays at Downside. Van Zeller described the improvised blare of “yokel blasts, the unashamed explosions [of sound], [and] the frank shakings of mouthpiece[s].”¹³ This performance depicted an example of Whiteoak’s “Anonymous” or “lowbrow” genre. Village bands appeared in the 1830s and played at different social functions early in the nineteenth century, and provided a significant base for the eventual establishment of the brass band.¹⁴ Their unconventional music-making, together with group interaction, delivered the conditions for musical invention based on an aural tradition. Davis became immersed in a musical context that was unconstrained and experimental.

What instruments accompanied the actors at Downside? There is no mention of a piano; rather, only an assortment of cornets, horns and trombones.¹⁵ Given the unsophisticated quality of the performances, it is likely the musicians were self-taught ‘ear players’ who played in either a spontaneous or seemingly spontaneous way. British historians Vic and Sheila Gammon describe the performance approaches of British instrumentalists during the first part of the nineteenth century thus:

It seems certain, from the evidence we have considered, that the majority of instrumentalists active in the first third of the nineteenth century were ear players, who learnt their playing without reading the notes.¹⁶

¹³ Hubert Van Zeller, H. *Downside By and Large*, (Sheed & Ward: London & New York, 1953), 208. See Appendices No 23 for a caricature of a village band, c. 1852.

¹⁴ http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband_07_britishbrassband.htm, [accessed on 24/4/2014].

¹⁵ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 208.

¹⁶ Vic Gammon & Sheila Gammon, “From ‘Repeat and Twiddle’ to Precision and Snap: the Musical Revolution of the Mid-Nineteenth Century” in Herbert, T., *Bands: the Brass Band Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), 125; cited in Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 34.

Given their findings, the musical accompaniments at Downside were most likely performed without music. If this was the case, various levels of improvisation occurred: continual repetition and spontaneous embellishment of melodic lines, intuitive group interaction and open-ended formats allowing for extendible arrangements. This gave the musicians a framework to explore and experiment creatively.

There is no mention of a conductor, so the musicians probably took directions from the cornet player who played the melody. He would have counted in the group from his chair indicating entries and general band cut-offs via eye-contact or exaggerated up and down motions of his instrument. This approach still occurs in contemporary jazz and folk groups. The bands' "rustic" sounds indicate a mediocre level of musicality.

Downside's village band was later replaced by a "Hanoverian German" brass band conducted by "Herr Kopp...secur[ing] the School's instant respect."¹⁷ There are no details of the instrumentation or the size of this band. Most likely it was a typical five piece German 'brass' group comprising brass and woodwind instruments. An 1854 account of a 'German Band' that played in Ballarat, Victoria indicates a representative model of the size and instrumentation of 'brass' groups that performed during the mid-nineteenth century:

Our band consisted of five pieces – an F flute, Eb clarionet, Bb cornet, Eb horn and Bb bass...¹⁸

¹⁷ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 208.

¹⁸ "Band Life in Early Australian Days," *Australasian Bandsman*, (26/10/1923): 15; cited in Whiteoak, *Playing Ad-Lib*, 70.

Did Kopp's band improvise? A study of German musicians who migrated to Melbourne from 1849 until the First World War reveals many musicians were capable of improvising. It seems they had a precise and disciplined approach to their playing.¹⁹

Maybe Kopp's group performed in a comparable way. Whatever the case may have been this group's high level of musicianship most likely influenced Davis' love of brass bands and stimulated his desire to improvise. All in all, Davis eventually formed his own 'brass' band in 1838 at Downside Abbey.

Davis' brass band at Downside

Davis' band was described as being "small at first" and consisted of six players performing a variety of instruments including a cornet, trombone and a "big and little drum among them."²⁰ It was reminiscent of the instrumentation of the local village 'brass band' discussed previously. Davis was the 'band master' and the ensemble "contained some grand players."²¹ Davis was an accomplished multi-instrumentalist,²² and probably 'filled-in' on whatever instrument was needed at the time. Whilst Davis' principal instrument was the small Eb clarinet (which "had to be specially constructed for him with a key for the stump of the third finger of the left hand, instead of a hole"²³), he played the tenor trombone and produced some "difficult solos."²⁴

Many musicians in nineteenth century England were "ear players" unable to read music,²⁵ so perhaps Davis trained the band aurally. After a number of

¹⁹ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad-Lib*, 34.

²⁰ W. Barnwell, "Music & Musicians at St. Gregory's, II – 1838," *Downside Review*, 90.

²¹ Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 208.

²² Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 208.

²³ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 208. Also refer to *Austral Light*, (1/2/1902): 135.

²⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 208. Also refer to *Austral Light*, 135.

²⁵ Gammon, "From 'Repeat and Twiddle' to Precision and Snap," 125; cited in Whiteoak, *Playing Ad-Lib*, 34.

performances of the same tune they probably played from memory. Moreover, given that some of the musicians were self-taught, “it was obviously safer to present ‘extemporisations’ which were partly, if not fully, prepared.”²⁶

Davis “arranged and composed hundreds of pieces for the band, including four or five brilliant and very effective marches, which he also played on the organ.”²⁷ These arrangements and compositions were possibly full scores incorporating all the instruments of the group. Alternatively, they may have been a simple lead line with a chord outline and a ‘pencilled in’ bass. If the majority of musicians could not read, it is feasible Davis approached his compositions using this latter example. Those who could read music probably played independent melodic or harmonic lines written by Davis. Collectively they had to adjust to a group context that allowed for musicians who could not read music. Davis united them into a single musical unit given most had diverse musical backgrounds.

The band performed “[St.] Patrick’s Day” when Daniel O’Connell visited St. Gregory’s in 1838. By this time, the band had ten members which included a “large drum suppressed and toned down & 2 cornets, 2 clarionets & octave flute.”²⁸ The other four instrumentalists were most likely lower brass players. As the size of the band increased, Davis became one of two clarinet players, as well as its conductor.²⁹ The *List of Boy’s at St. Gregory’s* reveals a large number of Irish students attending the school. It is possible some members of Davis’ brass group were Irish and embraced their rich improvisatory folk tradition within the context of the band.

²⁶ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 1.

²⁷ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 208.

²⁸ Barnewell, “Music & Musicians at St. Gregory’s, II – 1838,” 91.

²⁹ Barnewell, “Music & Musicians at St. Gregory’s, II – 1838,” 91.

What tunes did the band play? Besides Davis' marches, they played selections from operas, waltzes and military music which were nearly always arranged by Davis.³⁰ Not only did he compose and arrange hundreds of pieces for the band, he trained a group of musicians to play them. He even engaged the services of a "Sgt. Major Wheatley" as the bands' military instructor, teaching them marching and drill.³¹ All of this was done whilst studying for the priesthood, working as the Infirmarian, leading the monastery choir and playing the organ at Downside. One begins to develop a sense of Davis' obsession with musical perfection.

When approached, the archivist at Downside Abbey replied there was no record of any of Davis' compositions in the archive. What happened to them? Did Davis bring them out to Sydney in 1848? If he did and they were housed in St. Mary's Cathedral, all the music was destroyed in the Cathedral fire of 1865.³² It is interesting to notice there are no tutor or method books for piano or organ amongst this collection. As a working musician, he probably kept these in the Cathedral for handy reference. Fortunately, the archivist of Jamberoo Abbey provided copies of two extant sacred compositions written for the nuns at Subiaco by Davis, c. 1850. The two pieces will be examined in detail later.

Charles Davis: Church organist at Downside Abbey

Few realize how important improvising can be for the organist and for the liturgy, and few are aware that the organist, unlike other musicians, must also be an improviser.³³

³⁰ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 208.

³¹ Barnewell, "Music & Musicians at St. Gregory's, II – 1838," 91.

³² See Appendices No. 25 for a drawing of the fire at St. Mary's Cathedral.

³³ Karol Kope, "Improvisation Remembered," *Sacred Music* 119 (Spring 1992): 5.

By the nineteenth century, the church organ was regarded as the very essence of “churchliness”; able to support several levels of improvisatory performance. Besides improvising extensive preludes and postludes, the church organist performed other forms of improvisation during Mass, like the development or elaboration of hymns, the spontaneous reharmonisation of hymn accompaniments, and embellishments to the unison hymn singing of plainchant.³⁴ A later Vatican II document succinctly summarised the Catholic tradition: the organist had to “enrich the sacred celebration according to the true nature of each of its parts, and encourage the participation of the faithful.”³⁵ Improvisation became the organist’s method of prayer, elaborating the ceremony with improvised phrases, echoing what had been prayed or what was to follow.³⁶ The organ became the traditional musical instrument whose sound added “a wonderful splendour to the Church’s ceremonies and powerfully lift[ed] men’s minds to God and higher things.”³⁷

The church organist had a range of timbral choices provided by the console and pedals. Many organists displayed exceptional levels of improvisatory dexterity in early Australian church music. Organists like Davis, needed to consider the choice of tone colours to appropriately suit choir accompaniment, or indeed the organ being played. Frequently, early church music accompaniments were piano arrangements taken from an orchestral score and sometimes written outside the compass of the organ manual.

A question that needs to be explored in relation to Davis’ organ playing is: who taught him? He presumably learnt as a young boy at St. Gregory’s since extant records

³⁴ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad-Lib*, 20.

³⁵ Vatican Council II, *Musicam Sacrum*, “Instruction on Music in the Liturgy,” (5/3/1967), n. 67 in *Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979).

³⁶ Kope, “Improvisation Remembered,” 5.

³⁷ Vatican Council II, *Musicam Sacrum*, n. 62.

suggests Downside engendered ideal conditions for musical tuition. He could have been taught music at Usk; however, census records reveal there were no registered music teachers between 1815 and 1826. If Davis did learn music in Usk, it could have been from a family member.³⁸

Downside was renowned for its excellence in vocal and instrumental music and it was suggested that “they could teach a crow to sing at Downside or a horse to play violin.”³⁹ Perhaps Davis was taught by Count Joseph Mazzinghi (1765–1844) who was Downside’s resident organist and composer from at least 1823 until 1834.⁴⁰ Mazzinghi was a student of Johann Christian Bach, Pasquale Anfossi, and Antonio Sacchini. Mazzinghi wrote several operas, melodramas, and published between seventy to eighty piano sonatas, about 200 airs for piano, about 200 airs for harp and other instruments, and about thirty-five vocal trios.⁴¹ He probably taught Davis the organ, improvisation and composition, since Mazzinghi remained closely associated with Downside during Davis’ student years. After leaving Downside in 1834 to visit Italy,⁴²

³⁸ It was stated earlier Davis played clarinet and trombone. The *Downside Review* of 1888 reported Davis emerged as a solo violinist about 1841. See “Music and Musicians,” *Downside Review* VII, (July 1888): 87. If he did not know how to play these instruments already, he probably learnt them from Downside’s Musical Master Mr. A. W. Taylor, of Bath. Records show Taylor was working at Downside in 1829. See Henry Norbert Birt, *Downside: The history of St. Gregory’s school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1902), 211. By all accounts, Taylor favoured the flute, but in all probability knew how to play other woodwind instruments and perhaps the rudiments of brass playing as well. The author is a trained music teacher and accomplished clarinet player who can play and teach a variety of woodwind, string and brass instruments. In his experience, it is common for most music teachers to be able to teach more than one instrument; usually a number from the same family, or even two families such as brass and woodwind.

³⁹ Augustine Watts, “Downside,” *Downside Review*, (July, 1903): 120.

⁴⁰ Birt, *Downside: The history of St. Gregory’s school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*, 189; *Dictionary of National Biography* 37, 177.

⁴¹ T. Baker, *Biographical Dictionary Of Musicians Compiled And Edited By With Portraits From Drawings In Pen And Ink By Alex Gribayedoff*, (New York: G. Schirmer, 1900), 385; *Dictionary of National Biography* 37, 178. See Appendices No. 24 for examples of Mazzinghi’s published works.

⁴² Mazzinghi returned to England and retired to Bath, eventually dying at Downside College in 1844. *Dictionary of National Biography* 37, 177 - 178.

Davis replaced Mazzinghi as the organist until December 1847.⁴³ It was during his residency as Downside's organist Davis' musical reputation excelled. Davis enjoyed the status as an inventive organ virtuoso who could, according to Birt, play the "noble instrument in a style that some of our best organists would envy."⁴⁴ As the monastery's organist, Davis accompanied the singing at daily Mass and the singing of hymns during the Liturgy of the Hours.

It must be emphasised that improvisatory musical practice was common within different colonial church traditions in Australia prior to Davis' arrival in 1848, supporting both approaches to improvisation: "lowbrow" and "highbrow." Under Polding's direction, many extraordinary musical performances occurred at St. Mary's Cathedral between 1838 and 1848 demonstrating varying degrees of improvisation within the "Approved" genre.⁴⁵ The Cathedral doubled as a concert hall and a church. Moreover, the numerous examples of musical performances within the genre of oratorios, sacred masses, and organ recitals demonstrate a continuum of improvisatory practice prior to Davis' arrival in Sydney. What becomes interesting is the decline of sacred oratorios and concerts at St. Mary's Cathedral under the musical direction of Davis.

The Organ of St. Mary's Cathedral: Charles Davis

Church accompaniments at St. Mary's were performed on a Metalophone; an instrument presented to the Cathedral in June 1834 by the then choir-master and

⁴³ *Fasti Gregoriani (Brief Notices) respecting the members of St. Gregory the Great, of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, from the time of its re-establishment in England, A.D. 1793*, "Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis," 95; see Henry Norbert Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, (Edinburgh: J. C. Thomson at the Mercat Press, 1913), 150.

⁴⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* 11, 207.

⁴⁵ See Graeme Pender, *Improvisatory Musical Practices in Melbourne Colonial Christian Churches: 1835 – 1914*, MTheol diss., Melbourne College of Divinity, November 2004.

organist, J. de Cavendish.⁴⁶ In 1836, Polding ordered an organ, although by mid-1838 the organ had not arrived. Polding wrote to his cousin in England:

[I] proceed at once to inform you that we have been expecting monthly to hear something respecting the Organ for the Cathedral of St. Mary's. Two years ago I ordered it, specified price and mentioned how it was to be paid for. Not a syllable has escaped about your doings and orderings...Now if this Organ has not been ordered I do request it may be forthwith. I have £500 in hand to pay when required – other £300 I will raise by a Subscription. The price in London I wish not to be less than £800 – nor more than £1,000 or thereabouts, packing included....In a word take counsel with the wise – let me have an Instrument full of Dulcet sounds – and loud as the Ocean roar when the Blasts from the East drive its waters into Bondi Bay.⁴⁷

By May 1839 Polding again contacted Heptonstall describing the “ill-toned” organ on hire and the organ he wanted:

We have an Organ in the Church – One, Ellard late of Dublin, brought it out on speculation. It formerly belonged to Gardiner Street Dublin and was sold when they purchased Green's from the Westminster Festival. It is a weak, vacant ill-toned Instrument, for which the speculator has the Modesty to ask 500 Guineas. If he obtains one half he will have double its real value. We have hired it for one year – paying £20 for it. The party lending being at the expense of placing and removing. It certainly is a noble Instrument and the price is noble too. I do not object to the price for the Organ itself but the case is very costly. It will be a great ornament to the Church and serve the object I have most at heart, after the propagation of religion, the diffusion of sound taste, and love of the fine Arts...It must be an organ of astounding power – of course you will hear it in London...The Builders are the very persons I wish to be employed but I could not recollect their names. They produced the Redditch Organ which I admired greatly – I do not pretend to know anything of the composition of an Organ but it seems calculated for power, if it have softness also...⁴⁸

⁴⁶ A Metalaphone is a reed keyboard instrument that sounded like a church organ; *SH*, 16/6/1834, supplement, 1. Also see <http://www.ohta.org.au/confs/Sydney/STMARYSCATHEDRAL.html>, [accessed 24/4/2014].

⁴⁷ Polding to Heptonstall, 25/6/1838, DA K 72.

⁴⁸ Polding to Heptonstall, 20/5/1839, DA K 211.

A specification for the hired organ is not known although Rushworth lists a similar organ thus:⁴⁹

Great	
Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Flute	4
Fifteenth	2
Swell	
Stopped Diapason	8
Flute?	4
Hautboy	8
Pedal	
One octave coupled to Great	

The Bevington organ eventually arrived in 1841, enclosed in a Pugin designed case. By all accounts, it was “likely to have been of astounding power, being more than twice the size of that in St. James’, King Street.”⁵⁰ In 1851, Fr John Gourbeillon sculpted seven statues from plaster and finished in bronze, for the top of the case, standing three feet high; the first being the Blessed Virgin.⁵¹ They were described as looking “remarkably well and quite a finish to the organ.”⁵²

While playing the organ was usually led by men in the nineteenth century, either lay or clerical, Dame Magdalen le Clerk OSB from Rydalmere in Sydney played it at a monastic profession ceremony during High Mass. She wrote: “I played the organ and even that was not the first time I had performed the office of organist. Indeed, I never

⁴⁹ Graeme Rushworth, *Historic Organs of New South Wales: The Instruments, Their Makers and Players, 1791-1940*, (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1988), 37-38. Also see <http://www.ohta.org.au/confs/Sydney/STMARYSCATHEDRAL.html>, [accessed 24/4/2014].

⁵⁰ Rushworth, *Historic Organs of New South Wales*, 34.

⁵¹ *BJ*, 23/9/1851.

⁵² *BJ*, 28/8/1852. See Appendices No. 26 for a drawing of the 1841 Bevington organ by Graeme Rushworth.

thought I could have mustered courage to sit down before such an enormous pile of pipes.”⁵³

By the time Davis arrived in December 1848, he described the organ as “being in a deplorable state [with] every position out of order,” even though “it appear[ed] to be a grand instrument.” Despite complimenting the aesthetics of its design, he wrote “the materials were not well seasoned, and the Bellows intended to supply the pedal organ [was] much too small, consequently this apparently firm position of the organ is altogether lost.”⁵⁴ Davis suggested Polding was aware of its poor condition but had postponed repairing it until Davis could inspect it. The wood was described as “unsuited to the Australian climate,”⁵⁵ causing it to become “woefully out of condition within a few years.”⁵⁶ During its repairs, Davis decided the organ was to be relocated to a new location in the south gallery of the Cathedral. Edmund Moore wrote about its proposed relocation and its dysfunctional pipes:

The large organ in St. Mary's with its 22 stops is going to be removed at his suggestion from the end of the Church to the right hand gallery, and when they put it together again it will be put to rights – half the pipes are silent at present.⁵⁷

According to Rushworth, the specification of the organ was most likely the following:⁵⁸

⁵³ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 157-159.

⁵⁴ Davis to Brown, 3/2/1849, DA M138.

⁵⁵ Davis to Brown, 3/2/1849, DA M138

⁵⁶ Davis to Brown, 3/2/1849, DA M138

⁵⁷ Moore to Morrall, 31/1/1849, B Coll, M129, DA. See Terence Kavenagh, “My Dear Alphonsus...,” *Tjurunga* 10, (1975): 48.

⁵⁸ Rushworth, *Historic Organs of New South Wales*, Also see <http://www.ohta.org.au/conf/Sydney/STMARYSCATHEDRAL.html>, [accessed 24/4/2014].

Great

Bourdon	16
Clarabella	16
Open Diapason 1	8
Open Diapason 2	8
Stop Diapason	8
Dulciana	8
Principal large	4
Principal small	4
Twelfth	2-2/3
Fifteenth	2
Sesquialtera	IV
Mixture	III
Trumpet	8
Clarion	4
Bassoon	8
Cremona	8

Swell

Open Diapason	8
Stop Diapason	8
Principal	4
Flute	4
Fifteenth	2
Hautboy	8

Pedal

Double Diapason	32
Open Diapason	16
Principal	8
Posaune	16

Couplers

Swell to Great	
Great to Pedal	
Swell to Pedal	
3 combination pedals to Swell	
5 combination pedals to Great	

Following the removal of the organ, the west gallery returned to congregational use.⁵⁹ Its new location favoured Davis' model of a changed approach to liturgy. Whilst

⁵⁹ BJ, 1/7/1849.

the organ was being repaired, Davis sometimes accompanied the choir on piano. Other occasions saw the choir singing unaccompanied.⁶⁰ During its restoration, Davis supervised a person described as an “excellent workman...employed [for] some years in England in one of the larger organ factories.” The organ needed “a new Bellows for the pedal,” cleaning and other general restoration needs at a cost of about £70.⁶¹ By all accounts, the organ was repaired to Davis’ specifications and Easter Sunday was the first time the organ had been played since its removal from the west gallery.⁶²

Davis: the organist

Even though Davis indicated he wanted to play the organ comparable to the previously paid Cathedral organist, Walton, both the choir and congregation preferred Davis’ organ style because his “music would always go with far more spirit.”⁶³ His musical contribution became his moments of prayer, interpreting whatever had just transpired in the liturgy through music. Basic accompaniment methods including transposition, modulation and the re-harmonisation of melodic lines were some of the skills Davis had as a church organist and these skills were used to their fullest extent. Fairly elaborate improvised ornamentation in church organ music became a prominent feature of church services, especially at St. Mary’s whenever Davis played. He was regarded by his contemporaries as a master of the organ and was one who could introduce “many effects not in the organ score, [who] rarely ever played it twice alike.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *BJ*, 25/12/1848. The psalm, *venite exultemus* was accompanied by Davis on piano at Christmas matins.

⁶¹ Davis to Brown, 3/2/1849, DA M138

⁶² *BJ*, 8/4/1849.

⁶³ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* 11, 207-208.

⁶⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* 11, 209; see also J. Brian Butler, “Dear Little Charlie’ A Memoir of Charles Henry Davis 1815-1854 Monk of Downside and First Bishop of Maitland,” *Tjurunga* 73, (November 2007): 48.

As mentioned earlier, Davis had part of the third finger of his left hand amputated due to his receiving a kick from a horse at St. Gregory's. To compensate for this amputation, he practiced pedaling various improvised bass lines with his feet. Besides improvising extensive preludes and postludes, he included improvisation within the body of major works during the celebration of Mass. The following text is an example of Davis' musical virtuosity and spontaneous ability to depart from the score:

It was a veritable treat to hear him pedalling the scale passages in the Creed of Mozart's Twelfth Mass. He always used to play that Mass from the full orchestral score, instead of the organ score, and did so many a time in St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, where the present writer had the honour of turning the pages for him, which took him all his time, as the edition was in octavo, and contained only a few bars in each page. He introduced many effects not in the organ score, and rarely ever played it twice alike. His playing of the psalms at Vespers was really unsurpassable, and almost unapproachable. Every verse received a different treatment according to its meaning, and the pedal runs were often something marvellous.⁶⁵

Davis' improvisations adhered to the spirit of the liturgy. His improvisatory skills required him to supply a decent harmonisation to a simple melody at a moment's notice improvising accompaniments to the unison hymn singing of plainchant by the monks during their praying of the Divine Office. Whenever he accompanied the choir, Davis had to consider the choice of tone colours to suit the singers and organ timbres that may have varied from the original score. When Davis played the organ, his spirituality became infused into the music of St. Mary's.

Following Davis' arrival the Cathedral choir was reformed under his musical direction. Under Polding, the choir consisted of professional singers and many of the choristers regarded the choir purely as a paid engagement. Davis, however, did not want people in the choir who did not have a reverential sensitivity for the sacred words

⁶⁵ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* 11, 207.

being sung. After dismissing the choir, he reinstated a choral group made up of monks and the unbroken voices of young postulants to sing the soprano line.⁶⁶ He dismissed the organist (a Protestant) and engaged Br. Anselm Curtis as his pupil.⁶⁷ Edmund Moore described Davis' choral changes, thus: "Already even whilst His Grace is here great changes have been effected by Dr Davis in the choir...The singing is under Dr. Davis' care."⁶⁸

There was a complement of forty-two males at the monastery: nine priests, five unordained professed, two novices, two postulants, eight lay-brothers, four lay-postulants and twelve boys training for their postulancy. He unified the monastic choir into a single musical unit as well as saving St. Mary's £100 per annum in choir wages.⁶⁹

The members of the monastery were drawn from different walks of life, each with a diverse aesthetic approach. A balanced and effective choir required preparation and a significant amount of re-training; particularly since the choir ultimately had to sing composed masses and two, three and four-part works. It is not known whether the members of the choir could read music. If not, they learnt the parts by rote. Rehearsals took place each day for at least one hour. Initially, the repertoire consisted of Davis' more simple liturgical compositions. By all accounts the choir learnt fast. Within a few months they were singing compositions of the "great masters" to a high standard and performing a solemn high Mass every Sunday.⁷⁰ Often Davis played the organ during

⁶⁶ Davis to Heptonstall (?), 3/2/1849, DA M138. See also, Terence Kavanagh, "Polding Among the Germans," *Tjurunga* 69 (2005): 32.

⁶⁷ Kavanagh, "My Dear Alphonsus...", 48.

⁶⁸ Moore to Morrall, 31/1/1849, B Coll, M129, DA. See Kavanagh, "My Dear Alphonsus...", 48.

⁶⁹ Kavanagh, "My Dear Alphonsus...", 48.

⁷⁰ Patrick O'Farrell, ed., "Music and Liturgy in St. Mary's Cathedral under Bishop Davis, 1848-1854: A Memoir," *Documents in Australian Catholic History, Volume 1: 1788-1884*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1969), 112.

solemn Masses singing the tenor parts from the console.⁷¹ There is no record of what Davis' singing voice may have sounded like. Dom Anselm Barnewall,⁷² a slightly younger contemporary of Davis from Downside Abbey, described him as an average tenor who "rapidly improved in singing, making much of what I thought an agreeable but far from first-class voice."⁷³ Sir John Lambert⁷⁴ wrote he and his "dear old friend Charles Davis," were treble and contralto in the choir at Downside, describing Davis' voice as one that was "charming."⁷⁵

As noted earlier, Davis was promoted to the role of organist and cantor at Downside Abbey from 24 June 1834 until December 1847. As organist and cantor, his responsibilities entailed accompanying and leading all the choral services and singing. An appointment to these positions was considered prestigious since Davis would have supervised all aspects of music-making, including the role of accompanist. He was most likely responsible for the music library at Downside, as well as overseeing and directing all the celebrations of the liturgy. The experience he gained as cantor and organist at Downside gave Davis the skill to organise and manage the choir at St. Mary's monastery and lead from the organ during some of the Cathedral masses.

It was reported that "the duties of the choir will be performed in the Cathedral during this [Holy] week – the chapel of St. Felician being prepared for the reception of

⁷¹ Alan Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854, Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop," *Australasian Catholic Record* LIX, no. 2, (April 1982): 214.

⁷² According to the *List of boys at St Gregory's*, Robert Barnewall (Dom Anselm) [226], came to St. Gregory's in August 1829 at the age of 8 years (born 22/2/1821), and completed his education in 1838.

⁷³ Barnewall, "Music and Musicians at St. Gregory's," 88.

⁷⁴ According to the *List of boys at St Gregory's*, there was a John Lambert [142] who began his education at St. Gregory's in October 1823 (seven months after Richard Davis) and left in January 1831. Lambert recalls Charles Davis "extracted a promise from me that I would preside at the organ when he sang his first Mass, and how, when I had complied with that promise, I volunteered to perform a similar office when he was consecrated Bishop, little dreaming at the time that my second pledge would ever have to be redeemed." Refer to Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 214-215. Interestingly, Lambert is performing a piano solo in the same program as Davis.

⁷⁵ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 214.

the Blessed Sacrament on Maunday Thursday.”⁷⁶ During the *Tenebrae* service, the choir sang Davis' “masterly arrangement” of *Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem* for the first time, along with the *Miserere*. Both works were performed to a high level of musicianship “stimulat[ing] devotion in the hearts of the most apathetic.”⁷⁷ Because the organ was being repaired, the choir sang unaccompanied; an accomplishment that was musically demanding, since pitch, intonation and overall accuracy was exposed and could not be hidden by the organ.

Davis' choral reforms were integrated into the Feast of 'All Saints.' He celebrated Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament after Mass, followed by the singing of Matins of the Office for the Dead. Davis' choir sang the “Venite Exultemus” whilst the other psalms were sung by the entire monastic community in two choirs. The lessons were chanted by different monks, and the ninth lesson was sung as a solo by Davis.⁷⁸

Davis commented on the progress of his choir singing plainchant in February 1850: “[We] manage to make a pretty fair row. We use copies of the Benedictine Graduale, Vesperale etc. – fine old folios which the Archbishop got from some of the Monasteries in Germany.”⁷⁹ Terence Kavanagh discussed the music that may have been in these “fine old folios” and suggested the choral folios at St. Mary's may not have been specifically German in origin. Rather, Davis may have been making a general reference to a “German-speaking Europe,” including Austria, Switzerland, etc. These books were very large and would have contained an immense amount of music.

⁷⁶ *BJ*, 2/4/1849. The chapel of St. Felician abutted the northern transept of the Cathedral and was the monks' own chapel. Moreover, it was where Davis celebrated Mass each day at 5.30 am.

⁷⁷ O'Farrell, “Music and Liturgy in St. Mary's Cathedral under Bishop Davis, 1848-1854: A Memoir,” 113.

⁷⁸ *BJ*, 1/11/1849.

⁷⁹ Davis to Sweeney, 28/2/1850, DA, M 246. See also Kavanagh, “Polding Among the Germans 4,” *Tjurunga* 69, (2005): 32.

Kavenagh cited the *Antiphonale diurnum, dispositum juxta Breviarium monasticum*; a 474-page folio published in France in 1715 and presented to Polding in Vienna. Another surviving folio, located at the Benedictine abbey at Jamberoo is the *Psalterium monasticum dispositum per hebdomadam Regulam S. Benedicti*, again from the same publisher, Alexius Laurent.⁸⁰

Davis wrote he had a musical preference for the German style because it was “wild and bold, and free from the multiplicity of notes and hee-hawing to be found in the French Plain Chant.”⁸¹ There are two surviving choir folios inscribed, “St. Mary’s Sydney,” both printed in 1686 in Switzerland and now located at Jamberoo. It is possible the *Antiphonarium monasticum ad ritum Breiarum Benedictini, et ad normam cantus a S. Gregorio Magno, secundum exemplaris antiquissima Roma allata* was used by Davis at St. Mary’s, although there is only one example of a Benedictine *graduale* among the surviving books of the Sydney Benedictines.⁸² This volume was printed in 1750 in Paris and is Cistercian in origin.⁸³ There are no surviving *vesperale*. Kavenagh explained that perhaps the large choral books were left behind in the cathedral following the moving of the monastic community to the school at Lyndhurst by the end of the 1850s and were probably destroyed following the Cathedral fire in 1865.

⁸⁰ Kavanagh, “Polding Among the Germans 4,” 33.

⁸¹ Davis to Sweeney, 28/2/1850, DA, M246. See also Kavanagh, “Polding Among the Germans 4,” 32.

⁸² Kavanagh, “Polding Among the Germans 4,” 34.

⁸³ Kavanagh, “Polding Among the Germans 4,” 33.

The compositions of Davis

Besides being an accomplished musician, Davis was a talented composer. One gains an idea of the quantity of compositions written by Davis in the following tribute:

[Davis] arranged and composed hundreds of pieces for the [brass] band, including four or five effective marches, which he often played on the organ...He composed expressly for his brother's first Mass a grand motet to the following beautiful words: - *Juravit Dominus, et non poenitebit cum; Tu est sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech. ...Memor sit Dominus sacrificii tui, et holocaustum tuum pingue fiat. Sacerdotes tui induantur justitiam, et Sancti tui exultant.*⁸⁴

Given Davis' hectic schedule at Downside and Sydney, one wonders when he had time to write so much music. His compositions included music for brass band, masses, chamber music, vocal music, motets, plainchant and other ecclesiastical music. Hopefully Davis' early music remained at Downside Abbey following his departure to Australia and it has been misplaced in the Archives. If his music is finally located, it needs to be examined and performed; otherwise the rich musical heritage of Downside Abbey, circa 1826 – 1848 will be lost forever.

The first composition to be discussed is *Sharon*, written for the Benedictine nuns at Subiaco, c. 1850. Davis was their first chaplain, so this small work was probably a gift of appreciation to them. The name 'Sharon' is derived from the *Plain of Sharon* and is mentioned a number of times in the Old Testament, denoting a place of pasture (1 Chr 5:16; 27:29; Isa 65:10). Another reference compares the lushness of the pasture to that of Carmel and Lebanon (Isa 35:2). The text of Davis' hymn was motivated by the words found in the *Song of Solomon*: "I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens" (Song of Songs 2:1-2).

⁸⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 205-212.

These lyrics define Davis' spirituality. For Davis, Christ is his joy, peace, light, life, hope and gain; the God of his salvation. Jesus outshines the stars and heavens, allowing one the chance to gaze on Him in his fullness to express a profound love. For Davis, Jesus is the "rose of Sharon." His text and melody are reproduced below.

Figure 4: 'Sharon.'

Thou art my joy, Lord Jesus, for the Father joys in thee.
Thou art my peace Lord Jesus; thou didst give thyself for me.

Ere the closing race be run,
Ere the crown of life be one.
Thou art my peace,
Thou art my shield from condemnation.
Thou art the rock of my salvation.

Thou art my light, Lord Jesus, and I love to gaze on thee.
Thou art my life, Lord Jesus; thou art throned on high for me.

Tho' the lesser lights may pale,
Tho' my heart and flesh may fail,
Thou art my life,
Thou art the sun of God's creation,
Thou art my light and my salvation.

Thou art my hope, Lord Jesus. I am waiting here for thee.
Thou art my gain, Lord Jesus. Thou art all in all to me.

Thou art my joy and food and might,
Thou art peace and life and light,
Thou art hope; Thou art my Lord, my adoration,
Thou art the God of my salvation.

Figure 5: The notation of 'Sharon.'

Sharon Bishop Charles Henry Davis, OSB - c. 1850

♩ = 88

The musical score for 'Sharon' is presented in three systems. The first system begins with a treble clef and a bass clef, indicating a piano accompaniment. The key signature is G-flat major (three flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 88. The second system starts with a measure number '7' above the treble clef. The third system starts with a measure number '13' above the treble clef. The music features a series of diatonic primary and secondary chords, ending with a three-bar phrase.

A musical analysis of 'Sharon'

Davis' 'Sharon' is written in the key of Ab in a loose verse and chorus style. It comprises a series of diatonic primary and secondary chords, finishing with a three bar

coda. The lyrics of each verse and chorus are different. The piece is generally homophonic with a minimum use of polyphonic writing.⁸⁵ Each verse is eight bars long (bars one to eight), followed by a chorus of seven bars (bars nine to fifteen) together with an anacrusis and concluding with the three bar coda (bars sixteen to eighteen).⁸⁶

Whilst the harmonic structure of 'Sharon' is conventional in its tonality, the hymn uses *dynamic* harmony rather than a more prolonged *static* harmonic structure.⁸⁷ The composition makes use of tonic – dominant harmonies, as well as subdominant, supertonic and submediant chords to support the melody.⁸⁸

On one occasion, the mediant chord is used in bar nine. Whilst the mediant chord is the least used of the seven standard diatonic chords, especially in the major key, Davis has chosen to use the following progression: V - iii – vi–V/V.⁸⁹ By choosing these chord progressions, voice-leading errors have occurred on beats one and two: consecutive octaves (Eb to Eb and C to C) and again on beats three and four (A to A and Bb to Bb).

On the fourth beat of bar nine, Davis preceded beat one of bar ten [an Eb chord], with a Bb chord [with the use of the D natural]. Here Davis has given a sense of harmonic movement by introducing this non-diatonic chord: Bb [D natural], rather than

⁸⁵ Homophonic writing is when a piece of music has a very clear melody with chords supporting it. Sometimes the chords move at the same rhythm as the melody. Polyphonic writing consists of two or more simultaneous lines of independent melody.

⁸⁶ An anacrusis is the note or sequence of notes which precedes the first downbeat in a bar. A Coda is used to designate a passage that brings a piece to an end and may be as simple as a few measures, or as complex as an entire section.

⁸⁷ The function of dynamic harmony provides a sense of moving forward which allows the ear to follow the phrase syntax. Dynamic harmony comprises a succession of strong chord progressions. The simplest form of static harmony is the sustained tonic chord elaborated by arpeggios, passing notes and auxiliary notes, whilst no new chords are introduced.

⁸⁸ Each note of a scale has a special name, called a scale degree. The first (and last note) is called the tonic; the second is called the supertonic; the third is called the mediant; the fourth is called the subdominant; the fifth is called the dominant; the sixth is called the sub-mediante; the seventh is called the leading note.

⁸⁹ Diatonic chords involve only notes proper to the prevailing key without chromatic alteration.

the anticipated Bb minor [Db] chord. In this case, the Bb chord has become a secondary dominant chord.⁹⁰ The Eb chord (beat one of bar ten) temporarily becomes the tonic and the previous Bb chord [beat four of bar nine] becomes its dominant. This results in a temporary tonality of Eb. Because the D natural does not continue after bar nine, the tonality returns to the original key of Ab major.

Intermittently, Davis uses the cadential 6/4 featured in the following progression: I 6/4 V I (bars seven to eight, and fourteen to fifteen); a typical early nineteenth century compositional technique. Another compositional device which appears in this tune is the use of the suspension.⁹¹ Davis employs the use of a double suspension in bar four and eight, creating a temporary tension resolving stepwise to the tonic Ab in both cases. He uses a single suspension in bar seven, but it does not have the same intensity created by the previous double suspensions.

There is nothing unusual or exceptional in the use of these chord progressions. The simple melody and accompaniment aimed to merely support the more significant feature of this composition: the words. Davis' music more or less complemented the lyrics in a way that allowed his spirituality to emerge without being clouded by an overpowering accompaniment. The following is a chord analysis of *Sharon* demonstrating the previous discussion.⁹²

⁹⁰ A secondary dominant chord is a harmonic device that serves as an artificial dominant, (or borrowed dominant chord).

⁹¹ A suspension is a means of creating tension by prolonging a consonant note while the underlying harmony changes, normally on a strong beat. The resulting dissonance persists until the suspended note resolves by stepwise motion into a new consonant harmony.

⁹² In this analysis upper-case Roman numerals are used to indicate major triads, whilst lower-case Roman numerals have been used to indicate minor triads.

Figure 6: The chord progressions of 'Sharon.'

I / / / /	V / / / /	IV / V /	sus / I /
I / V _{6/3} /	IV _{6/3} / / IV	1 _{6/4} / V7sus4 V7	sus / I /
V iii vi _{6/3} V/V	V / IV _{6/3} /	1 _{6/4} vi ii _{6/3} V	I / I _{6/3} /
IV / ii _{6/3} /	V I _{6/3} I _{6/4} V7	I / / / /	I / V /
V7 _{6/3} I V7 /	I / / / /		

The second composition to be examined is 'O Salutaris Hostia.' The words were written by St. Thomas Aquinas and are used as a Benediction hymn which has become one of the most famous chants in existence.⁹³ Davis wrote a melody to the words and harmonised it. He most likely performed it during Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration, and Eucharistic processions; probably at Subiaco convent. Like 'Sharon,' 'O Salutaris Hostia' was composed around 1850 and is in the possession of the Benedictine Sisters.

O Salutaris Hostia is sixteen bars in length and is in binary form. The first section (bars one to eight) begins in the tonic key (G Major) and ends in the tonic (D Major). The second section (bars nine to sixteen) begins in the dominant key (D Major) and modulates to the tonic (G Major). Like 'Sharon,' the harmonic progressions are conventional. 'O Salutaris Hostia' makes use of dynamic harmony. Occasionally Davis employs supertonic and submediant chords to support the melodic line. Most of the chords are written in root position, however, some of the tonic, dominant and

⁹³ http://www.chantcd.com/lyrics/o_saving_victim.htm, [accessed on 7/8/2011].

supertonic chords are written as first inversions (5/3). The cadential 6/4 is used in bars seven, twelve and fifteen. The chord progression found in the opening two bars (I V_{6/4} I, IV V I) is repeated in bars five and six and again in bars thirteen and fourteen, except for a slight modification in the use of chords. The 'V' chord in bar six, for example, has been altered to a diminished chord: D# diminished. The root note (D#) provides a temporary dissonance resolving upwards to the root note of the submediant chord: VI (E minor). In the fourteenth bar, Davis uses the half-diminished chord which resolves to the submediant chord on the third beat of the bar. The melody found in bars one to two, five to six and thirteen to fourteen are the same. Below are the words of *O Salutaris Hostia* and a chart indicating the various chord progressions discussed above using conventional Roman numerals.⁹⁴

Figure 7: 'O Salutaris Hostia.'

O Salutaris Hostia
Quae caeli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.

Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.
Amen

⁹⁴ In this analysis upper-case Roman numerals are used to indicate major triads, whilst lower-case Roman numerals have been used to indicate minor triads.

Figures 8 & 9: Chord progressions and melody of 'O Salutaris Hostia.'

I	V7 _{6/3}	I	IV	V	I	V	I	I _{6/3}	V	/	/
I	V7 _{6/3}	I	IV	V7 [#] _{dim}	vi	ii _{6/3}	I _{6/4}	V7	I	/	/
V	V	V _{6/3}	I	/	/	IV	ii	ii _{6/3}	I _{6/4}	V	/
I	V7 _{6/3}	I	IV	VII _∅	vi	ii _{6/3}	I _{6/4}	V7	I	/	/

O. Salutaris

Bishop Charles Henry Davis, OSB

♩ = 96

7

12

Conclusion

One feature of Davis' musicality that stood out amongst all available primary and secondary literature was his exceptional ability to improvise. Two important performance genres (Approved and Anonymous) played a significant role in his musical life at Downside Abbey and St. Mary's Cathedral. This is evident in Davis' love of brass bands, composition and arranging, improvisation, playing the church organ, and position as choral master.

Following Davis' appointment as Musical Director of St. Mary's, he reformed the choir by sacking the "professional" singers in favour of a new group comprising monks and boy postulants. Rehearsals were rigorous, yet Davis was able to retrain the choir and eventually present challenging compositions by the "great masters" and a solemn high Mass each week.

The organ in St. Mary's empowered Davis to channel his own moments of prayer into the public arena of Cathedral worship by improvising countless sections of standard organ repertoire. His own compositions and arrangements, as well as extemporising sections of the liturgy enriched periods of prayer and reflection. Davis had the musical virtuosity and spur-of-the-moment ability to depart from the written score and reinterpret the music in a way that remained sacred and prayerful, yet fresh and alive.

Davis was a prolific composer and arranger. His work encompassed the brass and military band genre, and sacred choir and organ music. Two extant tunes of Davis were examined and despite being written in a pleasant style, the pieces are arguably not outstanding compositions. These comments are not meant to detract in any way from Davis' compositional ability, principally given the enormous output in his writing and

the consistent remarks by his peers regarding his exceptional ability to compose and arrange music. Perhaps if there was greater access to more of his compositions, a more informed scrutiny of his compositional style and technique could be made.

Besides his commitment to sacred music, Davis had numerous pastoral obligations such as his chaplaincy of the Benedictine Sisters at 'Subiaco' convent, Rydalmere, New South Wales. The following chapter will explore this appointment.

Chapter 3

Charles Davis: Education at Downside

This chapter will examine Davis' education at St. Gregory's, his priestly formation and ordination, his later Episcopal ordination at Downside Abbey, followed by his subsequent voyage to Australia in 1848.

Since scant archival information exists relating to Davis' education at St. Gregory's, much of what is presented is based on source material by Henry Norbert Birt and Hubert Van Zeller. William Ullathorne's autobiographical details provided useful perspectives on the schooling and priestly formation Davis almost certainly received, since life at Downside hardly altered between 1820 and 1850.¹ Other sources, such as extant documents and letters forwarded between Downside Abbey and the early Australian Church, as well as articles from *Tjurunga* and the *Downside Review*, assisted in providing a deeper understanding of the education process at St. Gregory's during the early nineteenth century. Finally, as already noted, Benedictine historian, Br. Terence Kavenagh made available invaluable primary and secondary sources.

Part 1: The establishment of Downside Abbey and Davis' education.

Downside Abbey

The English Benedictine Congregation (EBC) moved from Douay following attacks on Catholics and religious institutions in Revolutionary France. Once in England the

¹ Hubert Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, (London: Sheed & Ward, 1953), 40. See Appendices No. 14 for a photograph of William Ullathorne.

monks were given a provisional home at the residence of Sir Edward Smythe in Acton Burnell.² After Smythe died on 18 April 1811, the Benedictines had to leave the property because it was required for Smythe's family and "recently bereaved dowager."³ Various properties were considered and Downside was eventually purchased in 1813 for the sum of £7338:

[The monks] found themselves once more at home, so to say, in a village which owned for patron one of the holiest monks of Arras, St. Vigor, Bishop of Bayeux...for surely it was the hand of Providence, all unknown to themselves, that guided our fathers' wandering steps to one of the few spots in England connected with their old patron: not without a purpose are such things done.⁴

When the monks arrived at Downside on 29 April 1814, they discovered there was no furniture. The weather was bitterly cold and there was little supply of fuel to warm the house. Cardinal Gasquet underscored some of the hardships they endured in the early days:

Dom Levaux, their temporary superior, was a strict disciplinarian and did not recognize in these circumstances any reason to depart from the usual routine of monastic duties. Office was recited under great difficulties, and Dr. Brown used to speak of the embarrassment they experienced when they were told to study, as no books had arrived and they had no tables to sit at.⁵

The property was built as a farmhouse for men of yeoman rank and occupation, rather than a residence for "families of leisure."⁶ It was surrounded by out-houses, stables, a coach-house, a barn and nearby coalmines. Connected to the house was an older building which became 'Downside College.' The original building was described as a "veritable apotheosis," relegated to "the slums behind the Manor

² B. Turner, "The Story of the Abbey Land," *Ampleforth Journal* 46, 1 (1941): 1, 89; also 47, 1 (1942): 21, 170; and 48, 2 (1943): 65, 5.

³ Henry Norbert Birt, *Downside: The history of St. Gregory's school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1902), 150.

⁴ Birt, *Downside*, 152.

⁵ Letter from Cardinal Gasquet, quoted in Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 29. See No. 15 of Appendices for a photograph of Thomas Joseph Brown.

⁶ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 30.

house.”⁷ Some of the rooms on the top floor were converted to dormitories for the students, housekeeper and a French priest who taught theology at the College. The largest room became the refectory, study room and dayroom.⁸

Downside opened with only twelve boys. By 1818, there were twenty-four students and overcrowding became a serious issue. The monks lived in the ‘House’ adjoining the College which served as a monastery and church. Brother Placid Morris wrote: “Downside does not at all please me. We are sadly off for room. I sleep in the calefactory...”⁹ Similarly, Prior Lawson stated: “It is impossible to go on in the manner we are here as a religious community, and I am disgusted with the house, in which proper discipline cannot be carried on as it ought.”¹⁰ The following month, he added:

Our number increases...and I expect...we shall be completely crammed. I say crammed because there are so many in a room together, which appears not very comfortable, as the rooms are bad and inconvenient.¹¹

In an attempt to accommodate the growing numbers, extensions were made, as well as the construction of a new chapel. Following the completion of the school buildings in 1822, Dom Barber wrote:

There is no chance of the chapel being opened before July...[but]...the upper Dormitory, a capital room, is now completed; the cells also, with the exception of the windows, which will be in this week; the study-room nearly ready; the class-rooms may be soon so. The chapel is beautifully proportioned, and the solemn tones of the organ will have full range for its delightful harmony...¹²

By 1823, the monks were beginning to re-establish the pattern of community life and education experienced earlier at Douay. In 1823, there were eleven students enrolled at St. Gregory’s and by 1826 - the year Davis began his studies - student

⁷ T.B.S. “At the Dawn,” *Downside Review*, July 1901, 119.

⁸ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 30-31.

⁹ Morris to Lorymer (n.d.) reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 159.

¹⁰ Lawson to Lorymer, 28/7/1815, reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 160.

¹¹ Lawson to Lorymer, August 1815, reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 160.

¹² Barber to Jenkins, 25/2/1822, reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 184.

numbers increased to thirty-four. By September 1827, the then Novice Master, John Bede Polding wrote that St. Gregory's "shall be nearly as full as we can be with our present accommodations."¹³ He estimated the number of students would soon reach fifty; the maximum being about sixty, since "a larger school would be uncomfortable."¹⁴ To deal with growing student numbers, a third dormitory was being arranged.¹⁵ In the same year, Ampleforth had about eighty students; many whom were "procured thro the instrumentality of the Missionaries"; a system not adopted by Downside.¹⁶

Figure 1 reveals 109 boys were enrolled as students at St. Gregory's and there was an average of thirty-nine boys each year completing their education whilst Davis studied there (1826 – 1833). The names of students ordained priest have been included. It is interesting to observe that of the 109 boys, only seven were ordained priest.

¹³ Polding to S. M. Phillips, OSB, 7/9/1827, A A 216/25.

¹⁴ Polding to S. M. Phillips, OSB, 7/9/1827, A A 216/25.

¹⁵ Polding to S. M. Phillips, OSB, 7/9/1827, A A 216/25.

¹⁶ Polding to S. M. Phillips, OSB, 7/9/1827, A A 216/25.

Figure 1: Student enrolment at St, Gregory's, Downside (1826-33)

Student No.	Year	No. who came that year	No. who left the same year	Students who became a priest	Name of students ordained priest	Total at school
178-192	1826	15	0	2	Charles Davis James Duck	34
193-207	1827	15	2	2	Edward Paillett Thomas Bonney	36
208-217	1828	10	0	0		35
218-238	1829	21	1	2	Thomas Smith Robert Barnewall	39
239-262	1830	24	7	3	Joseph Tidmarsh Henry Gregory Nicholas Hodgson	56
263-269	1831	7	0	0		43
270-277	1832	8	0	0		34
278-286	1833	9	0	0		35

Records indicate few students left St. Gregory's in the same year they began, except in 1830. It is also interesting to observe the sudden drop in enrolments after

1830: 1829 (21) and 1830 (24), then 1831 (7), 1832 (8) and 1833 (9). Birt hints at reasons for this sudden drop. The first likely cause was the building program. It was still in progress in 1830:

The playroom was not finished, and one dormitory was not fitted up for a year or more; nor had the brew-house...and laundry been commenced...Fireplaces were scarce...In the winter the cold in the dormitory was sometimes painfully severe; and in the summer the atmosphere was often stuffy and unpleasant from the inadequate ventilation. A bath was an unknown luxury, and the lavatory and other sanitary arrangements were of the primitive type...¹⁷

The second likely cause for the decrease in student enrolments was “the attractions displayed by Dr. Baines [from Ampleforth Abbey] in his rival prospectus” at Prior Park in Bath.¹⁸

A third possibility developed from a dispute between Baines and the EBC at Downside. This disagreement will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter; suffice to say that following its resolve in 1830, Dom Bernard Barber resigned as the Prior as a result of the controversy after serving the community for twelve years.

Davis' education at St. Gregory's

Davis began at St. Gregory's on 15 August 1826 at the age of eleven and completed his education in 1833.¹⁹ A year after Davis arrived at St. Gregory's, Polding, the Subprior and Novice Master wrote, “Downside is going on remarkably well.” He also stressed there were no “complaints & every application made by Parents is prefaced by many complimentary expressions.”²⁰

¹⁷ Birt, *Downside*, 206-207.

¹⁸ Birt, *Downside*, 207. Also see David Lunn, “The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,” *Tjurunga*, no. 8 (1974): 27.

¹⁹ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's: Douay 1614-1793, Acton Burnell 1794-1814, Downside 1814-1972*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1972), 34; see Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 133.

²⁰ Polding to S. M. Phillips, OSB, 7/9/1827, A A 216/25.

Despite the satisfaction expressed by Polding and parents of the students, school life at St. Gregory's was hectic and demanding. No doubt Davis would have found the timetable challenging; particularly at his age. An average day comprised about nine hours of learning with five hours for recreation and meals. On Sunday's and Thursday's the boys were allowed an extra hour of sleep and on Tuesday's and Thursday's they were given a "half-holiday."²¹ The chart below is a model of a typical school day at St. Gregory's.²² It appears the term "Study" was a generic term covering all subjects.

Figure 2: Timetable at St. Gregory's, Downside

5.20 am	Rise
6 am	Study
8.30 am	Breakfast
9 am	Mass
9.30 am	Study
10 am	Recreation
10.30 am	Study
1 pm	Dinner and Recreation
3 pm	Study
4.30 pm	Recreation
5 pm	Study
7 pm	Supper, visit to the Chapel, recreation
8.30 pm	Night prayers and bed

The students' diet was "plain and substantial," consisting of as much bread as they wanted. At breakfast and supper, bread and milk were served, "except upon the first Thursday of each month...when [they] were allowed a pat of butter each at breakfast."

²¹ Birt, *Downside*, 210.

²² Birt, *Downside*, 210.

For dinner, they had meat soup; oiled or roasted meat and sometimes pudding or pie. They were also allowed to drink beer, which was described as never being “too heady.”²³

Not every student was enrolled for a full six years of schooling. Davis’ older brother Michael spent only twenty-three months at St. Gregory’s. Charles Davis’ education was more systematic, covering all the subjects on offer. His eldest brother Richard Davis was over seventeen years of age when he arrived at the school, spending only twelve months there. Most of Richard Davis’ education presumably occurred elsewhere, probably in Usk. Like William Ullathorne who was only at St. Gregory’s for about fourteen months, Richard Davis’ experience of St. Gregory’s became more of a cursory preparation for the novitiate. Charles Davis was the first from his family to receive a complete secondary education at St. Gregory’s. Moreover, Charles was regarded as a student of distinction.²⁴

Education at Downside was predominantly classical.²⁵ Sources such as Ullathorne’s autobiography and Birt’s treatise on the history of Downside provide insight into the curriculum. A pre-1818 Prospectus indicated English, French, Latin, and Greek, History (Ancient and Modern), Geography, Mathematics, and Theology. The latter was “particularly attended to, and all its duties assiduously explained and enforced.”²⁶ In 1848, William Ullathorne remembered:

The languages taught – I say actually *taught* – were Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and English...The principal classics were studied downright...A course of ancient and modern geography was given with care...History was a favourite study in the college...There was a separate course of ancient, Roman, modern, and Church history...After our arithmetic was

²³ Birt, *Downside*, 211.

²⁴ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 134.

²⁵ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 46.

²⁶ Birt, *Downside*, 207-208.

completed, we followed up our mathematics into conic sections, and acquired the elements of algebra.²⁷

Presumably, Davis studied these subjects at St. Gregory's. When comparing the pre-1818 Prospectus with the list of subjects recalled by Ullathorne, there are few variations in the curriculum, except Italian was introduced sometime after 1818. Davis read (and perhaps spoke) French fluently, as his collection of books included twenty-five French books on topics including history, sermons, philosophy, spirituality, theology.²⁸

The system of philosophy studied at Downside was scholastic, with a special focus on English philosophers such as Hobbes and Berkeley.²⁹ Given Ullathorne listed a variety of reference books, it is likely Davis read them too. Publications such as *Think Well O'nt* (1728) and *The Wonders of God in the Wilderness: Lives of the Fathers of the Deserts* (1755) by Challoner,³⁰ Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, Dom Lorenzo Scupoli's ascetic theological discourse *The Spiritual Combat*³¹ and Gobinet's *Instruction of Youth* were books studied by Ullathorne.³² Other books such as Goldsmith's *English and Roman Histories*, Reeve's *Church History* and Rollin's *Ancient* and Hooke's *Roman*

²⁷ Part of Ullathorne's letter to the 9/12/1848 edition of the *Tablet* reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 208-209.

²⁸ Please refer to the Appendices for a full list of Davis' book collection.

²⁹ David Lunn, "The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century," *Tjurunga*, 8 (1974): 28.

³⁰ William Bernard Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop: the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, (London: Burns Oates, 1941), 31. It is more than likely Davis reflected on other spiritual books written by Challoner, since Challoner was one of the most important figures of English Catholicism during the greater part of the eighteenth century. He published *Britannia Sancta* (1745), the *Douay Bible* (c. 1728), the *Reims New Testament* (1738), the *British Martyrology* (1761) as well as many other books. *Britannia Sancta* details the lives of British, English, Scottish, and Irish saints; see <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03564a.htm>, [accessed on 13/6/2009]; <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05140a.htm>, [accessed on 13/6/2009]; However, Davis' collection only had one book by Challoner: *Memoirs of missionary priests and other Catholics of both sexes that have suffered death in England on religious accounts from the year 1577 to 1684*, (Derby, England: Thomas Richardson, 1844).

³¹ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 32; see *The Spiritual Combat*, see <http://www.catholictradition.org/Classics/combat.htm#PREFACE>, [accessed on 13/6/2009].

³² William Bernard Ullathorne, *The Devil is a Jackass*, (Herefordshire: Gracewing Publishing, 1995), 37.

History almost certainly became mandated reading too.³³ Moral theology was taught using the works of St. Alphonsus and Charles-Rene Billuart. Davis studied the writings of St. Alphonsus and was attracted to his spirituality since he brought some of his books from England to Australia. Jansenist textbooks were studied and church history was taught from the Gallican perspective.³⁴

Whilst neither the Prospectus nor Ullathorne included music or rhetoric as common areas of study, these subjects were a significant part of the curriculum. Proficiency in music was one of Davis' achievements at Downside and Sydney. In a later chapter, his musical skills as a choirmaster, organist, composer and improviser will be examined. In relation to the significance of music as a serious study at Downside, Birt wrote:

A minor feature of similar nature to the above representations may be pointed out in the monthly exhibitions of recitations and music. These serve a double purpose. They ensure the careful study of music, for any boy may be selected to perform before masters and the rest of the school; and the recitations enable the authorities to discover latent talent available for the Downside stage.³⁵

Drama

At St. Gregory's the "principal classics" were taught, together with the works of the Roman poets Horace and Juvenal, the historian Livy, and playwright Terence. English composition, elocution and the plays of Shakespeare were studied too. Ullathorne wrote: "one of Shakespeare's best plays was well studied and brought out yearly, so

³³ Ullathorne, *The Devil is a Jackass*, 39.

³⁴ Lunn, "The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century," 28. Gallicanism was a movement among French Roman Catholic clergy that favoured the restriction of papal control in administrative matters and greater autonomy for the French church.

³⁵ Birt, *Downside*, 274.

that in the duration of the course five or six of the great poet's productions were thoroughly comprehended."³⁶

The performance of dramatic plays at "The Theatre Royal, Downside" was considered a "real and solid adjunct to education"³⁷ and Davis was one who helped form a "histrionic tradition" in drama at Downside.³⁸ He was described as an orator in "the highest of terms" who received "training in elocution from one of the leading English tragedians" and worked as the stage-manager of the Christmas plays.³⁹

Davis was described in the *Downside Review* as a "born actor." It was also claimed no one had "ever surpassed him in thorough appreciation and delineation of Shakespeare's characters."⁴⁰ Davis had an immense passion for Shakespeare and was outstanding in the interpretation of his various roles. Van Zeller, nonetheless, pondered Davis' obsession with Shakespeare writing: "that Shakespeare, ungarnished Shakespeare, and nothing other than Shakespeare might sit heavy upon the Downside mind."⁴¹

To encourage the love of drama at St. Gregory's and cater for all tastes at the Christmas celebrations, Davis introduced the practice of following the main act with a farce; a type of comedy that employed highly exaggerated characters, reinterpreting them into unlikely and absurd situations.⁴² Davis' introduction of comedy into stilted and overformal performances provides a glance into his apparent 'down-to-earth'

³⁶ Birt, *Downside*, 209. The performance of Shakespearean plays dominated much of the nineteenth century at Downside, followed by a series of Gilbert and Sullivan productions in the 1890s. See Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 204. Please refer to the Appendices No. 11 for a list of annual plays and operas performed at St. Gregory's from 1823. Shakespearean plays lead the list. Refer to Birt, *Downside*, 273-274.

³⁷ Birt, *Downside*, 268.

³⁸ Birt, *Downside*, 273.

³⁹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 135.

⁴⁰ "Memories II," *Downside Review*, Volume VI, (January 1887): 30-33.

⁴¹ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 206. See the Appendices No. 16 for a list of Shakespearean plays and Operas performed at Downside Abbey.

⁴² Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 206. In relation to farces, comedies and minstrel entertainments see Birt, *Downside*, 274.

character. He was described as one who “was quite unsurpassed in comic parts,” and those who heard his renditions of Falstaff, Pistol, Bardolph and Fluellen found it difficult to forget the excellence of his performances.⁴³ Davis brought to the Downside stage:

The rich yet delicate appreciation of every shade of humour, and the manner in which, by inflection of voice and play of feature, [Davis] made every word tell. He infused much of his spirit into his pupils; and having seen many Falstaff's on the stage, I hold that, although fairly good, the best of them were as inferior to our Downside ones, Charles Davis' pupils, as they, his pupils, were to their master...⁴⁴

In addition to the performance of classic plays, an eclectic mix of items was also presented, including instrumental solos and duets, singing, sword demonstrations and monodies. The following items were performed at the close of the 1829 school year.⁴⁵

Figure 3: A list of performances at St. Gregory's, c. 1829.

Chorus
Dolce Concerto Duet – J. Espinet and T. Cologan
Waterloo (Byron – E. Athy
Flute solo – T. Tudor
Duet Flutes – Wm. Coppinger and N. Cope
Latin Oration – J. Carne
Sword Exercise – First Class
Flute Solo – T. Walsh
Pretty Page Duet – C. Bodenham and C. Davis
Dancing
Greek Oration – E. Eccles
Flute Solo – E. Smythe
Sword Exercise – Second Class
Monody on Sheridan – N. Paillet
Song – C. Davis
Address to Greece composed by E. Athy
Flute Fantasia by Tulsa – N. Espinet
Piano – J. Lambert
Dulce Domum

⁴³ “Memories II,” 30-33.

⁴⁴ “Memories II,” 30-33.

⁴⁵ “At the Dawn,” 140.

In the first half of the program, Davis performed a “Pretty Page Duet” with fellow student Charles de la Barre Bodenham.⁴⁶ The title of the double act points towards a satirical characterisation of a Page Boy. Again, we have another glimpse into the comical wit of Davis. One wonders how far Davis and Bodenham extended the comedy around the inspiration of a “Pretty Page Duet.”

In the second half, Davis was featured as a soloist singing a “Song.” Unfortunately, there are no details regarding what he sang. Dom Anselm Barnewall,⁴⁷ a slightly younger contemporary of Davis, described him as an average tenor who “rapidly improved in singing, making much of what I thought an agreeable but far from first-class voice.”⁴⁸ Sir John Lambert⁴⁹ wrote he and his “dear old friend Charles Davis,” were treble and contralto in the choir at Downside, describing Davis’ voice as one that was “charming.”⁵⁰

There are two items listed on the program demonstrating exhibitions of fencing: “Sword Exercise – First Class and Sword Exercise – Second Class.” Davis probably featured in one of the demonstrations since he was described as “a most expert fencer”;⁵¹ although on one occasion he received a head wound during a fencing scene in Richard III:

In the great fight he and the one taking the part of the King handled their swords with so much skill, that Colonel Vaughan (father of Cardinal Vaughan) became so excited by the prowess of the combatants, that he

⁴⁶ According to the *List of boys at St Gregory's*, Charles Bodenham [211] entered St. Gregory's in April 1828 and left in March 1830.

⁴⁷ According to the *List of boys at St Gregory's*, Robert Barnewall (Dom Anselm) [226], came to St. Gregory's in August 1829 at the age of 8 years (born 22 February 1821) and completed his education in 1838.

⁴⁸ W. Barnewall, “Music and Musicians at St. Gregory's,” *The Downside Review*, VII (July 1888), 88.

⁴⁹ According to the *List of boys at St Gregory's*, John Lambert [142] began his education at St. Gregory's in October 1823 (seven months after Richard Davis) and left in January 1831. Lambert recalls that Charles Davis “extracted a promise from me that I would preside at the organ when he sang his first Mass, and how, when I had complied with that promise, I volunteered to perform a similar office when he was consecrated Bishop, little dreaming at the time that my second pledge would ever have to be redeemed.” See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 214-215. Interestingly, Lambert is performing a piano solo in the same program as Davis.

⁵⁰ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 214.

⁵¹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 207.

forgot they were acting, and cried out from his place among the spectators: 'Give it to him, Charlie.' But poor Charlie came off worst in the fight. His antagonist merely acted the part of the slain, but poor little Charlie received a dangerous cut on his forehead – his beautifully broad forehead – the scar from which he carried to his grave.⁵²

Choosing a "King"

One of the long traditions of St. Gregory's was the election of a "King." This began on the first Tuesday in Advent until the Feast of the Epiphany. Three candidates were selected and their peers elected a "King." Nominees had to meet certain requirements. The first applicant was the most proficient in his studies. The second was the longest in residence. The third was a combination of the previous two qualifications.⁵³ Davis was elected "King of St. Gregory's" in 1832 and was crowned "King Charles I."⁵⁴

Davis' palace was decorated on Christmas Eve by the students, after which Davis was crowned "King" on Boxing Day. His "coronation" occurred "at the hands of the prior in the presence of the audience; and then from the throne the king returned thanks for the honour conferred upon him."⁵⁵ A day or two later, a banquet was held in the refectory where Davis and his officers dressed in their robes and visitors appeared in evening dress. Birt wrote: "All threw themselves heart and soul into the spirit of the time, and treated the monarch with all deference and respect, so that for the time-being he felt himself every inch a king."⁵⁶

During the Christmas holidays the students performed the "Little Play" and a banquet called the "King's Feast." Davis organised and supervised the performances in his court. The final night of his reign occurred on the Epiphany and the students and teaching staff of St. Gregory's were invited:

⁵² Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 207. Also refer to *Austral Light*, 1/2/1902, 135.

⁵³ Birt, *Downside*, 256-257.

⁵⁴ Birt, *Downside*, 264.

⁵⁵ Birt, *Downside*, 258.

⁵⁶ Birt, *Downside*, 259.

At a given signal the games ceased, the company rose and sang 'God save the King,' and then, without any further speeches or ceremonies, the boy-king vacated the throne and returned to his former position in the school.⁵⁷

This celebration emerged from an attempt to relieve the anxiety of homesickness which almost certainly would have affected many of the boys during the Christmas holiday period. The performance of plays, various other games including cards, the grand banquets, as well as the enthusiastic speeches, ceremonies and singing, indicate what the celebrations in the "Court of St. Gregory's" would have been like under the reign of "King Charles Davis I." These celebrations may seem self-indulgent, or even to some extent, asinine, however, for the students, they were regarded as an extremely legitimate and solemn tradition which lasted for over a century. Birt wrote: "For the time being the king was regarded by all, and really was, the most prominent personage at Downside."⁵⁸ What was the intention behind dedicating so many weeks towards this tradition? Perhaps it was a counter to the quite demanding schedule for the boys and in keeping with the English tradition of merry making at Christmas tide.

The Teachers of St. Gregory's

The curriculum during Davis' time was taught by the nine or ten monks who staffed St. Gregory's; all less than thirty years of age who had "almost without exception passed through the school."⁵⁹ The community itself seldom numbered more than fifteen professed monks, again, mostly under the age of thirty years.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Birt, *Downside*, 263.

⁵⁸ Birt, *Downside*, 260.

⁵⁹ David Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, (Cambridge, 1964), 241.

⁶⁰ Lunn, *The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century*, 26.

EBC membership between 1822 and 1850 are revealing. Figure 4 reveals an average staff of about fourteen priests (and clerics) at Downside during Davis' years.⁶¹ Given student numbers were about sixty by 1830, student-teacher ratio was about 4:1. Students probably received individual instruction from their teachers.

Figure 4: EBC membership (1826 – 1850)⁶²

General Chapter	Date	Priests in Congregation	Clerics in Congregation	Priests St. Gregory's	Clerics St. Gregory's	Lay Brothers St. Gregory's	Total - St. Gregory's
52	1826	75	23	3	11	0	14
53	1830	72	19	5	7	0	12
54	1834	79	20	8	6	0	14
55	1838	81	25	5	6	0	11
56	1842	89	30	0	11	0	11
57	1846	96	29	6	12	1	19
58	1850	101	25	7	9	0	16

⁶¹ Downside Archives, "Congregation History" folder. The author gratefully acknowledges Br. Terry Kavenagh OSB for supplying these details.

⁶² The EBC 'clerics' included more than just the deacons. It consisted of all the novices who had completed their novitiate and taken vows - students of philosophy, theology, subdeacons etc. (other than the lay-brothers who were always a tiny group in the Congregation). Having received the tonsure (removal of a lock of hair) also marked the conferring of the clerical state - at least symbolically.

Two important considerations emerge regarding the competency of the teachers and how academically rigorous they may have been. Ullathorne conceded an “absence of worldly knowledge and experience” amongst his educators, but was nonetheless inspired by “their quiet dignity, their piety and their kindness.” He acknowledged the pastoral nature of the monks when he considered the “kindly relations that existed between [the boys] and their masters.”⁶³ Knowles was less charitable in his assessment, describing the monks’ teaching as “poor” and “by contemporary standards at Winchester or Shrewsbury the scholarship was rudimentary and the intellectual attainment contemptible.”⁶⁴ He argued it was only St. Gregory’s long traditions; its chain of distinguished students such as William Ullathorne, Roger and Herbert Vaughan and Francis Gasquet and a library well-built on patristic and church history gave St. Gregory’s the impression of a “culture and breeding of a peculiar cast but of very real power.”⁶⁵

Since the average age of monks at St. Gregory’s was less than thirty years and because there were only a dozen or so in the community at any one time during the 1820s – 1840s, one might begin to understand why the inconsistencies in academic rigor emerged. The governmental structures of the EBC during Davis’ time may have had some influence on the teaching standards at Downside. For instance, there was an uncertainty as to how long any of the monks would remain at Downside before being transferred to a parish or mission. This would have restricted one’s ability to develop a confident teaching practice. The systematic transfer of monks to various English

⁶³ Ullathorne, *The Devil is a Jackass*, 36.

⁶⁴ Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, 241.

⁶⁵ Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, 241.

missions must have placed great demands on the teaching staff who remained at Downside.⁶⁶

The Jurisdiction of the General Chapter of the EBC

The EBC held a General Chapter each four years and all administrative power was in the hands of this body; “oligarchic in structure and membership.”⁶⁷ David Lunn describes the “five Definitors and the President” elected by Chapter for the period of four years of his office, “held a position similar to that of the Doge of Venice.”⁶⁸ The power of the President was absolute and could transfer any monk from one monastery to another, or alternatively, from a monastery to a mission, or vice versa, without discretion or without appeal.⁶⁹ The English mission was divided into two provinces: Northern Missions and Southern Missions, each with its own provincial, Chapter and officials.⁷⁰ Usually the monk died on the mission or eventually returned to Downside to retire. The power of the president was deemed to be *omnium superiorum superior*.⁷¹

Dom Butler outlined the missionary nature of the EBC:

In the monasteries lived twelve or fifteen quite young men...the call came to most within a few years of ordination to go out of the monastery, and to pass from the jurisdiction of the prior to that of the provincial, and to spend their lives doing the work of the secular clergy on the mission and under conditions indistinguishable from those of other [sic] secular clergy; sometimes a quite old man came back to die in his monastery, but it was the exception: in most cases when a man went to the mission...he had finished for life with the externals of the monastic life...the exceptions were

⁶⁶ The term ‘English missions’ refers to the missioning by the EBC to the dispersed Catholic community in England. Many of the monks from Downside worked on the English missions, mainly in industrial areas such as Liverpool, Warrington, Whitehaven and South Wales. Many think of the missions as being directed to non-Christian countries. Of course, the EBC also travelled to far away mission lands such as Australia.

⁶⁷ Lunn, “The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,” 25

⁶⁸ Lunn, “The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,” 25. The Doge of Venice was an elected, chief-of-state lordship and the ruler of the republic in many of the Italian “crowned republics” during the medieval and renaissance periods. One of the best known republics was Venice where the Doge was elected for life by the city-state’s aristocracy.

⁶⁹ Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, 274.

⁷⁰ Lunn, “The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,” 25.

⁷¹ Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, 274.

so few to be negligible...In 1880 the priors of B[elmont] and D[ouai] were the only men of fifty in the whole Congregation who lived in the monastery uninterruptedly; and those of forty could be counted on the fingers of one hand.⁷²

Figure 5 shows the number of priests and clerics sent to different EBC missions from 1826-1850.

Figure 5: EBC priests and clerics sent to the missions.

General Chapter	Date	Missionaries - South	Missionaries - North	Total
52	1826	17	35	52
53	1830	15	35	51
54	1834	17	36	53
55	1838	0	35	35
56	1842	0	0	0
57	1846	20	45	65
58	1850	20	51	71

The previous extract by Butler points to the fact the EBC was first and foremost a Missionary Order and highlights the great contribution to the episcopate from a relatively small monastic community. Most monks taught at Downside for a few years before being assigned to a mission, and in most cases, never returned. Aidan Bellenger writes that in 1838 there were thirty Benedictine missions in England with fifty-five priests engaged in missionary work.⁷³ This number increased to 108 priests serving sixty-two missions by 1900. Between 1826 and 1850, a total of 326 monks were sent to the northern and the southern missions of England. Missionary work, therefore, remained the foremost occupation for the monks of the EBC, contributing in

⁷² Dom Butler cited in: Knowles, *The Historian and Character*, 275-276.

⁷³ Aidan Bellenger, "Revolution and Emancipation," from D. Rees, ed., *Monks of England. The Benedictine's in England from Augustine to the Present Day*, (London: SPCK, 1997), 209.

part to some of the challenges faced by Polding, particularly regarding the supply of monks for his Australian mission.

The likely teachers of Charles Davis

The following descriptions of probable teachers of Davis attempts to establish a context by contrasting their lifework and influence upon him.

Ralph Ephrem Pratt was the Prefect of Students from 1826-32 and presumably determined Davis' subject selection each year. Pratt was only twenty-four years old when he was placed in charge of the students and had not been ordained a deacon. Because of his youth, his administrative and pedagogical skills were most likely underdeveloped. After his ordination to priesthood in 1827, Pratt remained in charge of the school until he was sent to the Missions at the age of thirty, remaining there until returning to Downside in 1870. He died there in 1875.⁷⁴

Richard Francis Davis, the eldest brother of Charles Davis, was the Prefect of Students from September 1831 to 12 March 1834⁷⁵ and possibly taught or tutored his younger brother. Following his ordination, he spent four years at Downside before being assigned as a missionary to Coughton, Warwickshire on 12 March 1834 remaining there until his death on 15 May 1889;⁷⁶ another example of the destiny of a nineteenth century Downside monk.

⁷⁴ Henry Norbert Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, (United Kingdom: Gregg Publishing, 1970), 166

⁷⁵ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 182; also see *Fasti Gregoriani (Brief Notices) Respecting the members of St. Gregory the Great, of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, from the time of its re-establishment in England, A.D. 1793*, "Francis (alias Richard) Davis," 74.

⁷⁶ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 182.

It seems Richard Davis was not liked by his superiors. Polding was critical of his performance as Prefect of Students.⁷⁷ In a letter to Prior Brown in 1833 Polding discussed an incident concerning the dismissal of a certain staff member “Nolan” for bringing “the Masters into great contempt amongst the Boys” and habitually overindulging in “dram sipping.” He writes Nolan “made a mere tool of Mr. Davis, whom he used to distinguish by the name of soft Davis – who allowed the Boys to go into this man’s room whenever they asked.” In the same letter, Polding added:

Mr. Scott does not seem willing [?] to trust so many to Davis. It is a matter of indifference to me...Now Nolan has been dispatched, I trust a better spirit will spread amongst the Boys...We were indeed much deceived in him. He is the last sort I would ever take.⁷⁸

Future hostility between Richard Davis and Brown emerged over a number of personal matters concerning the Davis family. This antagonism will be discussed later in this chapter. Perhaps these aspects of Davis’ character might explain why he was not as successful in his ‘career’ compared to his two younger brothers, and why he was sent to one of the less busy missions for over 55 years. Whilst Davis was not popular with his superiors, the local parishioners held him in high regard, describing him as “a holy priest, a faithful man, a devoted pastor; dovelike in simplicity, abounding in charity, [and] full of gentleness.”⁷⁹

James Nicholas Kendal was born in 1806 and was educated at St. Gregory’s from 1818 to 1824. He was appointed Prefect of Students from 1834 to 1838. Even though

⁷⁷ If there was any animosity by Davis towards Polding, the ensuing years seems to have subdued any ill-feeling on the part of Davis. In 1874, Richard Davis, William Ullathorne, James Kendal and John Dowding all celebrating fifty years since entering the novitiate, wrote and co-signed a memorial of gratitude to Polding. The final paragraph summarised the essence of this letter: “That the good God who has guided your Grace for so many years, and through so many difficulties, may guide you for years yet to come, until you see your great work consolidated, and may bring you late with ripened fruit to the Divine Reward, is the earnest and affectionate prayer of your former novices and present jubilarians.” See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 384-388.

⁷⁸ Polding to Brown, OSB, 25/2/1833, DA I 16.

⁷⁹ *Fasti Gregoriani*, 74.

1834 was the year Charles Davis began his Novitiate, Kendal was somewhat of a 'fixture' at Downside and was one whom Davis would have known very well. It is possible Kendal taught Davis even if it was on a casual basis. In addition to being in charge of St. Gregory's for four years, Kendal was Parish Priest of the local parish church St. Benedict's, Stratton on the Fosse from 1838 to 1844, Subprior (1836-44) and Novice Master (1838-44). Kendal remained at Downside for twenty-six years before being sent on the Mission in the South Province until 1881. He retired to Downside and died in 1883.⁸⁰

Paulinus Heptonstall was born in 1798 and was educated at Acton Burnell but began his novitiate at Downside on 21 March 1815. He was ordained priest on 11 June 1827 and remained at Downside until 1831 before he was sent on the Mission in the Southern Province. Heptonstall was Polding's cousin and acted as his agent for many years. It is possible he taught Davis during the four years he resided at Downside. Heptonstall died in 1862.

Augustine Dowding was born in London in 1806 and was educated at St. Gregory's. He began his novitiate on 12 March 1824 (the same date as Richard Davis and William Ullathorne) and was ordained priest on 24 September 1831. Dowding remained at Downside until 1835 and was sent to the Mission in the Northern Province, remaining there until his death in 1877. Like Heptonstall, it is likely Dowding taught Davis.

⁸⁰ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, 177. The Kendal's were a prominent name in the history of St. Gregory's, beginning with Dom Peter Kendal (professed at Douai in 1779), James Kendal, Richard Gregory Kendal (Downside, 1859-1874, 1876-1878), and John Edmund Kendal (clothed at Downside in 1878; died 1951), see Terence Kavenagh, "Monk Voyager, Shipboard diary of Dom Gregory Kendal, November 1874-February 1875," *Tjurunga* 60, (2001): 69 – 72.

The Priors of Downside Abbey from 1818 – 1840

Since the Prior was the Superior of the monastery and the school, he influenced students' education and later their priestly formation. The Prior held "the place of Christ in the monastery"⁸¹ and was the spiritual parent of the students and the community. He was to be unpretentious; absorbed in God; a lover of those who found their studies difficult or their vocation challenging; one who actively sought to practice the Gospel; and a guiding light to the entire community. For those reasons, the actions of men such as Luke Bernard Barber and George Turner undoubtedly helped guide Davis in his vocation to become a priest.

Luke Bernard Barber was born in 1790 and was educated at Acton Burnell. In 1818 at the age of twenty-eight he became the Prior of St. Gregory's and held the office until 1830.⁸² He was described as a person "of a quiet and unobtrusive character"⁸³ and the one who saved "not only St. Gregory's school, but also the monastery, from extinction."⁸⁴ It was Barber who administered the construction of a suitable school at St. Gregory's. In a letter to Dom Jenkins, Barber described the progress of the new dormitory, cells, study-room, and classrooms and almost completed Chapel. He wrote:

We have, as you may easily guess...difficult cards to play in money matters. Had it not been for the 'godsend' by Mr. Naylor, the building must have been left incomplete. There is no chance of the chapel being opened before July, and of this I have my doubts, tho' Goodrich assures me that he will accomplish this job by that time. . . The upper Dormitory, a capital room, is now completed; the cells also, with the exception of the windows, which will be in this week; the study-room nearly ready; the class-rooms may be soon so. The chapel is beautifully proportioned, and the solemn tones of the organ will have full range for its delightful harmony, and above all the *Regem cui omnia vivunt* will have an awful effect and attract a crowded audience...⁸⁵

⁸¹ Timothy Fry, ed., *RB 1980: The Rule of Benedict, In Latin and English with Notes*, (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1981), 173.

⁸² Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 149.

⁸³ Birt, *Downside*, 180.

⁸⁴ Birt, *Downside*, 179.

⁸⁵ Barber to Jenkins, 25/2/1822 reproduced in Birt, *Downside*, 184.

In addition to the building programs, Barber “found himself hampered by the schemes floating in the brain of his restless neighbour” and “strongly resented what he looked upon as officious interference and unsolicited advice.”⁸⁶ The “schemes” and “officious interference” related to the serious disagreement that emerged from Bishop Peter Baines’ desire to secure Downside for his diocese.⁸⁷ Baines’ intention was to erect an Episcopal seminary there; arguing the monks of Downside had no real canonical status.⁸⁸

The first outcome of Baines’ proposal meant Downside would have closed as a school, accepting only prospective candidates for the priesthood. The second outcome would result in the monks coming under the direct authority of the Bishop and not the Prior. Barber and the Council rejected Baines’ proposal arguing it opposed Downside’s spirit and policy. A second proposal suggested the monks of St. Gregory’s exchange places with the monks of Ampleforth Abbey, since the latter Abbey accepted Baines’ plan. Baines argued that Downside’s “spirit and policy” would remain intact in Yorkshire, whilst Baines could continue with his plans of a developing Downside as a seminary. The monks of Downside maintained they had just opened their new buildings and did not want to leave and so rejected his proposal.⁸⁹

Baines continued efforts to secure Downside and took his case to Rome. Moreover, he withdrew the monks’ faculties. Since this withdrawal of faculties only affected the parish priest of Stratton on Fosse, Barber instructed his monks to continue administering the Sacraments within the confines of the abbey. The suspension of faculties was viewed adversely by Rome, and “tended to alienate sympathy from

⁸⁶ Birt, *Downside*, 195.

⁸⁷ Peter Augustine Baines (1786/87–1843) was an English Benedictine, Titular Bishop of Siga and Vicar Apostolic of the Western District of England.

⁸⁸ D. G. Dolan, “At the Dawn,” *Downside Review*, (July 1901): 126.

⁸⁹ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 36.

[Baines], even amongst his fellow vicars-apostolic.”⁹⁰ Rome felt he had taken his authority too far and instructed him to restore the monks’ full faculties. In 1830, Barber declined to be re-elected Prior, perhaps in an effort to ease the tension with Baines. Giving up on the hope of acquiring Downside, Baines purchased the estates of Prior Park, overlooking the city of Bath and “prepared to open his seminary and lay school in that location, thereby shewing [sic] that he had abandoned the hope of appropriating St. Gregory’s.”⁹¹

As far as St. Gregory’s was concerned, “prudence and honour kept the trouble as far as possible from the knowledge of the students.”⁹² It seems the ordinary routine of daily life continued, even though the community lacked enthusiasm.⁹³

Barber died in 1851. As Coadjutor to Polding in Sydney, Davis celebrated a “Solemn Dirge” followed by a Requiem Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral for the response of Barber’s soul.⁹⁴

Following Barber’s resignation, George Turner was chosen to Prior of Downside at the age of sixty.⁹⁵ Turner was born at Houghton in Lancashire in 1770 and was educated at St. Gregory’s in Douay. He was ordained priest on 7 June 1800 and in the same year was sent to the Mission in the Northern Province until 1830. At the time of his election, Turner was still on the Mission and Polding who was the Subprior at the time, remained in charge of Downside until Turner returned.⁹⁶ Both Birt and Van Zeller wrote practically nothing about Turner’s role as Prior. It seems his appointment was

⁹⁰ Birt, *Downside*, 203.

⁹¹ Birt, *Downside*, 204.

⁹² Dolan, “At the Dawn,” 137-138.

⁹³ Dolan, “At the Dawn,” 136.

⁹⁴ *BJ* 1848-51, 28/6/1851. The Journal stated earlier, “Intelligence was received today of the death of the Very Rev. Dr. Barber, late President of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation and a special benefactor to this Mission.” 31/5/1851.

⁹⁵ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150.

⁹⁶ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 38.

more of a caretaker role, given his age and his apparent reluctance to accept the position. At his installation as Prior, Turner wept “so abundantly...that only with difficulty [could] he read the relevant passages of the Constitutions.”⁹⁷ Turner remained Prior for four years, before returning to the Southern Province until his death in 1854.⁹⁸

Turner saw his strength more as a missionary than as a Prior. He may have taught Davis during Davis’ final three years as a student at St. Gregory’s. If not, he would have come into contact with Turner as Prior. Perhaps Turner’s passion for missionary work may have helped Davis aspire to follow Polding to Australia in 1848. Following Turner’s departure for the Missions in 1834, Thomas Brown became Prior of Downside.

Thomas Joseph Brown was born in 1796 and received his education at St. Gregory’s, Acton Burnell. He was ordained priest in 1823 and travelled to Rome with Dr. Marsh in 1829 to defend the rights of Downside Abbey during the Baines controversy. After filling nearly every post at Downside, Brown was elected Prior in 1834 and remained Prior until 1840. In 1840, the number of Vicars-apostolic increased from four to eight. Brown was consecrated Bishop of Appolonia and Vicar Apostolic of the Welsh District.⁹⁹ He later became the Bishop of Newport and Menevia in 1850 which he governed until his death in 1880. He was a learned theologian, receiving his doctorate in 1834¹⁰⁰ and publishing numerous pamphlets in defence of Catholic doctrines.¹⁰¹

Brown was Prefect of Studies at Downside and worked closely with Polding who was the Subprior from 1826-34. Brown remained in this role until his appointment as Prior in 1834. He was the Prefect of Studies during Davis’ student years, and Davis

⁹⁷ Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 294.

⁹⁸ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150.

⁹⁹ Birt, *Downside*, 214.

¹⁰⁰ Birt, *Downside*, 214.

¹⁰¹ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 173.

was taught Theology by him. Brown had an exceptional reputation at Downside, as a theologian, canon lawyer, and teacher. The following testimony witnesses to Brown's and Polding's standing in the EBC, as well as their loyalty and dedication to St. Gregory's:

Pleading, therefore, for the retention of DD. Polding and Brown at Downside as subprior and prefect respectively, he proceeds: It may never occur again that the Prior of St. Gregory's may possess two such eminent men, and at the same time so united in views with their superior, and so satisfied to give their services to the College.¹⁰²

Given Brown's "absorbing nature of his own studies in theology and canon law, his ordinary professorial duties, and monastic routine," his affection and devotion to his students was evident when he wrote the following comment:

I do feel a certain pride in reflecting that in recreation time I have gone over with a boy such as N - is, of no great abilities, and when I began with him very backward, in a year and a half, the whole of Horace, three books of Livy, four Satires of Juvenal, and part of Terence's *Heautontimorumenos*.¹⁰³

Correspondence relating to the illness of Charles Davis' father

Between 1839 and 1840, a series of letters was forwarded to Prior Brown at Downside by members of the Davis family.¹⁰⁴ The correspondence concerned the poor health and impending death of Charles Davis' father and a request from Jane Davis (Charles Davis' sister) that Charles and Edwin Davis be allowed compassionate leave to visit their father in Usk. Jane Davis' opening sentence states she had previously received a "kind letter" from Brown which "relieved us from a great deal of anxiety as

¹⁰² Birt, *Downside*, 198.

¹⁰³ Birt, *Downside*, 210.

¹⁰⁴ K156, K312 and K316 are located in *The Birt Collection Index Cards*, Downside Abbey and the *State Library of Victoria*.

my father still continues very ill.”¹⁰⁵ It seems Brown had earlier approved Charles and Edwin’s visit home, since travel directions were provided so that Brown could advise her brothers. She asked Brown to “be good enough to direct my brothers to call on the Rev. Mr. Metcalfe in Newport as I shall desire the servants to remain there till he sees them.”¹⁰⁶

The tone and expression of this letter indicates Jane Davis received a level of education which enabled her to write a very formal and courteous letter. She writes, for example, it “...would be too late to send intelligence to Downside.” This comment suggests an accomplished writing style. Moreover “...I shall desire the servants to remain there...: infers she was used to giving instructions. A hint of family status emerges when she mentions the “servants” and “the carriage [to] meet them.”

It appears Brown decided to refuse the Davis brothers permission to leave Downside, resulting in a number of ‘heated’ letters challenging his decision. A letter dated 6 January 1840 was received by Brown.¹⁰⁷ *The Birt Collection Index Cards* indicate it was written by Richard Francis Davis (Charles Davis’ older brother); however, this is not the case. Instead, the letter was written by one of his cousins with the same surname. Davis attempted to persuade Brown with elements of intimidation by using statements such as: “...[it’s] impossible that an Englishman can refuse a parent the dying consolation of seeing his child,” and:

To me it seems impossible anyone professing even the name of [Christian] could act so, but if improbable in the one case and impossible in the other, how doubly impossible that a Minister of the Most High, a Catholic Pastor, could thus act.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Jane Davis to Brown, 10/1/1839, K156. Thanks go to Br. Terry Kavanagh for kindly transcribing this letter. Some of the suppositions about the contents of the letter have emerged as a result of correspondence between the author and Kavenagh.

¹⁰⁶ Jane Davis to Brown, 10/1/1839, K156.

¹⁰⁷ Davis to Brown, 6/1/1840, K312. Thanks go to Br. Terry Kavanagh for kindly transcribed this letter. Again, suppositions about the contents of the letter have emerged as a result of correspondence between the author and Kavenagh.

¹⁰⁸ Davis to Brown, 6/1/1840, K312.

Whilst much of this letter is illegible, the parts that can be deciphered are fierce in their attack on Brown's decision not to grant the Davis brothers permission to see their father.

Brown responded on 8 January 1840 to a letter (which now appears to be lost) from Richard Davis.¹⁰⁹ It was difficult to decipher because Brown used many abbreviations. Nonetheless, it was plain Brown was not swayed by Davis' emotive arguments. He wrote:

little is that Sup[er]ior fitted for his Office who can be driven(?) from his sense of duty by coarse...or insolent menaces (?), and I had imagined I was known to possess a little more firmness of character than to be moved by such arts (?).¹¹⁰

Another aspect of Brown's response worth examining was his argument for not allowing Charles and Edwin to visit their father. Brown wrote:

[A Superior] is n[ot] to allow a young Rel[igiou]s to be abs[en]t more than one night, except in cases where he shall deem a dispensation requisite. Of such cases an extern is a very partial judge – for let me suppose that a young man, say for ex[ample] y[ou]r own Br. Edwin, had long hesitated about his Pro[fession] for reasons known to the Sup[er]ior only – that he had at length overcome his difficulties – that however they were of a nat[ur]e to be revived by quitt[ing] the discipl[in]e of his Mon[aster]y, tho' but for a time – (altho' the case is hypoth[etica]l only, it is very poss[ible] – his friends might endeavour to force his abs[en]ce – might forget all the suggestions of respect and civility, yet the Super[io]r be fully borne out in disregard of them – many other cases may exist(?) where an extern is a rash judge.¹¹¹

Brown went to great pains to suggest he was citing a "hypothetical" example. Both the author of this study and Kavenagh wonder if it was not in fact a real case he had in mind, although there is no way to prove this theory. When Brown wrote, "say for ex[ample] y[ou]r own Br. Edwin, had long hesitated about his Pro[fession] for reasons

¹⁰⁹ Davis to Brown, 6/1/1840, K313. Thanks go to Br. Terry Kavanagh for kindly transcribed this letter. Again, suppositions about the contents of the letter have emerged as a result of correspondence between the author and Kavenagh.

¹¹⁰ Brown to R. Davis, 8/1/1840, K313.

¹¹¹ Brown to R. Davis, 8/1/1840, K313.

known to the Sup[er]ior only,"¹¹² it is feasible he had Charles Davis in mind rather than Edwin.

Four months before Davis' ordination as priest, Davis wrote to Brown on 27 July 1840.¹¹³ It gave a view of the depth of the relationship Brown had with Davis and presented a snapshot of Davis' emotional state. It is clear, however, that Davis showed absolute devotion to Brown. Davis wrote:

I should be quite overpowered were I to attempt to tell you by word of mouth how sensible I am of all the affectionate cares and troubles...that they are still and even will be fresh in my mind, always reminding one of the love and gratitude I owe you.¹¹⁴

It was a profoundly personal outpouring of sentiment. Indeed, a large portion of this letter was a private declaration of guilt and remorse. Davis does not mention what the "dreadful state into which [his] own evil dispositions had on more than one occasion, almost precipitated [him]" was. He cannot even bring himself to reveal, in plain terms, what the problem was. It seems Brown was most likely Davis' confessor.

Davis wrote:

It is with tears in my eyes that I call to mind the many tokens of affection which I have received from you, your fraternal cares for my welfare, your kind and considerate manner of admonishing and correcting one of my many and great defects...That to you I am indebted for any peace of mind, that when reduced to a state of the greatest misery and almost to despair, I had recourse to you. I was received with the feelings of my heart.¹¹⁵

Davis confirmed Brown "must know well to what [he] allude[s], you must know, although your humility would conceal it from you." What can one make of Davis' outpouring in emotion? What was the "great defect" in Davis' personality? He

¹¹² Brown to R. Davis, 8/1/1840, K313.

¹¹³ Davis to Brown, 27/7/1840 K412. See the Appendices No. 17 for a copy of this correspondence. Kindly transcribed by Terence Kavanagh.

¹¹⁴ Davis to Brown, 27/7/1840 K412.

¹¹⁵ Davis to Brown, 27/7/1840 K412.

suggested he had been through a serious crisis of some sort and Brown provided support.

Could the “hypothetical” case indicated by Brown be a reference to the emotional content of Charles Davis’ letter? Was Davis having concerns with his vocation, particularly just prior to ordination? Would leaving Downside to visit his father have compounded these problems? If Davis was having ‘second thoughts’ about ordination, would he return to Downside if allowed to travel to Usk? These questions are purely exploratory and worth considering even though there is no evidence to suggest this was actually the case.

Part 2: Charles Davis’ Novitiate, Priesthood and Appointment as Coadjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding and Titular Bishop to the Diocese of Maitland, New South Wales.

Davis’ novitiate, his ordination as priest, his episcopal consecration and appointment as Coadjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding and Titular Bishop of the Diocese of Maitland, New South Wales will be examined. Again, there is very little extant material available regarding his novitiate and ordination to priesthood other than a variety of sources including William Ullathorne’s account of his own novitiate. This source illustrates the kind of religious formation Davis most likely experienced at Downside.

Monastic Formation

After completing his education at St. Gregory's in 1833, Davis was clothed in the Benedictine habit on 1 March 1833 by Dom George Turner.¹¹⁶ This marked the beginning of his novitiate; a period of twelve months.¹¹⁷ Davis' reception of the habit occurred during a rite described by Ullathorne as "very primitive."¹¹⁸ Davis would have been dressed in secular clothing prior to receiving a small scapular to be worn under his clothes. The choir-habit was then placed on his neck and then removed, but later worn entirely during his final candidature.¹¹⁹

As a novice, Davis wore secular clothes with an open college gown and trencher-cap. Davis' Novice Master was Polding.¹²⁰ Each morning after choir, Davis studied the Rule of Benedict, memorising parts since Polding was eager to exercise the novices' memories.¹²¹ He was required to memorise the Sunday Epistles and Gospels, as well as the letters of St. Paul (excepting the epistles to the Romans and the Hebrews). Moreover, Polding required novices to memorise the *Sixth Book of the Aeneid* by Virgil, Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Pope's *Essay on Man*.¹²²

Every day before breakfast Davis publicly announced his mistakes on his knees, together with the faults of his fellow novices. Polding then reprimanded or gave some kind of penance before Davis and the other novices ate breakfast alone in silence.¹²³

¹¹⁶ *Fasti Gregoriani*, "Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis," 95; see Patrick Francis Moran, *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, (Sydney: The Oceanic Publishing Company, 1896), 334.

¹¹⁷ Ullathorne provided discussion about his own "clothing" ceremony which occurred in 1824.

¹¹⁸ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 34.

¹¹⁹ Over the tunic, the cincture made of black leather or black cloth was tied around the waist. The scapular went over the tunic and hung nearly to the ankles both in front of the body and behind. See Appendices No. 18 for an image of the choir-habit comprising, a) Tunic, and b) Scapular.

¹²⁰ Polding held a dual role at Downside: Novice Master (1819-34) and Subprior (1826-34); see Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 169.

¹²¹ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 35.

¹²² Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 35-36.

¹²³ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 34.

This was the general treatment for all novices. It attempted to instill humility into the individual. Ullathorne described the penance process:

Our public penances were generally between the choirs in the chapel or in the refectory; sometimes they were more or less eccentric in their character, judiciously taking hold of our pride or human respect. Occasionally we were required to write down our morning meditation, distractions and wanderings of the mind included. This gave our master occasions to offer us some kind advice individually that seldom failed to reach its mark.¹²⁴

The main text used by Davis during his novitiate was *The Practice of Religious Perfection* by V. F. Alphonsus Rodriguez, published in 3 Volumes.¹²⁵ This was a book of practical instructions on all the virtues required by Christians.¹²⁶ These texts focused on a range of spiritual topics including mortification, silence, humility, temptations, the Eucharist, the three principal vows of religion and more.¹²⁷

During his novitiate, Davis was isolated from the community and was required to observe the Rule of Silence. Moreover, the call to missionary life was always impressed on him as a vocation left “in the Hands of God, [who] would always manifest His Divine Will through Superiors.” The principal aim of the novitiate was to form novices into “good monks.”¹²⁸

Davis was professed as a Benedictine monk on 24 June 1834.¹²⁹ Due to Prior Turner’s absence at the time, Polding received Davis’ vows.¹³⁰ Davis discarded his “old coloured clothes...putting on black suits, knee-length shorts and tails being then the

¹²⁴ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 34-35.

¹²⁵ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 35.

¹²⁶ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01341a.htm>

¹²⁷ See Alphonsus Rodriguez, *The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection*, 1–3, (United States: St. Athanasius Press, 2000).

¹²⁸ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 36.

¹²⁹ *Fasti Gregoriani*, “Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis,” 95; see Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150.

¹³⁰ *Fasti Gregoriani*, “Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis,” 95; see J. Brian Butler, “‘Dear Little Charlie’: a memoir of Charles Henry Davis 1815-1854, Monk of Downside and First Bishop of Maitland,” *Tjurunga* 73, (November 2007): 42.

clerical standard, with limp white cravats, and new college gowns and trenchers.”¹³¹ Downside monks did not wear the monastic habit because there was still nervousness in the EBC regarding negative public opinion.¹³² This was in contrast to the Sydney monks “highly distinctive appearance”¹³³ in the wearing of the habit which was “not so much worn as flaunted.”¹³⁴

As a newly professed monk, Davis continued his studies, probably under Polding, learning Rhetoric, Logic and Mental Philosophy. The texts on Rhetoric included a manuscript by Eustace, parts of Quintilian, Blair’s *Lectures* and *Sacred Eloquence* by Rollin. Additionally, Longinus and Campbell’s *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Cicero’s *Orations*, *De Oratore* and *De Senectute* were studied. After completing his Rhetoric year, Davis gained a basic knowledge of Physics before embarking on his studies of Logic. Davis’ other textbooks consisted of a manuscript in Latin by Eustace titled *Watts and the Logic of Port Royal*. He was also grounded in the Scottish philosophy of the day using Reid as the principal textbook for study. According to Ullathorne, this particular approach to philosophy served as a “valuable starting point for the future study of that science as expounded by the great Catholic philosophers.”¹³⁵

Sundays and chief liturgical church festivals were devoted entirely to spiritual studies where at least half an hour each day was spent in meditation, as well as self-examination in the chapel under the guidance of Polding. Polding emphasised the importance of reading a chapter from the Gospels at the beginning of a spiritual

¹³¹ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 36.

¹³² When he was in Rome, Ullathorne admitted: “although I had been a professed Religious for now some twelve years, it was the first time that I had ever worn the Religious habit, and the Religious habit controlled my habitual rapidity of motion, and consequently of my thinking.” See Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 131. Further, when Ullathorne wore the habit in English Benedictine churches during the 1840s, he was rebuked by fellow priests and on one occasion banned from preaching in it. See Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 217; see Terence Kavenagh, “Aspects of Monastic Observance at Old St. Mary’s,” *Tjurunga* 27, (1984): 66.

¹³³ Kavenagh, “Aspects of Monastic Observance at Old St. Mary’s,” 66.

¹³⁴ Kavenagh, “Aspects of Monastic Observance at Old St. Mary’s,” 67.

¹³⁵ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 37-38.

reflection. As part of Davis' spiritual reading, he studied a commentary on the Psalms from which he had to make notes to be read by Polding.¹³⁶

Ullathorne formally began his Theological studies in 1828, some three years after his profession as a monk.¹³⁷ Similarly, Davis would have begun studying Theology three years after his profession in 1837. Davis' Theology lecturer was most likely Thomas Brown, so Davis would have experienced a systematic and rigorous instruction. Brown was one who was methodical in preparation and knew his subject intimately. Ullathorne wrote: "all else was acquired chiefly from books, but here we found a teacher, who spoke from the digested stores of his mind."¹³⁸

Much of what Davis studied in his Theology course focused on philosophical tracts on religion, Trinity, Incarnation, Grace, and the Gallican doctrines on the Church. Moral Theology centered on the praxis of Blessed Leonard de Porto Mauritio and the theology of St. Alphonsus.¹³⁹ In addition to the prescribed reading, Davis, like Ullathorne, read widely, focusing on the Church Fathers such as Augustine and Tertullian.¹⁴⁰

Davis received the Tonsure and Minor Orders from Polding in the chapel at Downside on 20 September 1834 and was ordained sub-deacon by Bishop Baines on 28 May 1836. He was ordained deacon at Prior Park on 23 February 1839 and priest at the Downside Chapel on 8 November 1840 by Brown who had recently become a bishop.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 39-40.

¹³⁷ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 40.

¹³⁸ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 40.

¹³⁹ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 41.

¹⁴⁰ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop*, 41. There are eighty-one of his books housed in the Veech Library, Sydney varying in topics that include spirituality, sermons, ethics, philosophy, history, theology, apologetics and language. Refer to the Appendices II for a complete list of Davis' personal books.

¹⁴¹ *Fasti Gregoriani*, "Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis," 95; see Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150.

As a monk, Davis was charged with numerous responsibilities at Downside: 'Cellarer' (1841 - December 1847), 'Prefect of Students' (August 1839 – December 1847), 'Infirmarian' (1840 – December 1847), 'Organist' (June 1834 – December 1847), and 'Parish Priest' of St. Benedict's at Downside (1844 - 1848).¹⁴² Since Davis was an accomplished musician and composer, he was also the 'Cantor' of the monastery. Regrettably, the *Fasti Gregoriani* omitted the dates of this appointment. One can assume he probably performed this task concomitantly as Organist.¹⁴³ Prior Joseph Wilson must have recognised immense qualities in Davis by appointing him to these many roles, most being performed simultaneously.¹⁴⁴

Charles Davis' roles at Downside Abbey

Davis was appointed 'Prefect of Students' in August 1839; a position he held until December 1847.¹⁴⁵ In this role, he was described as "being the very life and soul" of St. Gregory's and had the respect of the students, excelling in leading the boys in games and dramatic plays.¹⁴⁶ A former member of the Sydney Benedictine community, Fr. Anselm Curtis wrote "the boys...almost worshipped him...often familiarly [speaking] of him as 'dear little Charlie'." ¹⁴⁷

Davis held the position of 'Infirmarian' from 1840 to December 1847 and was responsible for the care of the sick. It was in this role he developed a loathing for the

¹⁴² *Fasti Gregoriani*, Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis, 95; see Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150. Birt's dates of Davis' appointment as Prefect of Students differ to the dates in the *Fasti Gregoriani*.

¹⁴³ D. Pike, ed., "A-H," *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 1788-1850*, (Melbourne University Press, 1966), 292.

¹⁴⁴ All three Davis brothers had the role of 'Prefect of Students.' Admittedly the school was small, but perhaps it did denote some sense of family ability or talent. Richard Francis Davis (1831-34), Charles Henry Davis (1839-47), and Edwin Oswald Davis (1847-57); refer to Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 182, 150 & 173.

¹⁴⁵ *Fasti Gregoriani*, "Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis," 95.

¹⁴⁶ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 207-208; Also *Downside Review*, XXI, 188.

¹⁴⁷ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, II, 207-208; Also see *Downside Review*, XXI, 188.

drugs he had to administer. Instead he became a convert to hydrotherapy: a treatment based on the external and internal application of water and as Infirmarian, Davis grew in popularity with the students because of his tolerant nature.¹⁴⁸

It is possible to get an insight into Davis 'the Infirmarian' by drawing on an account of the last illness and death of a lay novice Br Hugh Craig in Sydney years later.

Craig was frequently ill, probably as a "consequence of his laborious way of life"¹⁴⁹ in his previous occupation as a sailor. He was "attacked by violent retchings which continued till the time of his death" on 1 August 1851.¹⁵⁰ Davis had Craig taken from the dormitory to his own sitting-room so "that he might be more easily attended [to] by the Physician who was expected on the following morning."¹⁵¹ The following extract provides an example of Davis' unassuming nature, his humility and the level of service he gave to someone who was sick:

[Craig] was much pleased at the change and expressed his thanks for the kindness of the Bishop and those who were attending him...During the night he was attended by the Bishop and one of the Brothers and in the morning he showed every symptom of improvement. He continued in this state till nearly 9 o'clock, speaking to those who visited him and apparently much better, so that all retired, with the exception of one, who remained to arrange his bed...After a few moments he desired to be put back [to bed], and called for the attendant Brother, who seeing that he was changing colour, began to fear, and called to his assistance the Fr. Subprior, who was at a little distance from the room; but scarcely had he reached the spot when [Craig] calmly resigned his soul into the hands of his creator, without a struggle.¹⁵²

Even though Davis was a bishop and Craig was a lay novice, the difference in rank was not an issue for Davis. For Davis, care of the sick was uppermost in his thoughts. The personal care of Craig by Davis was in part faith-driven, because to serve the sick

¹⁴⁸ Alan Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854: Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop," *ACR* LIX, no. 2 (April 1982): 213

¹⁴⁹ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵⁰ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵¹ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵² *BJ* 2/8/1851.

was to serve Christ.¹⁵³ Davis showed an authentic humility and genuine love for Craig's well-being in anticipation of his death.

Davis nursed him through the night until he died and then celebrated Mass for the repose of his soul in St. Felician's Chapel at 6.30am. Davis and the Benedictine community "went in procession to the apartment of the deceased, where in silent sorrow they took their places round the coffin." Davis read prayers from the "Monastic Breviary," after which the community went to the chapel "bearing lighted tapers in their hands...reciting the 'Miserere' & other psalms."¹⁵⁴ Following the closing of the coffin in the late afternoon, it was taken to the Cathedral where Matins was later recited at 7 pm lead by Polding. The Journal recorded the following:

At 7 o'clock the Archbishop presided in Cappa. The whole of the Matins was sung. The Lessons in the following order...The Archbishop sung the last. A numerous and respectable congregation assisted at the office.¹⁵⁵

The next morning Craig's coffin was removed and placed on a hearse and taken to Subiaco. It was followed by Davis, the Subprior and five lay brothers for the purposes of celebrating a Requiem Mass for Craig.¹⁵⁶ His body was interred at Subiaco: "the first of the sons of Benedict, in this portion of the world."¹⁵⁷

A "large congregation assisted at the ceremonies" celebrated by Polding. But many of the laity were critical of Polding and expressed "their regret, at not having been permitted to assist at the funeral."¹⁵⁸ Maybe he considered it more appropriate to keep

¹⁵³ *RB* 1980, 235.

¹⁵⁴ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵⁵ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵⁶ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

¹⁵⁷ *BJ* 2/8/1851. The journalist added a personal prayer at the end of this entry. He wrote: "May he whose life he endeavoured to imitate on earth, obtain for him, a participation in that glory, which he now enjoys in Heaven, is the fervent prayer of the Brother, who has stated the above mentioned particulars, hoping that whosoever may chance to read them will not fail to pray for the soul of him, who is the subject of them. R.I.P." Hugh Craig entered St. Mary's as a lay postulant on 18/4/1849 and worked as a Porter and Refectorian and was clothed in the habit on 2/8/1849. See Terence Kavenagh, "Appendix 1 – Polding's Monks," *Tjurunga* 8, (1974): v

¹⁵⁸ *BJ* 2/8/1851.

the ceremony purely Benedictine. Perhaps Polding may not have been completely in touch with the feelings of the local community since Craig was loved and respected by both the monks and the laity.¹⁵⁹

There is no extant material relating to how Davis performed the duties of Cellarer (1841 – December 1847) at Downside Abbey. Suffice to say, it was a position of great responsibility, since he had to provide the food and drink for the students and monks. The role of Cellarer included business manager, treasurer and bursar.¹⁶⁰ The ‘Rule of Benedict’ states that the Cellarer should be:

[W]ise, mature in conduct, temperate, not an excessive eater, not proud, excitable, offensive, dilatory or wasteful, but God-fearing, and like a father to the whole community.¹⁶¹

Wilson saw in Davis a man who possessed many, if not all of these qualities. In particular, he observed Davis’ gift of managerial and administrative expertise. It was this experience and skill Polding drew on at St. Mary’s in Sydney following Davis’ arrival as Coadjutor.

As Cellarer, Davis had to deal with people who chose the wrong times to make a request, or even made extreme demands on him. His response had to be courteous, and free from any arrogance or contempt. The ‘Rule of Benedict’ advises the Cellarer to “show every care and concern for the sick, children, guests and the poor, knowing for certain that he will be made accountable for all of them on the day of judgement.”¹⁶² Knowing the essence of this description equates to relationships, we can learn much about Davis’ character. Reflecting for a moment on his care of Br. Craig in illness and death, one gains a clearer idea about how he carried out the role of Cellarer.

¹⁵⁹ Kavenagh, “Appendix 1 – Polding’s Monks,” v.

¹⁶⁰ *RB 1980*, 227.

¹⁶¹ *RB 1980*, 227.

¹⁶² *RB 1980*, 229.

As the 'Organist' and 'Cantor' of Downside, Davis' responsibilities entailed accompanying and leading the choral services. He held this significant position from the date of his profession (24 June 1834) until December 1847, a period of over thirteen years. He composed a variety of music, including masses, sacred music and marches. After his arrival in Sydney in 1848, Davis was able to bring to St. Mary's his expertise as an accomplished organist, improviser, composer, and choral director.

Davis' musical proficiency at Downside and St. Mary's will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

During the late 1840s at Downside Abbey there was an apparent clash in temperaments between Davis and Prior Joseph Wilson. The following discussion is important because it raises similar questions about the awkwardness in Davis' relationship with Polding that appeared to emerge in Sydney during the early 1850s.

Prior Joseph Peter Wilson

Joseph Peter Wilson was born in Yorkshire in 1798 and was educated at Acton Burnell and Downside from 1813-1819. He was ordained priest in 1827 and in the same year was sent on the Mission in the Southern Province at Cheltenham, Bungay and Bath and remained there until 1840.¹⁶³ It is doubtful whether Davis had much to do with Wilson during his education at St. Gregory's. If Wilson taught him, it would have been on a part-time basis during Wilson's studies for the priesthood.

In 1840, Wilson was elected Prior of Downside and it was following this appointment Davis had direct contact with him. By all accounts, Wilson was described as one who led quietly "without fuss or bustle, one department after another shewed

¹⁶³ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 180.

the result of his careful supervision.”¹⁶⁴ Polding suggested in a letter to Cardinal Frasoni in Rome that Wilson had the “necessary qualities of zeal, prudence, active piety and energy joined with a super-abundance of charitable feelings.”¹⁶⁵ He was renowned for his physical strength.¹⁶⁶

Wilson must have been impressed by Davis’ diligence and attention to detail because he assigned to him the roles of Infirmarian (1840) and Cellarer (1841). Following his ordination in 1840, Davis was appointed parish priest of St. Benedict’s at Stratton on the Fosse, near Downside Abbey. Prior to Wilson’s appointment, Davis was already performing the roles of ‘Cantor,’ ‘Organist’ and ‘Prefect of Students.’ By 1844, Davis had six significant responsibilities and whilst being able to fulfil them all adequately would have been a great challenge, he carried out these duties in an exemplary manner.

By the mid-1840s apparent troubles in Davis’ relationship with Wilson began to emerge. Tension amongst the community was beginning to surface at Downside too.¹⁶⁷ Whilst visiting Downside in 1846, Polding gave the impression some of the monks were actively supporting Davis’ leadership aspirations in opposition to the Prior.¹⁶⁸ A similar scenario developed at St. Mary’s monastery in Sydney during the early 1850s. One only needs to compare the leadership styles of Prior Henry Gregory

¹⁶⁴ Birt, *Downside*, 215.

¹⁶⁵ Polding to Frasoni, 8/5/1842. Cardinal Giacomo Frasoni (10/12/1775 – 20.4.1856) was an Italian Cardinal who served from 1834 to 1856 as Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. See Appendices No. 19 for a painting of Cardinal Giacomo Frasoni.

¹⁶⁶ Refer to Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, 270, 285-86, 300.

¹⁶⁷ Birt wrote that during the “life of a school, like an individual, [it] has its critical periods, its troubles and anxieties,” and during the 1840s, Downside experienced a “rough and turbulent” period with “a passing element of insubordination” developing following “the removal of Dr. Polding and Dr. Davis” as bishops. The “unruly symptoms were suppressed before they had become hurtful” by reviving a “solid and traditional system of school discipline” through the joint efforts of Dom Oswald Davis (prefect) and Dom Norbert Sweeney (sub-prefect) acting as the protagonists. See Birt, *Downside*, 217.

¹⁶⁸ Polding left Sydney for Europe on 16/2/1846. See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 117. He left England to return to Sydney on 7/10/1847. See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* II, 131.

to Davis to discover why. The following extract from Polding indicates why a strain between Davis and Wilson may have developed:

I am impatiently expecting my little dear friend, Dr. Davis. I can never be sufficiently grateful to you F. President, the Regimen, and my dear good friend F. Prior of Downside for the sacrifice. I dreaded the first letter from the latter and was most agreeably surprised and yet I ought not to have been, to find how readily the assent was given; and the proper reliance on Providence given. I am satisfied it is for the best. From what I heard and saw I am sure the peace of the Community would have been subjected to strong trial. I do not wish to see another Prior at Downside. He who has made the House what it is, has proved himself to be the best to govern it. The quiet surveillance which keeps all in order without interfering with individual offices & duties is the perfection of a Superior – but is apt not to be sufficiently appreciated (sic) & hence the man more active is deemed the preferable. Hence in spite of Religion, cabal or party will creep in, and good is not the result. Besides, I perceived in Davis that want of a change which at his age I myself experienced, which renders present duties irksome, and would have ended in his being placed in some obscure Mission, where he would not have the opportunity he will now have. Then his ardent longing to come and join me, after 12 years of arduous duty in the house, merited consideration. I am satisfied that all is for the best.¹⁶⁹

It seems Davis wanted to pursue the challenge of leadership, but felt limited remaining at Downside. Polding defended Davis' aspirations after recognising his want of change, empathising with Davis' desire to do something different as he wished to at the same age. Polding believed change was important, especially for someone like Davis. From a political viewpoint, it was probably prudent for Wilson to allow Davis to travel to Australia.

Edmund Ford (1851-1930), who was the Prior of Downside Abbey from 1894-1906 once said: "by the time men get to thirty-five all men are glad to get out of [Downside] and go to a parish."¹⁷⁰ In reply to Ford's comment, Edmund Bishop (1846-1917) an eminent liturgist and historian closely associated with Downside cynically remarked: "The education of the Anglo-Benedictine is calculated to produce a mind essentially

¹⁶⁹ Polding to Barber, 18/11/1848, DA M108.

¹⁷⁰ Lunn, "The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century," 30.

skeptical, a type of man who is essentially not a man of Faith.”¹⁷¹ Whilst Davis did not resemble the person described by Bishop, he was one who had been at Downside too long and was in need of a change.

Polding supported Wilson’s management because he believed Wilson had “[proven] himself best to govern,” and was one who kept “all in order without interfering with individual offices & duties.” Polding, however, cautioned Wilson his style of leadership might not always be welcomed, especially by those at Downside who might prefer someone like Davis whose temperament appeared to be more proactive than Wilson.

Davis was appointed Titular Bishop of Maitland and Coadjutor to Polding on 24 September 1847.¹⁷² In December 1847, Davis ceased all positions of responsibility at Downside continuing only as Parish Priest at St. Benedict’s. The reduction in Davis’ workload allowed him time to prepare for his trip to Australia.

No doubt Davis saw himself as a leader and perhaps some of these aspirations came into conflict with Wilson’s administration. Davis had become an established identity at Downside after some twenty-two years and needed greater challenges to his ministry.

The Parish Church of St. Benedict at Stratton in Fosse

Charles Davis succeeded Dom James (Nicholas) Kendal as parish priest of St. Benedict’s in 1844 and remained parish priest until 1848.¹⁷³ During his residency, Davis “built the Poor school and schoolhouse” and “provided the cemetery and cross”

¹⁷¹ Nigel Abercrombie, *The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop*, (London: Longmans, 1959), 88, 114-5, quoted in Lunn, “The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,” 30.

¹⁷² *Fasti Gregoriani*, “Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis,” 95.

¹⁷³ See No. 20 of Appendices for a photograph of St. Benedict’s, Downside.

for the local community.¹⁷⁴ Figure 6 presents a list of parish priests at St. Benedict's from 1837 to 1854.¹⁷⁵

Figure 6: Parish priests at St. Benedict's

1837	Dom (James) Nicholas Kendal (assisted occasionally by Dom James Wilson)
1844	Dom Nicholas Hodgson
1844	Dom Charles Henry Davis – (builder of the school, cemetery and cross)
1848	Dom John Hall
1852	Dom Benet Tidmarsh
1853	Dom Joseph Blount
1854	Alphonse Morall (builder of the church)

Near the site of the present Downside 'Guest House' stood a small cottage, probably an outbuilding from the original farm. It was located near where "School Lane" intersects with Fosse Road. It was here Polding taught the local children of Stratton. Since the nearby village of Chilcompton did not have a school until 1840 and there was no Church of England School until 1850, Polding's cottage was the only school in the area.¹⁷⁶ There are no extant records regarding what was taught to the children nor is there any surviving documentation of accounts or expenditure on local village education.

¹⁷⁴ *Fasti Gregoriani*, "Charles (alias Charles Henry) Davis," 95. Construction on the Church of St. Benedict's began in 1854 under the guidance of Dom Alphonsus Morrall and was completed and opened in 1857.

¹⁷⁵ Brine, G. A. *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict, Stratton on the Fosse, Somerset*, (Private publication: 1972), p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Brine, *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict*, 14.

Dom Bede Rigby succeeded Polding as the School Master, followed by Dom Basil Duck. Whilst the Parish Priest did much of the teaching, he was assisted by some of the older students. By the time the school was relocated to two old cottages near Green Lane Farm in 1835, the school had acquired a paid teacher to instruct a class of about 100 students – mostly non-Catholics. The cost of their education was one penny per week.¹⁷⁷

In 1840 the school was relocated back to Stratton on the Fosse. Perhaps the death of its teacher Mrs. Collyer was the reason for moving the school. The school at Stratton recommenced in a back room of the Downside dairy until Davis began rebuilding the school in 1847. After he became Parish Priest, Davis directed the construction of a new school for the local children. Records show the school was designed by Charles Hanson (1817- 1888) comprising two separate rooms side by side with the teacher's house in between.¹⁷⁸ Hanson's design never eventuated. Only one of the intended rooms was built, whilst the other became the Parish Church. The school was fully completed and opened in 1854 (the year of Davis' death), and the Parish Church was finished in 1857 differing slightly from its present appearance by having a taller spire with one bell and a shorter nave. What was once the Lady Chapel is now the entrance porch.¹⁷⁹

Davis was a man of vision, especially in relation to promoting education amongst local children. Regrettably, individual priests from the EBC did not serve St. Benedict's parish for very long because they were regularly moved to missions in other parts of

¹⁷⁷ Brine, *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict*, 14.

¹⁷⁸ Brine, *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict*, 14. It is interesting to note Hanson designed the Catholic Church in Porthycarne Street, Usk near to the Davis family home. Hanson was one of England's celebrated architects. The majority of his English churches have been described as scholarly and at times surpasses ordinary examples of the early Gothic Revival genre. See B. Andrews, "Polding's English Architects," *Tjurunga* 47, (December 1994): 21-43.

¹⁷⁹ Brine, *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict*, 4.

Britain. From 1818 – 1837, the average period of time spent in the parish was two years. From 1837 – 1859, it increased to just over three years. Davis remained parish priest for four years, prior to his appointment as Coadjutor Bishop in Sydney.

Following the arrival of the EBC in Stratton on the Fosse in 1814, locals began to gradually convert to Catholicism. The Baptismal Registers for Stratton on the Fosse began very slowly, with only one baptism being registered on 26 May 1818 (Richard Broom by Dom Thomas Lawson) and another on 15 April 1819 (John Cox by Dom Luke Barber).¹⁸⁰ These baptisms were probably administered in the front parlour of the “Old House” at Downside which was used as a chapel until 1823. Extant Baptismal registers reveal numerous baptisms took place in the School Chapel of Downside Abbey from 1820 to 1836.¹⁸¹ Roman Catholic baptisms in the parish of St. Benedict’s did not begin to increase until the 1840s. During Davis’ tenure, fifty-five baptisms were performed. Of these fifty-five baptisms, Davis performed twenty-five of them.¹⁸² Figure 7 reveals the number of recorded baptisms in the parish of St. Benedict’s between 1818-1849.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ F. Daniels, *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Baptisms 1818-1915*, no. 24, 2006.

¹⁸¹ As there was no regular parish priest during this period, it is likely a member of the Benedictine community was delegated to minister to the local Catholics.

¹⁸² Refer to Appendices for a list of Baptisms.

¹⁸³ Daniels, *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Baptisms*.

Figure 7: Baptisms in the Parish of St. Benedict's.

Year	Number of Baptisms	Year	Number of Baptisms	Baptisms by Davis	Baptisms by others
1818	1	1834	3		
1819	1	1835	1		
1820	3	1836	2		
1821	3	1837	4		
1822	0	1838	5		
1823	3	1839	2		
1824	1	1840	6		
1825	2	1841	6		
1826	0	1842	6		
1827	3	1843	7		
1828	2	1844	6	1	5
1829	2	1845	11	6	5
1830	5	1846	12	10	2
1831	3	1847	9	7	2
1832	5	1848	17	1	16
1833	5	1849	12		

There are no surviving records of burials performed by Davis. Before the cemetery of St. Benedict's became available, Roman Catholics were buried in the old

Church of England cemetery of St. Vigors, (including some of the older monks from the EBC who died soon after arriving from Acton Burnell). Regrettably, their graves have now disappeared.¹⁸⁴ Whilst Davis probably performed Roman Catholic funeral services, there are no extant parish records indicating who he may have buried because St. Benedict's Catholic burial records did not begin until March 1851 (Francesca Newman – buried by Roger Bede Vaughan).¹⁸⁵ Marriage records for St. Benedict's parish began on 7 March 1848 (Denis Keen to Margaret Holland).¹⁸⁶ There are no records of Davis performing any marriages during his latter term as parish priest.

Bishop of Maitland and Coadjutor to John Bede Polding

Polding meanwhile had been appointed to the colony of New South Wales as first Bishop of Sydney. In February 1842 he presented a list of prospective candidates to the Propaganda Fide Cardinals with the view to obtaining either an assistant or a Coadjutor. Polding wanted episcopal help so he could pursue lengthy missionary journeys to various Catholics in remote districts in outback Australia.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, if a Coadjutor was appointed, he had the right of succession in the event of Polding's death. The original list consisted of two English Benedictines, William Ullathorne and Francis Appleton; an English secular priest, Robert Wilson; an Italian member of the Institute of Charity, Luigi Gentili and Polding's then current Vicar General, Francis Murphy.¹⁸⁸ Polding's future proposals nearly always asked for an English Benedictine

¹⁸⁴ Brine, *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict*, 12.

¹⁸⁵ F. Daniels, *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Burials 1851-1915*, no. 26, 2008.

¹⁸⁶ F. Daniels, *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Marriages, 1848-1915*, no. 25, 2007.

¹⁸⁷ See Appendices No. 21 for an itinerary of dates and locations of the Missionary Journeys of Polding during Davis' tenure as his coadjutor.

¹⁸⁸ Christopher Dowd, *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions 1834-1884*, (Leiden Boston, 2008), 394.

to be his Coadjutor. Australian Church historian, Christopher Dowd argues Polding favoured candidates from the EBC in order to “foster good relations with the British civil authorities both at home and in Australia.” Moreover, a Benedictine Coadjutor would “strengthen the monastic establishment in Sydney.” With the right to succession after Polding’s death, “[a Benedictine Coadjutor] would guarantee Benedictine leadership in the Archdiocese.”¹⁸⁹ Polding originally asked Ullathorne, but he declined:

I saw that if I should be appointed, being at so vast a distance from Rome, I should scarcely be free to exercise a judgement as to accepting or declining; that I should be driven to a kind of necessity to accept or to let the country go on for years more without having a bishop. I therefore told Dr. Polding that unless he consented to take my name off, and to promise he would not bring it before the Holy See, I should be compelled also to go to Europe until the affair was settled, because I should not otherwise be left a free agent in case my name were accepted.¹⁹⁰

Following the directions of Polding, Ullathorne wrote to the Provincial of the EBC in 1838 requesting more Benedictines for the Australian Mission. The Provincial replied: “the brethren in general and the chaptermen in particular are against sending our useful subjects abroad.”¹⁹¹ Ullathorne responded to Brown doubting whether Polding’s idea to staff the diocese with Benedictines would work. He suggested the Colony would almost certainly become an Irish mission due to the large numbers of Irish Catholics. Ullathorne wrote “to do anything Benedictine in the Colony is now out of the question.”¹⁹² Ullathorne did not want to become involved in Polding’s Australian Benedictine vision because he sensed it was destined to fail. Ullathorne returned to

¹⁸⁹ Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 394.

¹⁹⁰ Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop: the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, 164. See also Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 485. Ullathorne was eventually consecrated Bishop by Bishop John Briggs, Vicar-Apostolic of the Yorkshire District on 21/6/1846. See Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 121.

¹⁹¹ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia I*, 370; see also Mary Shanahan, “Bishop Davis: 1848-1854,” *Manna*, no. 6, (1963): 52.

¹⁹² Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, Vol. I, 370; see also Shanahan, “Bishop Davis,” 52.

England and was subsequently appointed to a bishopric in the Diocese of Birmingham.

Polding later wrote to Cardinal Frasoni requesting his Vicar General, Henry Gregory be considered as his Coadjutor. This submission was rejected.¹⁹³ Polding wrote to Frasoni asking the Sacred Congregation to consider increasing the number of bishops so they could provide better for the spiritual needs of the community in the various missionary regions of Australia. He urged the Sacred Congregation to appoint a Coadjutor “so that the infant Church on the death of the Pastor [Polding] might not incur grave loss.” He maintained:

Strengthened by such a helper, I would be able to visit distant places, areas where there are many faithful and where no Pastors visit. Besides, according to Church discipline it is right to establish individual Missions under the hand and eye of the Archbishop. Such is now almost impossible however, for it is not convenient that the head Ecclesiastic, on account of our relations with the civil Government, should be far distant from the city of Sydney.¹⁹⁴

Polding wrote to Frasoni stating:

[T]he Anglicans are making every attempt to gain possession for themselves of this vast province...and it is important that an energetic opposition to their plans is put forward.¹⁹⁵

Polding continued appealing that another Episcopal See should be established in Maitland, a short distance from the proposed Church of England Bishopric. He asked that a “new Bishop be appointed Coadjutor to the Petitioner [Polding].”¹⁹⁶ He suggested Edmund Burchall, the current Prior of St. Edmunds at Douay as the possible Bishop of

¹⁹³ Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 394.

¹⁹⁴ Polding to Frasoni, 29/1/1846, PF CO, Vol. 3, ff. 62-5, SMPG tr Lat

¹⁹⁵ Polding to Frasoni, 16/4/1847, PF Acta 1847, f. 173. SMPD tr It

¹⁹⁶ Polding to Frasoni, 16/4/1847, PF Acta 1847, f. 173. SMPD tr It. Propaganda Fide ruled whoever became the Bishop of Maitland was to become Polding’s Coadjutor too. Refer to Dowd, *Rome in Australia*, 394 - 395.

Maitland.¹⁹⁷ A Papal Brief created the Diocese of Maitland on 27 May 1847 and decided whoever was appointed to the position of Bishop of Maitland was to become Polding's Coadjutor.¹⁹⁸

Burchall declined the offer due to the "recent loss sustained by the Order among its most outstanding Fathers."¹⁹⁹ Luke Barber, the President General of the EBC wrote a letter to Cardinal Wiseman requesting that the Holy See not appoint Burchall due to the demise of some of monks from the EBC:

...unexpected and deplorable losses have since befallen the English Benedictine Congregation. No less than three of our most eminent Missionaries, including the Rev^d Dr. Appleton, have fallen victims to their charity and zeal in attending the sick. Thus and more especially by the death of Dr. Appleton, the means of supplying the place of Father Prior Burchall are greatly diminished, not to say totally taken away.²⁰⁰

Likewise, Burchall did not want to place any more unnecessary strain on the already diminished numbers in the community by his departure to Australia. He recommended instead two candidates for the position of Bishop of Maitland. The first candidate was Davis who:

...has been under the guidance of Monsignor Polding who gives him a very honourable testimonial; and whilst he has praiseworthy held different positions for 13 years in the Convent of St Gregory in England, he has kept longing for the Australian Mission.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁷ Polding to Franson, 16/4/1847, PF Acta 1847, f. 173. SMPD tr It; see Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, 178. Goold was earlier recommended to New Zealand, but after asking for Burchall to go to Maitland, Goold was recommended to the Diocese of Melbourne instead, Refer to Polding to Franson, 22/2/1847, paragraph 4 of Polding's attachment of recommended candidates, PF Acta 1847, f. 170-3. SMPD tr It.

¹⁹⁸ Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854," 213; see Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 131; see Polding to Society for the Propagation of the Faith [France], 16/5/1847.

¹⁹⁹ Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847 SAA, U1315/13-12, SMPD tr It, cited in Campbell, H. *The Diocese of Maitland 1866-1966*, (Maitland, 1966), 189-190. Several members of the EBC had died from a widespread illness while ministering to patients in hospitals.

²⁰⁰ Barber to Wiseman, *Allanson Records IV*, Record CCCXXIV, 436, 626; see *Allanson History*, Vol. III, Pt 2.

²⁰¹ Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847, SAA, U1315/13-12, SMPD tr It, cited in Campbell, *The Diocese of Maitland 1866-1966*, 189-190.

The other candidate was Joseph Benedict Tidmarsh. Tidmarsh was at Downside with Davis and had been ordained priest on 19 September 1846.²⁰² Barber endorsed Tidmarsh as Polding's Coadjutor and made no reference to Davis at all:

...I can offer, as I now do, with all deference and with the entire concurrence of the most Reverend the Archbishop, Father Joseph Benedict Tidmarsh, who, not occupying at present an office of essential importance, can be spared to the Congregation more readily than the Prior of St. Edmunds Monastery. Father Joseph Benedict Tidmarsh possesses learning, piety and zeal resting in humility, which in my humble judgement qualify him for any Ecclesiastical dignity which the Holy See may deign to confer on him. In his Monastery he is a pattern to his Brethren in the observance of regular discipline and of every religious virtue.²⁰³

Barber insisted that Tidmarsh's recommendation had "the entire concurrence of the most Reverend Archbishop [Polding]." In reality Polding argued against Tidmarsh's endorsement as his Coadjutor because of his inexperience, his youth and lack of desire to "embrace the Australian Mission."²⁰⁴ Instead Polding petitioned Fr. Thomas Grant, Rector of the English College and agent for English Bishops:

The Very Rev. Fr. President has suggested the name of Rev. Fr. Tidmarsh, a priest of St. Gregory's Monastery, Downside, whose praises all sing. He is a very young man, being only 29 years old, and he has not had any practical experience. He has not shown any strong desire for inclination for the Australian missions. These three facts constitute the principal difficulty.²⁰⁵

Polding proposed Davis as his desired Coadjutor:

I would like to nominate the Rev. Fr. Charles Davis, a priest of the same monastery who is 33 years old. He has been involved as Superior for more than eight years in various charges in the course of which he has given proof of great prudence and zeal. Moved by charity he has acted as a Missionary for some years among the poor in the neighbourhood of the Monastery. The time of his profession is around that of Father Gregory. For 14 years he has had a strong and constant desire to be associated with me in the labours of the Mission, he has even written and proposed

²⁰² Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 197. Tidmarsh later succeeded Davis in the role as Cellarer in December 1847.

²⁰³ Barber to Wiseman, *Allanson Records IV*, Record CCCXXIV, 436, 627.

²⁰⁴ Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847, SAA, U1315/13-12, SMPD tr It, cited in Campbell, *The Diocese of Maitland 1866-1966*, 189-190.

²⁰⁵ Polding to Grant, 11/8/1847, PF CO, Vol. 3 ff. 780-1. SMPD tr It.

this and in the past week he warmly begged me to obtain from his Superiors the permission allowing him to accompany me. This permission would not be granted, I fear, if he were to remain a simple priest, but if he can be raised to the episcopate, there would not, it seems to me, be any such difficulty. I am sure at least that he would not be the cause of any further delay in this matter...I would prefer to have Father Davis who will also be more acceptable to Father Gregory and to the Clergy.²⁰⁶

After returning from Ireland, Polding was interviewed by Barber and was advised it would not be possible to let Davis travel to Sydney as his Coadjutor due to the many significant positions Davis held at Downside. Polding wrote to Fransoni:

I have had an interview with the Rev. President of the Benedictine Congregation and I have learnt from him that, without encountering a strong opposition, it will not be possible to remove the Reverend Father Charles Davis from St. Gregory's Monastery where he is engaged in many undertakings of very great importance. When I had the honour of writing recently to Your Eminence I did not anticipate any such thing. As matters stand, I shall not insist that the proposed appointment be made on the grounds that it would be embarrassing to a Congregation which has no other object for its existence except to promote the good of Religion.²⁰⁷

Polding suggested:

[That Barber] be invited by the Holy See to propose some others of his subjects instead of the Most Rev. Father Burchell (sic), should his reasons for renouncing the episcopacy be admitted, and Father Davis be not nominated, and I ask the necessary permission be given me to substitute the name of the person chosen by the Most Rev. Father President on the address of the Apostolic letter to the Bishop-Elect of Maitland which has come into my possession and has been presented to the Most Rev. Father Burchall.²⁰⁸

After prolonged negotiations, Davis was eventually chosen as Polding's Coadjutor.

A Papal Brief appointed Davis to the Diocese of Maitland on 24 September 1847.²⁰⁹

Following an audience with Pius IX, the Secretary of Propaganda Fide wrote:

²⁰⁶ Polding to Grant, 11/8/1847, PF CO, Vol. 3 ff. 780-1. SMPD tr It.

²⁰⁷ Polding to Fransoni, 1/9/1847, PF CO, Vol. 3 ff. 778-9. SMPD tr It

²⁰⁸ Polding to Fransoni, 1/9/1847, PF CO, Vol. 3 ff. 778-9. SMPD tr It

²⁰⁹ Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854," see also *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1788-1850, 292.

Having heard the report, His Holiness, in place of Fr. Burchall, willingly substituted Fr. Charles Davis for the Maitland Episcopal See in Australia, and ordered the usual decree to be dispatched.²¹⁰

Ignoring this appointment by the Holy See, Thomas Grant from Rome wrote to Barber on the apparent advice of Franson stating that Burchall should once again be approached since Davis “cannot be spared”:

As Fr. C. Henry Davis cannot be spared for appointment to the Bishopric of Maitland and Coadjutor of Archbishop Polding, and as Propaganda thinks Fr. Tidmarsh too young under the circumstances, the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, Franson, wishes that Prior Burchall again be pressed to accept the post. Failing this, he should see Archbishop Polding and agree with him on a fitting subject [to be sent], and write at once. Evidently Propaganda would like Burchall to accept the post.²¹¹

The following day Franson suggested via correspondence to Polding that if he preferred Burchall to Davis, it would be more sensible for him to request Burchall again to be his Coadjutor bishop:

[I]t is best to decide nothing in this matter if it is still thought advantageous to ask the said Father Burchell to assume the burden. As the proposals would fall on the Benedictines monks and indeed the Order would have to make some sacrifices in every case, it would be desirable for such an important office that the one might really be promoted who, in every circumstance, gives us to expect the best result, all the more so because this choice was already settled [indecipherable word] by the dispatching of the Apostolic Briefs.²¹²

The subsequent comment by Barber illustrated the position of the EBC regarding Davis' appointment: “[The EBC is] against...others arguing against the appointment of Mr. C. Davis to Maitland, NSW.”²¹³

²¹⁰ Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847, SAA, U1315/13-12, SMPD tr It, cited in Campbell, *The Diocese of Maitland 1866-1966*, 189-190.

²¹¹ Grant to Barber, 29/9/1847, *Ampleforth Abbey Archives* 262, no. 94. The author's thanks go to Br. Terry Kavenagh for kindly supplying this document.

²¹² Franson to Polding, 30/9/1847, SAA, U1315/13-13. SMPD tr It.

²¹³ Barber to Prest, 21/12/1847, *Ampleforth Abbey Archives* 262, no. 103. The author's thanks go to Br. Terry Kavenagh for kindly supplying this document.

Whilst Burchall was the preferred candidate, the EBC and the Pope supported Davis' appointment.²¹⁴ It was around this time Davis relinquished his roles at Downside except his appointment as Parish Priest at St. Benedict's. Propaganda Fide, nonetheless, was still reluctant to appoint Davis to the position. Remarkably, letters from Frasoni and Grant were still urging Davis' appointment to be reconsidered. Davis was ordained bishop on 25 February 1848, but Polding was still corresponding to Frasoni in March 1848 about who was going to be appointed Bishop of Maitland. Polding wrote:

Concerning the Episcopate of Maitland let me say only this if there is still difficulty: it will be best to select from our people here one who already would have experience of the place and the people – and who also would benefit our people in his wearing of the mitre.²¹⁵

A few days later, Polding again wrote to Frasoni expressing his apparent frustration in the appointment process:

Of the Bishopric of Maitland, I shall only say that, if there is still a difficulty, it will be best to select from our men living here one who has experience of the place and the people and who is well-known also to me.²¹⁶

Following Davis's appointment to the role of Coadjutor and titular Bishop to Maitland, Davis was now able to "bring consolation to the aged Prelate" and assist Polding in the promotion of Catholicism in Australia.²¹⁷ It is surprising that during Davis' episcopacy in Australia, he never once visited Maitland. His spasmodic health and heavy workload kept him fully occupied in Sydney.²¹⁸

Davis took his role as Polding's Coadjutor very seriously, managing the Sydney Archdiocese for an aggregate of nearly three years during Polding's frequent

²¹⁴ Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847, SAA, U1315/13-12, SMPD tr It, cited in Campbell, *The Diocese of Maitland 1866-1966*, 189-190.

²¹⁵ Polding to Frasoni, 5/3/1848, PF CO, Vol. 4, f. 58. SMPG tr Lat.

²¹⁶ Polding to Frasoni, 8/3/1848, PF CO, Vol. 4, f. 56. SMPG tr Lat.

²¹⁷ Moran, *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, 335.

²¹⁸ Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia II*, 131.

missionary journeys into country New South Wales. This included his daily administrative responsibilities of the Archdiocese; rehearsal of the choir at St. Mary's; organ playing at the Cathedral; chaplaincy to the Benedictine nuns at Subiaco; his role on the Senate of Sydney University; his daily supervision and management of St. Mary's Seminary and Lyndhurst College; his examination of students and postulants; his role as Prior of St. Mary's monastery during the many absences of Polding and Gregory; as well as his spiritual and pastoral duties in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Davis' Episcopal Ordination

Davis was consecrated Bishop of Maitland, New South Wales and Coadjutor to Polding at Bath on 25 February 1848.²¹⁹ Ullathorne, the Vicar Apostolic of the Midlands District and previous Vicar-General of New Holland, was the principal celebrant who consecrated Davis. The assistant prelates were Rev. Dr. Wareing of the Eastern District and Rev. Dr. Brown of the Welsh District.²²⁰ Rev. Dr. Morris, the Senior-assistant bishop in the London District preached on the following Scripture to symbolise Davis' imminent missionary journey to Australia:

You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the Uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8).²²¹

Davis received a gold Chalice and Paten from his friend Charles Michael Berington dated 5 February 1848. Davis took them with him to Sydney, and they are housed at the Heritage Centre of the Benedictine Sisters at Jamberoo Abbey.²²² They are used

²¹⁹ Birt, *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 150; see also Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854," 213; *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1788-1850, 292; *Allanson History*, Vol. III, Pt 2.

²²⁰ Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, O.S.B. 1815-1854," 213.

²²¹ Moran, *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, 335.

²²² See Appendices for a photograph of Davis' Chalice and Paten. Davis' friend, Charles Michael Berington, was a descendant of the Berington family who were strong Catholic recusants and owned the Benedictine priory and manor of Little Malvern. Following Catholic emancipation, they donated land

on special Eucharistic occasions in the convent chapel. The Chalice is inscribed in Latin, thus:

***R R D F Carolo Henricus Davis +
Apo Maitlandensi et Archdioeesesis Sydneiensis
Coadiutori + Caeloc Michael Berington – hoc grati ammi
Testimonium obtulit die V Mens Feb Mdccclviii Aiabos Culielmi et
Maria Josephine + Patris et Sororis huiusse maneris auctoris +
Propitietior Deus + Amen.***

After his ordination, Davis celebrated many liturgical functions as bishop including the ordination of his younger brother, Edwin Davis in the Downside Chapel on 18 March 1848.²²³ Davis concelebrated at the consecration of the Cathedral of St. George's in the Fields; one of the most spectacular consecrations of a Catholic Cathedral since the English Reformation. Also present were the Archbishop of Treves, seven English Bishops, and one Bishop from Ireland, one Bishop from Scotland, and three Bishop's from Belgium and 240 priests. Davis represented the Australian Church.²²⁴

to build a larger church, in addition to the conventual church that was already there. Eventually, St. Wulstan's at Little Malvern was built (1862). Monks from the EBC have served as chaplains in the area from 1760. Eventually, the manor at Little Malvern was bequeathed to William Berington of Hereford. Following his death in 1847, it was passed to his son Charles Michael Berington, who lived there until his death in 1897.

See http://www.downside.co.uk/Abbey/about_us/local_parish_service_times_detail.php?Little-Malvern-10, [accessed 4/1/2014].

²²³ *Fasti Gregoriani*, "Oswald (alias Edwin) Davis," 102.

²²⁴ Moran, *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, 335.

Davis left England for Australia on 15 August 1848, “a few hours after having the happiness of celebrating Mass” on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary “under whose especial protection [he] placed [himself] on embarking.”²²⁵

Raising funds to travel to Australia

In a letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon, Davis requested monetary assistance for “pontifical vestments, as well as food, clothes and money for the journey.” Davis did not want to arrive in Australia in debt.²²⁶ After his ordination and appointment to Sydney, Davis had no resources other than “the generosity of [his] friends and the charity of the faithful, to acquire the effects that [he] absolutely [needed].”²²⁷ Davis added: “the British Government, from which I had reason to hope for some aid, will not grant me anything.”²²⁸

He wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, again requesting some kind of financial assistance, maintaining he was “anxious to go and join the flock entrusted to [him], and from which [he is] only separated because of [his] poverty.”²²⁹ Davis’ lack of funds kept him at Downside for a number of months unable to travel. Another letter highlights the ongoing problems he was experiencing raising money for the voyage. Davis even requested that if a party of Catholic emigrants were travelling to Australia he would appreciate being considered by the Government to be their

²²⁵ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²²⁶ Davis to The Society for the Propagation of the Faith – Lyon, 1/3/1848, cited in M. Xavier Compton, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding, OSB 1*, ed., M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Doreen Dyson, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 2000), 172.

²²⁷ Davis to The Society for the Propagation of the Faith – Lyon, 1/3/1848, cited in *Adjutor Deus*, 172.

²²⁸ Davis to The Society for the Propagation of the Faith – Lyon, 1/3/1848, cited in *Adjutor Deus*, 172.

²²⁹ Davis to M. Choiselat-Gallien, 6/4/1848, cited in *Adjutor Deus*, 174.

clergyman. One imagines Davis was hoping he might be given a gratuitous voyage with perhaps a stipend:

The great difficulty which I have experienced to collect from private friends means sufficient to enable me to provide my outfit and passage to Sydney, urges me to again apply to Her Majesty's Colonial Government for assistance towards this object. Having been appointed some months since Coadjutor Bishop to Archbishop Polding I am anxious to engage without delay in the important duties of my position and therefore I shall feel most thankful for any assistance that Her Majesty's Government may think proper to endow me. Should there be a party of Emigrants consisting in great measure or in part of Roman Catholics, and should it be considered desirable by Her Majesty's Government that they should have on board a clergyman of their own faith, I shall be happy to embark in such a vessel, provided accommodation suitable to my state as a Clergyman be afforded me.²³⁰

Davis finally persuaded the Colonial Office of London to help him. They indicated that if he could find a ship with female emigrants, presumably from Ireland, then the Government would help him.²³¹ Davis was to leave England on 15 August 1848.

A month or so after the arrival of Davis in Sydney, Polding mentioned the sum of £150 "destined for the payment of the Outfit and Passage of the Reverend Mr Burchall" and requested it be reallocated to Davis "to supply the Sum that has been required for his Outfit and Passage."²³² In another letter, Polding asked for "the final settlement of the sum voted for outfit & passage of six – including the Bp of Maitland" to be made. Polding's humour becomes apparent when wrote:

I calculate that I am rising in your estimation as a correspondent & man of business.²³³

²³⁰ Davis to The Colonial Office, London, 10/7/1848, (PRO CO, 201/399, f. 280).

²³¹ A footnote from the following letter: Davis to The Colonial Office, London, 10/1/848, (PRO CO, 201/399, f. 280).

²³² Polding to Heptonstall, 18/1/1849, DA, M130, Polding to Frasoni, 5/3/1848, PF CO, Vol. 4, f. 58. SMPG tr Lat.

²³³ Polding to Heptonstall, 31/1/1849, DA, M136Polding to Frasoni, 5/3/1848, PF CO, Vol. 4, f. 58. SMPG tr Lat.

As a “man of business” it seems Polding took his time to organise the financial side of Davis’ voyage. It is also odd to think Polding advised Heptonstall to provide the money for Davis’ trip five weeks after Davis arrived in Sydney. As it turned out, Davis arranged his finances with the assistance of Her Majesty’s Colonial Office and perhaps from his friend Charles Berington. A number of key questions emerge in relation to the raising of funds by Davis. Polding gives the impression he was responsible for supplying Davis’ financial assistance. This funding was not straightaway forthcoming. By March 1848, due to the ‘tyranny of distance,’ Polding was still unaware who his Coadjutor was going to be. Even if Polding became aware of Davis’ appointment by June or July 1848, it is reasonable to presume he would have at least started the process of funding or reimbursing contributors for the voyage of his Coadjutor-elect. This did not occur. This perhaps points to Polding’s failings as an administrator. One wonders if the Colonial Office in London or Davis’ “friends” were ever reimbursed by Heptonstall.

Why were the EBC not forthcoming in assisting Davis? He was travelling to one of their Missions to assist Polding. None of Davis’ correspondence mentions any help from Downside, yet they eventually supported his appointment. Perhaps the responsibility of funding fell directly on Polding and the EBC were observing protocol? If this was the case, one would think they could have helped Davis and requested Polding to refund them the cost. In Polding’s later years he blamed the EBC for their failure to support his vision for the Australian Catholic Church. In a letter to Heptonstall in 1869, he wrote there had been a “coldness and unwillingness to assist this infant [Australian Benedictine] Institute which disheartens me.”²³⁴

²³⁴ Polding to Heptonstall 26/2/1869, SPM-DownsAA/MF, O 303. See also Polding to Gregory, 6/10/1871, quoted in Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, 366, and T. Kavenagh, “Vaughan and the Monks of Sydney,” *Tjurunga* 25, (1983): 170. Also refer to Christopher Dowd, *Papal policy towards*

The Voyage

Davis sailed from Downs, England on the *St. George*, a 605 ton ship carrying 45 passengers commanded by Captain Jones on 20 August 1848.²³⁵ Jones was described by Davis as “a first rate sea man” who had been “engaged on this line” for “the last 20 years.”²³⁶ Accompanying Davis was Br. Edmund Moore from Downside, described by Davis as one who looked “exceedingly delicate” and “not likely to be more useful [in Sydney] than he promised to be in the English climate.”²³⁷

The voyage to Sydney took about four-months and “on the whole [was] most favourable.”²³⁸ Davis was affected with homesickness because “after each day” his “mind reverted to [his] dear home – again and again” and he hoped and prayed for “each dear individual” that “all might be well.”²³⁹

The *St. George* was unable to leave the channel for the first two weeks of the voyage because it “was tossed to and fro by the foul winds and heavy squalls,” affecting most on board with sea sickness, including Davis.²⁴⁰ During the journey, Davis “was attacked by a severe pain in [his] face which continued 6 or 7 weeks...during the whole of [the] hot weather, [but] left [him] as [they] got into the cold latitudes.”²⁴¹ His face became so inflamed he was unable to eat for “some weeks.” The heat was so unbearable Davis “was confined to [his] cabin applying hot fomentations, mustard plaisters and blisters to [his] poor face,” whilst “all on board were having

conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions: The relationship between John Bede Polding, O.S.B., Archbishop of Sydney, and the Sacred Congregation De Propaganda Fide, 1842-1874, (PhD diss., Australian National University, Canberra, July 1994), 358.

²³⁵ *MM*, 13/12/1848, 2.

²³⁶ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²³⁷ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²³⁸ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²³⁹ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁰ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴¹ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

shower baths and adopting very forcible modes of cooling themselves.”²⁴² Given his sea sickness and blistered face, Davis wrote he “enjoyed every good health” and considered himself “stouter than when [he] left England.”²⁴³

Davis got up between five and six o’clock each morning and meditated and took “a little walk” on the ship before breakfast. When he was in good health, Davis and Br. Edmund Moore prayed “a part of the Rosary...and various other prayers, after which [they] had [a] spiritual lecture.”²⁴⁴ After breakfast, Davis studied until twelve o’clock and walked for another fifteen minutes and

“again took [his] studies, performed some spiritual exercises which [he] prescribed for [himself] before embarking and [saying] vespers and compline...till 3 o’clock when [he] took another ¼ hours walk before dinner.”²⁴⁵

After dinner Davis spent time with the passengers for about thirty minutes then returned to his cabin and prayed Matins and Lauds. Moore would join Davis in his cabin to pray “the penitential Ps. and Litanies, a few other prayers and spiritual lecture.”²⁴⁶ For the remainder of the evening, he would remain in his cabin “studying and discharging [his] spiritual duties.”²⁴⁷ Davis spent much of his time on board the *St. George* in prayer and study. Whilst he socialised, Davis found “Tea at 6 and Grog at 9 o’clock...useless time destroyers.”²⁴⁸

Davis disembarked from the *St. George* in Sydney Harbour at two o’clock on 8 December 1848²⁴⁹ and “within 20 minutes [he] reached St. Mary’s...[and] was received

²⁴² Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴³ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁴ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁵ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁶ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁷ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁸ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁴⁹ *MM*, 13/12/1848, 2; also see Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

most cordially by the deacon and charge of the Cathedral as well as by the Sub-Prior.”²⁵⁰

The following diary entry described Moore’s first meeting with Davis at the doors of St. Mary’s Monastery. By all accounts the anticipation of Davis’ arrival at St. Mary’s was one of high drama. He wrote:

Shortly after dinner, about 2 ½, F Maurus was on the Bell Tower with the telescope looking to see if any ship was coming in; when he happened to look along one of the streets leading to St. Mary’s, and whom should he see but two persons in black conducted by a third whom he recognised as the Medical Dr appointed by [the] Government to visit all ships coming into the Harbour. Immediately he ran down and spread the report that the new Bishop had arrived. I was as incredulous as St Thomas and to show my unbelief went straight to the gates which open into the enclosure from the street and maintained (?) till the opening of the gates and doors revealed Dr Davis in open sunshine within 8 yards of me. I was for retreating for I was ashamed of myself, unshaven for 3 or 4 days, and of my habit all tattered and torn. However, I saw it was too late to attempt to leave my ground, and accordingly stood firm for one minute longer. When on bended knee I’m kissing the ring and hand and receiving the Episcopal benediction of our long expected and truly beloved Right Revd Confrere.²⁵¹

Conclusion

Davis was, by nineteenth century standards, particularly well qualified as a missionary bishop. The first of his family to receive a full secondary education, he entered the monastery aged nineteen years. In addition to the classical education at St. Gregory’s, Davis studied music, poetry and drama; areas of study that allowed him freedom to develop his gifts of artistic expression. The average age of the staff at St. Gregory’s and Downside was less than thirty years of age. This contributed to a lack

²⁵⁰ Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848, M113.

²⁵¹ Moore to Morrall, 9/12/1848, B Coll M 115, DA. quoted in Kavenagh, “My dear Alphonsus..,” 47.

of pedagogical rigor, experience and reduction in student enrolments due to the uncertainty of tenure before being transferred to a parish or mission.

Some of the teachers at Downside Abbey who probably taught and influenced Davis in some way were studied. One teacher, Prior Thomas Brown became significant because of a number of letters forwarded to him over the period of about a month by members of Davis' family. The letters concerned the imminent death of Davis' father requesting Charles and Edwin be allowed compassionate leave to visit him in Usk. What is important to note was the refusal by Brown. This rejection caused the Davis family to be understandably annoyed. Whilst the Davis' were angry with Brown, Davis continued to see Brown as a great confidant and spiritual advisor, demonstrated by a profound letter of appreciation to him from Davis. The greater part of this letter expressed an errant side of Davis' nature only Brown knew about. It was speculated Davis was refused permission was because he may have been struggling with his vocation only months before his ordination to priest.

Davis performed significant roles at Downside, fulfilling each position commendably. In December 1847 Davis ceased these roles, except Parish Priest of St. Benedict's. It was suggested Davis' appointment to the Diocese of Maitland and Coadjutor to Polding on 24 September 1847 was most likely the reason he was relieved of these roles.

A perceived tension between Davis and Prior Wilson during the mid-1840s was explored. It was indicated Davis' desire for a more challenging position of leadership and his lengthy tenure at Downside may have contributed towards this conflict.

It was also revealed Davis had never been the first choice for the role of Polding's Coadjutor. Rather, a number of earlier candidates were preferred by Propaganda Fide to Davis. Even though Polding considered Davis was the better nominee, and Pius IX

had eventually given his papal assent for Davis to be consecrated Bishop and appointed Polding's Coadjutor, Propaganda Fide ignored this, suggesting Polding should once again ask Burchall to reconsider the offer to be his Coadjutor. Contemporary literature suggests by inference that Davis was the only candidate nominated and selected to be Polding's Coadjutor. The author has shown this was not the case. Did Propaganda Fide or Downside doubt Davis' capability to carry out the role? Most likely not. Davis had been effectively undertaking six concurrently-held significant positions at Downside over a number of years. Practically speaking, the monastery did not want to lose him to Australia because he was exceptional at what he did. Did they think he was too young for the position of Bishop? Again, probably not. Tidmarsh had been considered over Davis, and Tidmarsh was twenty-nine years of age and had only been ordained twelve months. Burchall was three years older than Davis and had been the Prior of St. Edmunds since 1841.²⁵² Propaganda Fide felt Burchall was more suitable for the role of Bishop because of his experience, but Davis was eventually chosen. It seems unusual that Wilson remained curiously 'silent' throughout the entire selection process. Although this is pure conjecture, perhaps Wilson thought it better for their relationship that Davis be relocated to Sydney.

Davis took about six months to raise the funds for his trip to Sydney, receiving no immediate financial assistance from Polding, the EBC or the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He depended on the Colonial Office, London and his friends. Eventually he sailed from England on 20 August 1848, arriving at St. Mary's, Sydney on 8 December 1848.

²⁵² Birt, H. *Obit book of the English Benedictines*, 178.

Chapter 2

Charles Henry Davis – his early life

Since there are virtually no surviving records relating to his childhood, the following discussion hinges on the author's attempts to build up a contextual outline by exploring Davis' family pedigree. This includes a study of his immediate family based on extant Census records for Wales and England, vital records that pertain to a variety of birth, marriage and death, oral histories, and a selection of personal letters. By building a profile of Davis' family and examining the social structure of early nineteenth century Usk, including those relating to the Catholic Missions of Monmouthshire, one will begin to distinguish key aspects of Davis' emerging early life and faith dimension.

The township of Usk

The town of Usk, where Charles Davis was born, has been described as both a market settlement and a “sleepy, little town, where even the river goes softly”¹ and is located 230 kilometres from London.² Only a few years after Davis had left Usk to study at St. Gregory's in Bath, it was reported the buildings were “in general ancient and irregularly disposed...and [Usk was] a town of very remote antiquity,”³ remaining “in much the same condition it had been for centuries.”⁴ The sizeable remains of the cylindrical 12th century castle “perched on a cliff above the river” could be seen from the Davis home in nearby Porth-y-carne Street.⁵ The township of Usk covered an area of 383 acres during Davis' childhood years and was originally named Caer Wysg

¹ G. W. Wade and J. H. Wade, *Monmouthshire*, (London Methuen & Co. Strand, 1909), 254.

² See Appendices No. 1 and 2 for maps of Usk.

³ The 1830 *Usk Gazette*, [page unknown], from a scanned document provided by the Gwent Record Office, 3/4/2009; hereafter referred to as *UG*.

⁴ Bradney, *History of Monmouthshire*, 11.

⁵ Wade and Wade, *Monmouthshire*, 254.

(the fortress on the river Usk); but colloquially, it was known as Brynbuga. Usk broadened out into a rich countryside from the rows of streets that constituted the town.⁶ The chart below provides an indication of its gentle growth in population from 1801 to 1831:

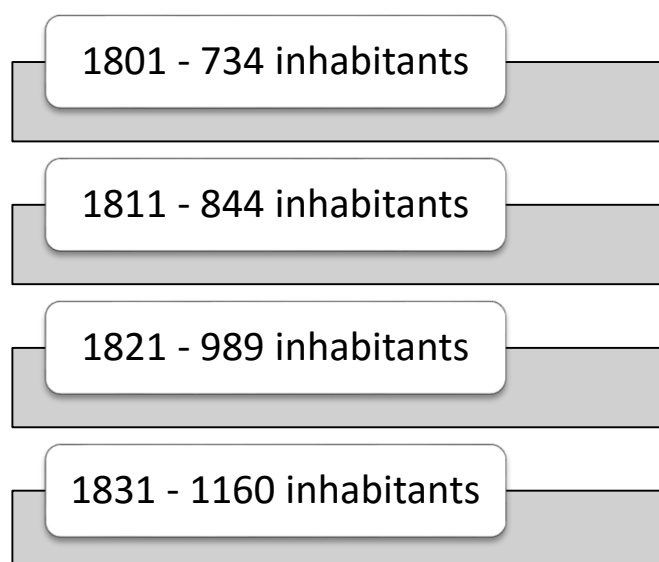


Figure 1: Population of Usk: 1801 - 1831⁷

Davis' great-great-grandfather, Richard Davis, arrived in Usk in the early 18th century and operated there as a farmer. The area of local farming estates, which included the Davis property, were generally sizeable, equating to around 100 to 200 acres each. An extant tithe certificate belonging to Michael Davis, (either Charles Davis' father or brother) shows he grew substantial amounts of wheat, barley and oats incurring a tithe of £202 10s for one year's harvest.⁸ This was a significant amount of money and reflected the wealth of the Davis family.

⁶ Joseph Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire: The Hundred of Usk*, Part 1, Volume 1, (Mitchell, Hughes & Clarke, 1921), 1.

⁷ Bradney, *History of Monmouthshire*, 1.

⁸ *Tithe Certificate of Michael Davis in the parish of Trostrey*, (n.d.), Courtesy of Carole Marshall, 22/3/2009. Carole Marshall is the great, great, great grand-daughter of Charles Davis' sister Jane. Marshall lives in Canada. In addition to its farming products, Monmouthshire was well-known for its export of mineral produce such as coal and ironstone. In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, there

Each Friday the Usk market sold local produce, and on the first Monday of each month, there was an extended market that sold farming stock. Fairs were held on 18 – 20 of April and on the Monday before Christmas, cattle and farming stock were sold.⁹ No doubt the Davis family would have helped connect with the community spirit of the town by supporting the local economy selling some of their produce.

Religion played a considerable function in shaping Welsh culture. The chart below indicates the major denominations in the County of Monmouthshire. Roman Catholics in Monmouthshire are negligible in comparison to Protestants.¹⁹

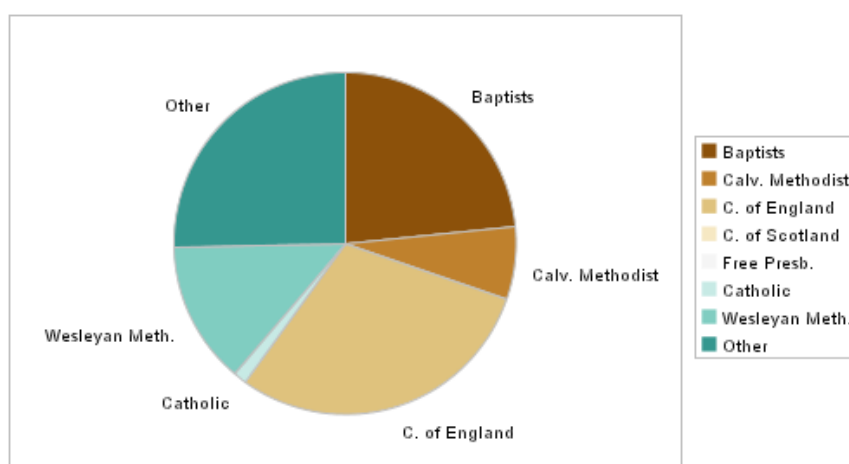


Figure 2: Religious Denominations in Monmouthshire, c. 1851.

Recusancy

In the history of England and Wales, the term ‘recusant’ referred to those who refused to attend Anglican services, and remained loyal to the Roman Catholic

were 74 collieries located at Pontypool, Aberyschan, Pentwyan, Blaenavon, Nantyglo, Beaufort, Tredegar, and the vales of the Ebbw, the Sirhowy, and the Rumney. “Descriptive Gazetteer Entries for Monmouthshire,” http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/place_page.jsp?p_id=1136, [accessed 25/4/2009]; M. Ember & C. R. Ember, ed., *Wales, Countries and their Cultures* 4, (USA: Macmillan Reference, 2001), 243.

⁹ The 1830 *UG*, [page unknown].

¹⁹ http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_cube_chart_page.jsp?data_theme=T_REL&data_cube=N_RE L1851_attend&u_id=10039691&c_id=10001043&add=Y, [accessed, 25/4/2009].

Church. Some general discussion about recusancy becomes highly relevant to Charles Davis' experience of religious faith.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, the *Recusancy Acts* were enacted imposing various types of punishment such as fines, property confiscation and imprisonment, and in some cases capital punishment on those who did not participate in Anglican religious activity. In England, Roman Catholics were “gagged, and bound by a multiplicity of restraints and penalties” dating from the Elizabethan era.²³ From the sixteenth century onwards, Roman Catholics were considered a seditious group whose allegiance to the Crown and Parliament was regularly in doubt.

Under the *Act of Uniformity* (1559) those who missed Sunday services or holy days were punishable by a fine of one shilling. Later Acts of Parliament imposed a fine of twenty pounds for each continued absence of four weeks. The seizure of two-thirds of one's lands and all goods could be imposed in lieu of the monetary fine.²⁴ The celebration of Mass and the institution of priesthood suffered under recusant Acts. One statute (1585), for example, ordered all priests ordained after 1559 to leave England. Those who remained longer than forty days were liable to be executed. Those who harboured or aided Catholic priests could be charged as felons and hanged.²⁵ By the eighteenth century it was generally accepted that Catholics, priests and missions in England and Wales were declining. The Rev. T. G. Holt writes:

The blame has been laid on the conforming to the established Church, or the dying out, of families who had long supported priests and missions, on the shortage of vocations to the priesthood, on the intermittent enforcement of the penal laws, or even the infectious religious indifference of the century.²⁶

²³ Earnest G. Rupp, *Religion in England 1688-1791*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 184.

²⁴ J. A. Williams, “English Catholicism under Charles III: the legal position,” *Recusant History* 7, no. 3, (October 1963): 125.

²⁵ Williams, *English Catholicism under Charles III: the legal position*, 127.

²⁶ T. G. Holt, “A note on some eighteenth century statistics,” *Recusant History* 10, no. 1, (January 1969): 3.

In the eighteenth century however, Catholicism in Monmouthshire was able to maintain its adherents from the gentry to the working class. Moreover, there was a strong presence of middle class Catholics who owed their livings to the patronage of the gentry. Bradney observed: “in Monmouthshire the principles of the old Catholic faith [has] never been lost to a large number of people. Many families of position in this district continued to adhere to the old doctrines.”²⁹

Discussion about the effects of recusancy in the county of Monmouthshire and the emergence of the Catholic Missions in Monmouthshire during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century places the Davis family in a religious context; particularly since Davis' grandfather was a recusant and public opinion towards Catholicism was generally hostile.

It would seem the anti-Catholic panic which emerged because of the perceived 'Popish Plot' was for the most part, an urban experience. Monmouthshire remained relatively unscathed:

London and its Parliament were far from looming large in the consciousness of Monmouthshire man. He reserved his awe for the local justices, his respect for the party squirearchy of his little parish, and...regarded Bristol as the centre of the world.³⁰

Extant records, for instance, reveal a list of 'Popish Recusants' presented at the Monmouth Quarter Sessions from 1716-1719. Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield from the hamlet of Wyesham in the parish of Dixton were presented before the Grand Jury on only eight occasions over a two and a half year period:

²⁹ Bradney, *History of Monmouthshire*, 22.

³⁰ Guy, *Eighteenth-century Gwent Catholics*, 82.

1716 April 16: Presented by the Constable of the Hamlett (sic) of Wyesham. Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield as fitt (sic) for service.
1716 Dec. 10: The constable of Wyesham hamlet presents Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield as fit for service.
1717 Jan. 14: Mary Duffield is presented as fit for service.
1717 May 6: Hamlet of Wyesham. Absentees from service and fitt (sic) for service: Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield.
1717 July 15: Hamlet of Wyesham. Those fitt (sic) for service: Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield.
1718 Jan 20: Hamlet of Wyesham. Marg^t and Mary Duffield fit for service.
1718 Oct. 6: Wyesham hamlet. Marg^t and Mary Duffield. Absenters from service.
1718 Oct. 20: Wyesham hamlet. Margaret Duffield and Mary Duffield for service.
1719 Oct. 19: Wyebridge Ward. Ben Williams, Mad^m Morgan, Popish Recusants.³¹

The appearance of only two Catholics from the County of Monmouthshire from April 1716 to October 1718 suggests the local constable seemed to tolerate practising Catholics, especially since “the town and neighbourhood of Monmouth at this time, and for long afterwards, abounded in *obstinate Papists*.”³² Interestingly, there are no records of fines or other penalties imposed upon these women (or the two other defendants on 19 October 1719). One would imagine if any fines had been imposed, they would have been recorded. Records indicate the practice of presenting alleged recusants in Monmouth was disappearing:

The custom of presenting the Recusants at the Sessions was evidently becoming obsolete. It died a lingering death in 1720, after a final flicker of life in 1719, in which year a last spasmodic attempt was made by the Justices to schedule the Catholics throughout Monmouthshire. It is surprising that so few persons should be presented here, and those almost exclusively from one place, especially in view of the censure on the constables in 1716 for their neglect of duty in this respect.³³

³¹ Matthews, “Names of Catholic’s presented at the Monmouth Quarter Sessions for the non-attendance at Protestant worship in the Parish Church,” <http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/catholic-record-society-great-britain/miscellanea-volume-9-hta/page-16-miscellanea-volume-9-hta.shtml>, accessed 1/4/2014.

³² J. H. Matthews, “Some Records of the Monmouth Missions,” *Miscellanea IX*, (London: Aberdeen University Press, 1911): 132.

³³ “Some Records of the Monmouth Missions, Publications of the Catholic Record Society,” <http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/catholic-record-society-great-britain/miscellanea-volume-9-hta/page-16-miscellanea-volume-9-hta.shtml>, (accessed 4/1/2015).

Catholicism was deep-seated in Monmouthshire and fundamental to these families who were also an exceptionally tight-knit community. Martin Havran wrote: “The smallness of most parishes necessarily drew people into close association, and the bonds so engendered were quite as strong as religious beliefs.”³⁴ Whilst the law forbade the practice of Catholicism, the homes of the landed gentry of Monmouthshire became the centres of Catholic worship. The Gunters of Abergavenny, the Milbornes of Wonastow and the Powells of Perthir maintained Catholic chapels and priests throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thomas Gunter likewise hosted Fr. Philip Evans and his chapel in the attic of ‘The Cardiff Arms’ and often housed a congregation in excess of those attending the Anglican church.³⁵ Similarly, local Catholics met in various locations throughout Monmouthshire, “including the Robin Hood Inn in Monmow Street.”³⁶ The local Catholic gentry of Monmouthshire not only supported the clergy in the eighteenth century, they also provided most of the personnel from local families who ministered in the area and abroad as priests. Some of the local women became nuns.³⁷

During the eighteenth century, “Mass was celebrated in the house” of Richard Davis, the grandfather of Charles Davis, “by a secular priest from Llanarth.”³⁸ Given the Davis’ local status, the author made a thorough check of *Burke’s Landed Gentry: The Principality of Wales and The North West* and *Burke’s Peerage, Baronetage and Knighthood* and was unable to locate any evidence that the Davis family, or any related

³⁴ Martin Havran, *The Catholics in Caroline England*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 99; also quoted in Guy, *Eighteenth-century Gwent Catholics*, 79.

³⁵ J. R. Guy, “The Anglican patronage of Monmouthshire recusants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: some examples,” *Recusant History* 15, no. 6, (October 1981): 452.

³⁶ Donald Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales – a record of the past century*, (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1935), 50.

³⁷ Jenkins, “A Welsh Lancashire”? 181.

³⁸ Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales*, 51.

family member such as the Jones, Watkins, Davids or Morgans had any links to the landed gentry.³⁹

One reason why Anglican incumbents of local parishes tolerated Catholics was because of their own genealogical links to Catholic families.⁴⁰ Catholic families “were some of the most powerful and influential families in the country”⁴¹ even though they were not always deemed to be excessively wealthy. There were gentry who made less than £150 a year, but could boast great local power.⁴²

Davis’ maternal grandfather’s *Last Will and Testament* (William Jones, ‘gent’)⁴³ does not reveal the income from his farm properties, but it does show an ownership of what appears to be a significant amount of land:

1. ‘Copyhold messuage [sic] outhouses, farm and lands with the appurtenances called ‘Tuy Gwyn’ situate in the parish of Langwm Ycha.’ This land was bequeathed to Jones’ wife ‘for and during the term of her natural life and from and immediately after her decease, to the use of my daughter Jane Jones [**Charles Davis’ mother**], her customary heirs and assigns forever’;
2. ‘Messuage or tenement garden, orchard, and several parcels of land thereto belonging, called *Gwern Lead*, situate in the parish of Landenny in the said County’;
3. ‘Several parcels of land called *Clyr Dee*, with the coppice woods thereunto belonging, situated in the parish of Langwm Ycha’;
4. ‘Freehold and copyhold estates (not hereinbefore devised)’; and
5. A sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, bequeathed to his two other daughters and grandchild. The final paragraph reads that ‘the goods, chattels and credits...do not amount in value to the sum of six hundred pounds.’

³⁹ <http://www.burkespeerage.com/home.php>, accessed 5/1/2015.

⁴⁰ Guy, “The Anglican patronage of Monmouthshire recusants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: some examples,” 453.

⁴¹ Guy, “The Anglican patronage of Monmouthshire recusants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: some examples,” 452.

⁴² Jenkins, “A Welsh Lancashire?,” 176. See Guy, “Eighteenth-century Gwent Catholics,” 9; Refer to Edgar Estcourt and John Payne, *The English Catholic Nonjurors of 1715* (London: Burns & Oates, c. 1885), 181, 182, for examples of men who claimed the title ‘gent’ who lived in modest properties: “John Williams of Llanbadoc, ‘gent’, was the possessor of a freehold house at Usk, an estate valued at £17 10s.; John Pritchard of Gwenddew, ‘gent,’ possessed a freehold at Abergavenny worth £10 7s.; and Walter Williams, ‘gent,’ had a life interest in an estate at Rockfield worth £28 13s.”

⁴³ William Jones - *Last Will and Testament* (1797): Proved 12/10/1797, from Langwm Ycha in the County of Monmouth.

Local Catholics were to some degree reliant on the rites of the Church of England; probably due to the shortage of Catholic priests. This dependence was significant in relation to baptisms, marriages and burials. John Aveling indicated “many of the lay Catholic children might often be baptised at the Anglican Church, wives churched there, marriages be celebrated there and the dead buried in church graveyards with Anglican rites.”⁴⁴

Whilst some Catholics in the area were sometimes able to be baptised or married by Catholic priests, albeit in secret, burials were generally performed according to Anglican usage. Clandestine burials and matters concerning probate, the bequeathing of property and assets would have been difficult to conceal.⁴⁵ Extant burial records at St. David’s Anglican Church, Trostrey reveal, as a case in point, many of Davis’ immediate family including his grandmother, uncle, father, mother and sisters are buried in its graveyard.⁴⁶ Whilst staunchly Catholic, the Davis family was constrained by the law and buried under the Anglican funeral and burial rites. The records revealed the following:

1. [Altar Tomb]: Sacred to the memory/ of M^{rs}. *Mary Davis* [**Charles Davis’ grandmother**] / late of Lancayo / wife of M^r. *Rich. Davis* of that place who / died March y^e 27th 1812 aged 70 (?) years.⁴⁷
2. [Upright stone]: In memory of James [**Charles Davis’ uncle**] / eldest son of Richard Davis / formerly of Lancayo / who died 5 April 1840, aged 73.
 - a. Also Michael [**Charles Davis’ father**] / third son of the said Richard Davis / who died 14 April 1847, aged 74.
 - b. Also Jane [**Charles Davis’ mother**] / wife of the above named Michael Davis / who died 2 April 1855, aged 79.⁴⁸
3. [Upright stone]: In memory of Jane [**Charles Davis’ sister**] / Daughter of / Michael & Jane Davis / of the Town of Usk / who departed this life / the 24th day of February 1810 / Aged Fifteen Months / Mary Teresa [**Charles**

⁴⁴ J.C.H. Aveling, “The marriages of Catholic Recusants, 1559-1642,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14, no. 1 (1963): 70; cited in Guy, “Eighteenth-century Gwent Catholics,” 84.

⁴⁵ J. A. Williams, “English Catholicism under Charles II: the legal portion,” *Recusant History*, 7, no. 3, (October 1963), 127.

⁴⁶ See Appendices No. 3 for a photograph of St. David’s Anglican Church.

⁴⁷ Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, 92.

⁴⁸ Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, 92.

Davis' sister] / another daughter died / September 8th 182? / Aged 2 Years .. 6 Months.⁴⁹

4. [Upright stone]: In / memory of / William Morgan / [very faint] – **[this may be the grave of Richard Davis' wife's father].**

Catholic Missions in Monmouthshire

An Act of Parliament called the *Roman Catholic Relief Act* (1778) was passed allowing Catholics in Britain certain religious, political, educational and economic rights. Any Catholic swearing this oath could not be prosecuted for being a Papist. Moreover, whilst Catholics were able to inherit and purchase land, a Protestant heir was no longer empowered to enter and enjoy the estate of his Catholic kinsman. The *Roman Catholic Relief Act* (1791) was more wide-reaching because in addition to protecting Catholics from prosecution as Papists, or for being educated in Catholicism, it also allowed priests to say Mass and belong to any ecclesiastical order or community. Catholics, however, were required to swear an *Oath of Allegiance* to the monarchy and support the Protestant Succession to the throne under the *Act of Settlement* (1701).⁵⁰ Three recusants from the parish of Monmouth subscribed to the *Oath of Allegiance* on 20 August 1778; namely, Elizabeth Jones, Teresa McCarty and Charles Davis' great grandfather, "Rich^d Davis of Llancaio" before the Commission of Justices.⁵² Likewise, another eight recusant Catholics from the parish of Usk subscribed to the *Oath of Allegiance* on 25 August 1791. Two of these locals were Catholic priests: "Walter

⁴⁹ Trostrey: St. David's, *The Graves*, <http://www.cefnpennar.com/trostrey/church.htm>, [accessed 10/4/2009].

⁵⁰ The legislation outlined in the *Roman Catholic Relief Act* (1791), allowed Catholics to enter professions of counsellor and barrister at law, attorney and solicitor. Charles Davis' brother, nephew and great-nephew, Michael Davis, Thomas Watkins and John Maitland Watkins respectively, became Attorney's and Solicitors. See *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, "The Roman Catholic Relief Bill," see <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13123a.htm>, [accessed 17/4/2009].

⁵² J. H. Matthews, "Appointment of a Committee for the erection of the Catholic Chapel at Monmouth," *Publications of the Catholic Record Society* IX, *Miscellanea* VII, (London, Aberdeen University Press: 1911), 136.

Watkins of Abergavenny, priest; Edward Jones of the Tump, Lanarth, Priest.” One other from this group was Charles Davis’ grandfather, “Richard Davis of Lancayo (sic) in the Parish of Usk, Yeoman.”⁵³ Given the families devoted Catholic background it is little wonder why two of Davis’ brothers became priests.⁵⁴

By the end of the 18th Century the local Catholics were numerous and confident enough to build a place of worship. A committee in Monmouth was appointed in 1792 to begin the process of building a chapel for “the Catholicks (sic)...having laboured under the considerable inconveniences in regard to a place of worship.”⁵⁵ Buildings known as “domestic chapels” were located at Talacre, Llanarth and Courtfield in Monmouthshire, while local Catholics, not living in these areas, had to rely on “the ministrations of itinerant missionaries.”⁵⁶ In 1800, the parish of Usk received a Catholic priest.

In 1806, a Catholic chapel was built in Porth-y-carne Street, the street where Davis and his family resided.⁵⁷ Not only did this chapel serve the spiritual needs of the Catholic community for many years, it serviced local Catholics in the parishes of Llanarth and Newport.⁵⁸ The chapel continued to minister to local Catholics until a

⁵³ J. H. Matthews, “Some Records of the Monmouth Mission,” *Publications of the Catholic Record Society* IX, *Miscellanea* VII, (London, Aberdeen University Press: 1911), 136.

⁵⁴ Their father entered Downside too, but did not complete his seminary training.

⁵⁵ Matthews, “Appointment of a Committee for the erection of the Catholic Chapel at Monmouth,” 144.

⁵⁶ Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales*, 66.

⁵⁷ The Chapel’s location was traditionally opposite to where Blessed David Lewis SJ was martyred in 1679. Fr. David Lewis was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1970. The following is an excerpt from Lewis’ last words: “My religion is Roman Catholic; in it I have loved above these forty years; in it now I die, and so fixedly die, that if all the good things in the world were offered to me to renounce it, all should not remove me one hair’s breadth from the Roman Catholic faith. A Roman Catholic I am; a Roman Catholic priest I am; a Roman Catholic priest of that order known as the Society of Jesus, I am;” See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Lewis_\(Jesuit\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Lewis_(Jesuit)) accessed 20/5/2015; see Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, 35. Since Davis’ house was so close to the place Lewis was killed, it would have had an impact on Davis’ religious imagination.

⁵⁸ Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales*, 52.

Catholic Church was built in Porth-y-carne Street in 1846 on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Fr. David Lewis SJ, fifty metres from the location of his hanging.⁵⁹

By the nineteenth century, a mixture of “apathy and failure of the missionary spirit,” as well as a fading out of gentry families contributed towards a reduction of indigenous Catholics in northern Monmouthshire.⁶⁰ In other parts of Monmouthshire, however, Catholicism continued to be practiced by all classes of the local community. It is within this milieu that Davis developed his faith and the love of service that culminated in his later ordination to priesthood.

Davis’ family ancestry

Bradney’s “Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk” provided a reference point for a more detailed search of Davis’ genealogical origins.⁶¹ Most of this independent research offers a detailed family context for the first time.⁶² As indicated previously, the archive of Downside Abbey was unable to offer any significant family information other than Davis’ admission to St. Gregory’s and Downside and his appointment and ordination dates.⁶³

The main intention behind studying Davis’ ancestry was to gain a better understanding of the context of Davis’ robust faith. Besides plotting his family history,

⁵⁹ J. H. Clark, *The Roman Catholic Church, Usk - Past and Present, Antiquities - Castle, Church - Customs and Claims – Priory – Charters – Charities - Scraps and Facts*, (Usk: County Observer Office, 1891), 202; also refer to Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire*, 36. Dissenting Chapels were also built in Usk: Wesleyan Methodist Chapel – 1817; Baptist Chapel – 1842; and Independent or Congregational Chapel was rebuilt – 1862. Refer to Clark, J. *The Roman Catholic Church, Usk - Past and Present, Antiquities - Castle, Church - Customs and Claims – Priory – Charters – Charities - Scraps and Facts*, (Usk: County Observer Office, 1891), 202. By 1827, the resident priest, Fr. Morton, similarly ministered to Catholics in Newport, Cardiff and Pontypool. By 1838, there were 76 priests ministering to local Catholics. See Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales*, 52.

⁶⁰ Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales*, 33.

⁶¹ Bradney, “Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk,” 40.

⁶² Please refer to Appendices for the Davis genealogical chart.

⁶³ This information is available in the publication, *List of boys at St Gregory's: Douay 1614-1793, Acton Burnell 1794-1814, Downside 1814-1972*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1972).

land ownership, inheritance, his education and seminary training at Downside Abbey and community history pertaining to his family in Wales was traced. The family history was also studied to ascertain whether Davis' premature death in 1854 at the age of thirty nine years may have been due to a family predisposition to heart disease. But other than the death after a stroke of his sister at fifty years of age, there does not appear to be any indication of premature death within his immediate family.⁶⁴

Whilst the occupation of 'yeoman' became obsolete after Charles Davis' grandfather, the social status of the Davis family continued to grow and the family achieved a significant reputation. Bradney wrote that the Davis family "occupied a prominent position in [Usk]" for "many years."⁶⁵ The *1841 Wales Census* indicated Davis' parents lived in Porth-y-carne Street, Usk with two of their children: Michael, Jane and two servants.⁶⁶ The employment of servants suggests a solid social standing within the community.⁶⁷

Following the death of Davis' father in 1847, his mother left the Porth-y-carne street address and resided with her daughter in Cardiff until her own death in 1855. The *1851 Wales Census* reveals Davis' brother Michael was an Attorney and Solicitor who remained at the Porth-y-carne street residence with his wife Catharina Davis (nee Borini) and their four children and three "domestic servants."⁶⁸ Records also point to him inheriting a prominent legal business once owned by Thomas Prothero, a leading

⁶⁴ Please refer to the Appendices for Davis' genealogical chart.

⁶⁵ Bradney, "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk," 41.

⁶⁶ Wales 1841 Census - Class: HO107; Piece 749; Book: 23; Civil Parish: Usk; County: Monmouthshire; Enumeration District: 1; Folio: 5; Page: 1; Line: 18; GSU roll: 438845.

⁶⁷ Davis' father was the local Land Valuer and Property Auctioneer, and as such, was a specialist surveyor who advised clients on all aspects of valuation of property; Wales 1841 Census - Class: HO107; Piece 749; Book: 23; Civil Parish: Usk; County: Monmouthshire; Enumeration District: 1; Folio: 5; Page: 1; Line: 18; GSU roll: 438845. From a scanned document provided by the Gwent Record Office, 3/4/2009, the 1830 UG recorded the occupation of Michael Davis as "Auctioneer and Agent to the Protector to the Fire Officer," (page unknown).

⁶⁸ Wales 1851 Census - Class: HO107; Piece: 2450; Folio: 137; Page: 2; GSU roll: 104190. See Appendices No. 4, 5, & 6, for photographs of the extant Davis residence: Coach House & Stables, Rhiw Castell, and Michael Davis' Law business, Porth-y-carne Street, Usk.

solicitor and “clerk of the peace for the county.”⁶⁹ This business finally “descended to Mr. John Maitland Watkins, grandson of Michael Davis [Jnr.]”⁷⁰

Not only was Michael Davis a solicitor; he also dabbled in local politics. He was one of twenty residents to be nominated to the Local Government Board by local owners and rate payers. Davis withdrew his nomination before the election on 7 February 1873.⁷¹

His wife, Catharina Borini was born in Birmingham (1817) and was married in 1842 in Birmingham.⁷² Birmingham is about 180 km from Usk and it is not known why Davis was there, or how he came to meet Borini. What is clear is that her father came from Italy and owned a successful business in Birmingham from 1815-1842 manufacturing scientific instruments.⁷³ His business continued to expand because he had to move to “more extensive premises” to accommodate his “manufacture of every Description of Looking Glasses, Picture Frames, Barometers, Thermometers, hour, Half hour, three Minutes, fourteen Seconds, and twenty-eight Second Glasses.”⁷⁴ Davis’ marriage into a presumably wealthy industrial family probably did not greatly enhance his fortunes since he was already a successful solicitor and land owner but it certainly would not have harmed them.

A check of the *1881 Wales Census* revealed that Michael Davis’ family still resided in Porth-y-carne Street with his two daughters, Agnes and Gertrude, his son Bernard, his sister-in-law Anna Borini and two servants in a residence now called the “Mission House in Rhiw Castell.”⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Bradney, “Ty-brith,” *A History of Monmouthshire*, 37.

⁷⁰ Bradney, “Ty-brith,” *A History of Monmouthshire*, 37.

⁷¹ Bradney, “The Borough of Usk,” *A History of Monmouthshire*, 20.

⁷² *BMD Index*, (GRO reference: September, District: Birmingham, Vol. 16, 353).

⁷³ A. D. Morrison-Low, *Making Scientific Instruments in the Industrial Revolution*, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishers, 2007), 300.

⁷⁴ Morrison-Low, *Making Scientific Instruments in the Industrial Revolution*, 113. See also 301 and 396.

⁷⁵ Wales 1881 census - Class: RG11; Piece: 5257; Folio: 4; Page: 2; Line: GSU roll: 1342265.

It was fortunate to have located Mrs Esme Weare, the secretary to John Maitland Watkins – legal partner and nephew of Michael Davis, Mrs Esme Weare - aged ninety-seven years and still living in Michael Davis' 'Rhiw Castell' was able to provide details about Michael Davis and his residence:

Michael Davis was a solicitor in Usk. He lived in a house called *Rhiw Castell*. (It was, and is, in Porth-y-carne St. Usk). *Rhiw Castell* is the name of my house which was built in 1846. It is situated almost alongside the office block...but in between is a driving way to what were the stables and coach houses belonging to this house. There are two houses here now, both joining and alike, but apparently at that time, in the 1840s it was all one big house. In it lived a Deaconess...but I do not know to which denomination she belonged or if she had any family. One part of the house was for the Deaconess and the other part was for the servants, so they were people of some wealth...Could this have been the Mission House?⁷⁶

Weare provided a drawing for the author describing the location of 'Rhiw Castell' in relation to Michael Davis' business address, the Catholic Church and Castle Vale; (the residence of the Reverend John Saunders, master of the 'Free Grammar School'). The drawing is reproduced below.⁷⁷



Figure 3: The location of the Davis family house.

Weare's account of Michael Davis' occupation and residence correspond to records that indicate the 'Mission House' was a substantial building and was probably physically connected to 'Rhiw Castell' during the 1840s. Records also reveal some of

⁷⁶ Email from Weare to Pender, 24/4/2009.

⁷⁷ Email from Weare to Pender, 24/4/2009.

the Davis' engaged in occupations that were lucrative and unlike the professions of their forebears. This would explain why Michael Davis (snr.) was able to send his six sons to St. Gregory's for their education.

Whilst a thorough "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk" is available in the Appendices, the following two charts ("Close Family of Charles Henry Davis" and "Close Family of William Jones" (Charles Davis' maternal grandfather)) are provided to help the reader distinguish the various family relationships that emerge in the next part of this study.

Figure 4: Descendants of Richard Davis, I

1st Generation

1. **Richard Davis, I**. He married **Mary Davis [David]**.

Children of **Richard Davis, I** and **Mary Davis [David]**

- i. 2. **Richard Davis, II** died in 1749.

2nd Generation (Children)

2. **Richard Davis, II** died in 1749. He married **Mary Davis [David]**. **Mary**, daughter of **Thomas David** and **Rebecca David**, died in 1776.

Children of **Richard Davis, II** and **Mary Davis [David]**

- i. 3. **Richard Davis, III** was born in 1736 and died in 1801.

3rd Generation (Grandchildren)

3. **Richard Davis, III** was born in 1736 and died in 1801. He married **Mary Davis [Morgan]**. **Mary**, daughter of **William Morgan**, was born in 1742 and died in 1812.

Children of **Richard Davis, III** and **Mary Davis [Morgan]**

- i. 4. **James Davis** was born in 1766 and died on an unknown date.
- ii. 5. **Michael Davis, I** was born in 1773 and died in 1847.
- iii. 6. **Joseph Davis** was born in 1776 and died in 1852.
- iv. 7. **George Davis** was born in 1782 and died in 1838.

4th Generation (Great-grandchildren)

- 4. **James Davis** was born in 1766 and died on an unknown date.
- 5. **Michael Davis, I** was born in 1773 and died in 1847. He married **Jane Davis [Jones]**. **Jane**, daughter of **William Jones** and **Margaret Jones [Evans]**, was born in 1776 and died in 1855.

Children of **Michael Davis, I** and **Jane Davis [Jones]**

- i. 8. **Richard Davis, IV** was born in 1806 and died in 1882.
- ii. 9. **William Davis** was born in 1807 and died in 1869.
- iii. 10. **Michael Davis, II** was born in 1812 and died in 1887.
- iv. 11. **Charles Henry Davis** was born in 1815 and died in 1854.
- v. 12. **Jane Davis** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
- vi. 13. **Jane Watkins [Davis]** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
- vii. 14. **Edwin Davis** was born in 1821 and died in 1880.

- 6. **Joseph Davis** was born in 1776 and died in 1852.
- 7. **George Davis** was born in 1782 and died in 1838.

5th Generation (Great(2)-grandchildren)

- 8. **Richard Davis, IV** was born in 1806 and died in 1882.
- 9. **William Davis** was born in 1807 and died in 1869.

Descendants of **Richard Davis, I**

- 10. **Michael Davis, II** was born in 1812 and died in 1887. He married **Catharina Davis [Borini]**. **Catharina** was born in 1817 and died in 1867.
- 11. **Charles Henry Davis** was born in 1815 and died in 1854.

12. **Jane Davis** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
13. **Jane Watkins [Davis]** was born in 1816 and died in 1868. She married **Thomas Watkins**. **Thomas** was born in 1821 and died in 1867.
14. **Edwin Davis** was born in 1821 and died in 1880.

Figure 5: Descendants of William Jones

1st Generation

1. **William Jones** was born in 1721 and died in 1797. He married **Margaret Jones [Evans]**.

Children of **William Jones** and **Margaret Jones [Evans]**

- i. 2. **Leonard Jones** was born in 1764 and died on an unknown date.
- ii. 3. **Elizabeth Jones** was born in 1768 and died on an unknown date.
- iii. 4. **William Jones** was born in 1772 and died in 1829.
- iv. 5. **Margaret Jones** was born in 1773 and died in 1858.
- v. 6. **Jane Davis [Jones]** was born in 1776 and died in 1855.

2nd Generation (Children)

2. **Leonard Jones** was born in 1764 and died on an unknown date.
3. **Elizabeth Jones** was born in 1768 and died on an unknown date.
4. **William Jones** was born in 1772 and died in 1829.
5. **Margaret Jones** was born in 1773 and died in 1858.
6. **Jane Davis [Jones]** was born in 1776 and died in 1855. She married **Michael Davis, I**. **Michael**, son of **Richard Davis, III** and **Mary Davis [Morgan]**, was born in 1773 and died in 1847.

Children of **Jane Davis [Jones]** and **Michael Davis, I**

- i. 7. **Richard Davis, IV** was born in 1806 and died in 1882.

- ii. 8. **William Davis** was born in 1807 and died in 1869.
- iii. 9. **Michael Davis, II** was born in 1812 and died in 1887.
- iv. 10. **Charles Henry Davis was born in 1815 and died in 1854.**
- v. 11. **Jane Davis** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
- vi. 12. **Jane Watkins [Davis]** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
- vii. 13. **Edwin Davis** was born in 1821 and died in 1880.

3rd Generation (Grandchildren)

- 7. **Richard Davis, IV** was born in 1806 and died in 1882.
- 8. **William Davis** was born in 1807 and died in 1869.
- 9. **Michael Davis, II** was born in 1812 and died in 1887. He married **Catharina Davis [Borini]**. **Catharina** was born in 1817 and died in 1867.

Children of **Michael Davis, II** and **Catharina Davis [Borini]**

- i. 14. **Charles M Davis** was born in 1844 and died in 1905.
- ii. 15. **Frances Mary Davis** was born in 1845 and died on an unknown date.
- iii. 16. **Gertrude Mary Davis** was born in 1849 and died on an unknown date.
- iv. 17. **Bernard Davis** was born in 1856 and died on an unknown date.
- 10. **Charles Henry Davis was born in 1815 and died in 1854.**
- 11. **Jane Davis** was born in 1816 and died in 1868.
- 12. **Jane Watkins [Davis]** was born in 1816 and died in 1868. She married **Thomas Watkins**. **Thomas** was born in 1821 and died in 1867.

Descendants of William Jones

Children of **Jane Watkins [Davis]** and **Thomas Watkins**

- i. 18. **Francis W. Watkins** died on an unknown date.
- ii. 19. **John M. Watkins** died on an unknown date.

iii. 20. **Wilfred E. Watkins** died on an unknown date.

13. **Edwin Davis** was born in 1821 and died in 1880.

4th Generation (Great-grandchildren)

14. **Charles M Davis** was born in 1844 and died in 1905.

15. **Frances Mary Davis** was born in 1845 and died on an unknown date.

16. **Gertrude Mary Davis** was born in 1849 and died on an unknown date.

17. **Bernard Davis** was born in 1856 and died on an unknown date.

18. **Francis W. Watkins** died on an unknown date.

19. **John M. Watkins** died on an unknown date.

20. **Wilfred E. Watkins** died on an unknown date.

Charles Davis' family

(Paternal grandfather) - Richard Davis

While the Davis' were described as a family who "were adherent to the catholic faith."⁷⁸ The paternal connection to the Catholic Church, however, only extends back to Charles Davis' grandfather, Richard Davis. He was an Anglican who converted to Catholicism to marry Mary Morgan. A longer Catholic lineage can be traced back through Davis' grandmothers' paternal pedigree, thus:

Richard [Davis] came from Carmarthenshire about 1730, and married Mary, the daughter of Thomas David of Llancaio. His son, Richard was at Llancaio, and through his marriage with Mary, daughter of William Morgan of Troy, became a catholic.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Bradney, "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk," 41.

⁷⁹ Bradney, "Ynys-hafod," 41.

Richard Davis (Charles Davis' grandfather) was a "yeoman," suggesting he was probably a farmer and small land owner. His father, Richard Davis (snr.) was a "yeoman," as well as Richard Davis' (snr.) father-in-law Thomas David who lived in Llancaio, Wales.⁸⁰ The title "yeoman" which suggests that the family were freeholders is used to describe the Davis family for at least three generations and various local family lineages owning several estates in Monmouthshire married into the Davis family for well over a century.

(Father) - Michael Davis (1772 – 1847)

Michael Davis was born in Usk in 1772. His father was Richard Davis and his mother was Mary Morgan (daughter to William Morgan of Troy, "yeoman").⁸¹ Michael Davis had sixteen siblings; thirteen were brothers and three were sisters.⁸² He married Jane Jones in 1802 in the parish of Llangeview.⁸³ Bradney suggests Charles Davis had six siblings.⁸⁴ Records show there were in fact two other siblings who died as infants.⁸⁵

One example of Davis' father's commitment to living out his faith is reflected in his contribution to the planning and building of new alms-houses in Usk. Davis was

⁸⁰ It appears Richard Davis' wife Mary David divorced him and married John James of Pentwyn in Gwelhelog, (yeomen) and had two other children: John James and Ann James. See Bradney, "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk," 40.

⁸¹ Troy is located 3 miles south west of the county town of Monmouth. Welsh: *Llanfihangel Troddi*, that is 'church of St. Michael on the River Trothy.' The English name of the parish derives from the name of the river, the Welsh *Troddi* becoming Trothy and then Troy. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitchel_Troy, [accessed on 14/4/2009].

⁸² Bradney, "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk," 40.

⁸³ See "Monmouthshire Marriages, 1725-1812," <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~monfamilies/grooms-d.html>, [accessed 5/5/2009].

⁸⁴ Bradney, "Pedigree of the family of Davis of Usk," 40. His siblings were: Richard (1805 – 1889), William (1807 - 1869), Michael (1812-1887), James (?), Jane Florence (1818 – 1868) and Edwin (1819 – 1888).

⁸⁵ The children were: Jane (1808 – 1810, aged 15 months) and Mary Teresa (died in 182? aged two years and 6 months). See <http://www.cefnpennar.com/trostrey/church.htm>, "Trostrey: St. David's – the graves," surname: Davis, [accessed on 9/4/2009]. See Appendices No. 7 for a photograph of the graves. Courtesy of Esme Weare.

elected to a vestry sub-committee at St. Mary's Anglican Church on 29 September 1825.⁸⁶ His job was to oversee the erection of "new and convenient [alms-houses] for the reception of the poor."⁸⁷ The alms-houses were described as being in a "ruinous state" and were "totally unfit for the residence of the poor."⁸⁸ This sub-committee consisted of Davis, four other men, and the vicars of St. Mary's Priory.⁸⁹ They reported their opinions on local land values at a parish meeting on 20 October 1825.⁹⁰ Being a Catholic, Davis was probably appointed because of his expertise gained as a land valuer and auctioneer,⁹¹ particularly since the main purpose of the group was to ascertain "the practicality of effecting the sale of such part of the property now vested in this parish...and also the probable value of the same, and also take into consideration the most desirable place for erecting new Houses."⁹²

It was recommended the land be sold for £400.⁹³ Davis' responsibility was to advertise the sale of the old alms-houses and lands in Usk.⁹⁴ This project was to benefit the poorer members of the local Usk community by providing improved housing. He was able to offer professional advice to the parish of St. Mary's and provide a service

⁸⁶ The word "vestry" refers to a room in the parish church and a meeting of parish officials. It was where the minister kept his vestments and prepared for divine service. The name of the room came to signify the group of men who governed a parish because it was where they met. For a more detailed account of a *vestry*, please see: <http://www.ancestry.it/learn/library/article.aspx?article=6345>, [accessed 6/4/2009].

⁸⁷ John Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," *Usk - Past and Present, Antiquities - Castle, Church - Customs and Claims – Priory – Charters – Charities - Scraps and Facts*, (Usk: County Observer Office, 1891), 131.

⁸⁸ Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 131.

⁸⁹ Reverend Thomas Addams-Williams and the Reverend James Barnard Davies. See Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 131-132.

⁹⁰ Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 131-132.

⁹¹ Generally, churchwardens, the parish clerk, overseers of the poor, surveyors of the highways and police were appointed to vestry committees; See <http://www.ancestry.it/learn/library/article.aspx?article=6345>, [accessed 14/4/2006].

⁹² Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 131.

⁹³ Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 133. After auction, the land that had the previous Alms-houses sold for £235, see 135.

⁹⁴ Clark, "Erection of the Almshouses," 136. Davis was reimbursed £9 8s 7p for advertising. The cost of the new Alms-houses built in 1826 totalled £662.

to the poor and disadvantaged.⁹⁵ Perhaps Charles Davis' knowledge of the almshouses through his father sowed the seeds of his empathy with less privileged people and later inspired him to minister to, and fight for the moral privileges of convicts on Cockatoo Island, Sydney during his ministry there.

All six of Michael Davis' sons were educated at St. Gregory's. The following list provides the names of his sons who attended and the dates they spent there:

1. Richard Davis: March 1823 - 1824.⁹⁶
2. William Davis: October 1823 – September 1829.⁹⁷
3. James Davis: April 1827 – April 1827.⁹⁸
4. Michael Davis: January 1825 - December 1826.⁹⁹
5. **Charles Henry Davis: 1826 – 1833.**¹⁰⁰
6. Edwin Davis: 1836 – 1838.¹⁰¹

Of the six Davis brothers who attended St. Gregory's, three of them remained and became Benedictine priests:

1. Richard Davis: (Dom Francis Davis) – professed 1824.¹⁰²
2. **Charles Henry Davis: (Dom Charles) – professed 1833.**¹⁰³
3. Edwin Davis: (Dom Oswald) – professed 1838.¹⁰⁴

It is not known how the Davis family became involved with Downside Abbey. John Butler presumes the connection grew from contact with Dom Anselm Lorymer (1751 –

⁹⁵ See Appendices No. 8 & 9 for a photograph of the exterior and interior of St. Mary's Anglican Church.

⁹⁶ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 33.

⁹⁷ "An Old List of Boys," *Downside Review*, (July 1904): 149.

⁹⁸ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 34; "An Old List of Boys," 149.

⁹⁹ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 34.

¹⁰⁰ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 34.

¹⁰¹ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 37.

¹⁰² *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 229.

¹⁰³ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 229.

¹⁰⁴ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 229.

1832) who came from Monmouthshire and had been associated with St. Gregory's since 1768.¹⁰⁵

(Mother) - Jane Davis (née Jones) (1776 – 1855)

Davis' mother was born Jane Jones on 10 April 1776 at Allt-y-Bella, Llangwn to William Jones (1721-1797), "yeoman" and Margaret Jones (1741/42 - ?).¹⁰⁶ The baptism certificate indicates her parents began living at "Alta Villa" in 1764. This residence was originally built three miles from Usk¹⁰⁸ in the mid-fifteenth century. It was a traditional single-storey cruck-framed building with wooden mullions and leaded lights, and was originally named "Alltabilla House."¹⁰⁹ In 1599, Roger Edwards added a three-storey Renaissance tower.¹¹⁰ The building had few owners and was largely tenanted; at one stage by the Jones'.¹¹¹ The *1832 Electoral Register* revealed that "Alltt-y-Billa" was occupied by Francis Evans who acted as the "tenant of lands" for an "annual rent of £50."¹¹² Francis Evans was the nephew of William Jones, and was born at Jones' "Ty-Gwyn farm," Llangwn in 1796. His father was Philip Evans, who was the brother of Margaret Jones (née Evans).

Jones descended from a family who had considerable financial status, inheriting a large amount of land. Her father was a "yeoman" who owned property. His properties

¹⁰⁵ J. Brian Butler, "Dear Little Charlie," *Tjurunga* 73, (November, 2007): 41-42.

¹⁰⁶ See Appendices, No. 10: Allt-y-Bela, Langwyn. The house where Davis' mother was born.

¹⁰⁸ See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/3342777/A-towering-achievement.html>, [accessed 9/4/2009].

¹⁰⁹ Bradney, "The Grammar School," 42.

¹¹⁰ See http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/legacies/heritage/wales/w_se/index.shtml, [accessed 9/4/2009]. Not much is known about Edwards other than he was wealthy and founded the local grammar school and alms-houses at Coed-cwnwr in the parish of Llangeview in 1621. See Bradney, "The Grammar School," 41.

¹¹¹ See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/3342777/A-towering-achievement.html>, [accessed 9/4/2009]. The 1841 census records the residence as Att-y-Billa, but does not record the Jones family residing there anymore.

¹¹² "Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2788," *1832 Monmouthshire Electoral Registers*, [Francis Evans].

comprised the “Ty-Gwyn” and “Cly-Dee” farms located in “Llangwn Ycha”; a property in the parish of Landenny; including freehold and copyhold estates.¹¹⁴

After the death of her mother, Jones inherited the farm at “Ty-Gwyn.” Records reveal Michael Davis (Jones’ husband) was accountable for the “copyhold house and lands situated at Tu-Gurin [Ty-Gwyn] farm, Llangwn Ycha.”¹¹⁵ Following the death of her brother in 1829, Jones (and her two sisters) further inherited equal shares of “all the rest and residue...[of her brothers]...personal property...as tenants in common...not to be subject or liable to the debts, controul (sic) or engagements of their...husbands...but the same to be at their own free sole and separate disposal.”¹¹⁶

One can only imagine the grief she suffered following the deaths of her two infant daughters, her parents, her husband and finally her son, Charles Davis on the other side of the world eleven months before her own demise in Usk on 2 April 1855. It was surprising to discover that records indicated Jane Davis was baptised a Catholic on the day of her death. She had lived her life in a strongly Catholic home with three of her sons becoming priests. How extraordinary she was not a Catholic.¹¹⁷

(Sister) Jane Florence Watkins (née Davis) (1818-1868)

Davis’ sister, Jane Watkins (née Davis) provided an example of her fidelity and affection to the Catholic Church by directing in her *Last Will and Testament* her desire that her children were to continue being raised as Catholics:

¹¹⁴ William Jones - *Last Will and Testament* (1797): Proved 12/10/1797.

¹¹⁵ “Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2786,” *1832 Monmouthshire Electoral Registers*, [Michael Davis]. Whilst the name on the Register reads: *Tu-Gurin farm, Llangwn Ycha*, the probable name is *Ty-Gwyn farm, Llangwn Ycha* as specified on the *Last Will and Testament* of William Jones (1797).

¹¹⁶ William Jones - *Last Will and Testament* (1829): Proved 18/8/1829. See Appendices No. 11 for a copy of his Last Will and Testament, courtesy of Carole Marshall.

¹¹⁷ Llangwm Bishop Transcripts: 1696-1801, entry number 203. Jane had five other siblings: Leonard (baptised 25/4/1764), Elizabeth (baptised 11/1/1768), Anne (baptised 17/6/1770), Margaret (9/11/1773), and Philip (14/9/1779); See Llangwm Bishop Transcripts: 1696-1801, entry numbers: 130, 158, 175, 193 and 223.

[M]y children to be brought up in the Roman Catholic religion...the said Michael Davis sole guardian of my children and shall have the sole direction...and bringing up of my children and shall have power to appoint by his Will or otherwise a guardian or guardians of my children and in default of his appointment that trustee or trustees for that time being of his Will being Roman Catholics shall be sure guardians...¹¹⁸

Davis' sister Jane was widowed on 14 May 1867 and had to care for three children: John Maitland (b. 1853), Francis William (b. 1854) and Wilfred Edwin (b. 1856). She died from a stroke eleven months later at the age of fifty.¹¹⁹ Watkins prepared her *Last Will and Testament* a few weeks after the death of her husband. It focused on her children who were to be cared for by her brother Michael Davis (a widower).¹²⁰

(Brother) Michael Davis (1812 – 1887)

Although Michael Davis did not become a Benedictine priest like his three brothers, he attended St. Gregory's and his contribution to the local Catholic Church of Usk was significant.¹²¹ Further letters from Mrs Esme Weare described Davis' role in the local Roman Catholic community, thus: "[H]e built the church called St. Francis

¹¹⁸ *Last Will and Testament* of Jane Florence Watkins (nee Davis), 4 June 1867, provided by Carole Marshall on 22/3/2009.

¹¹⁹ *Certified Copy of an Entry of Death*: Jane Florence Watkins, 1868. Application Number COL666691, dated 7/1/2008. Provided by Carole Marshall on 22/3/2009. See Appendices No. 12 for a copy of Jane Watkins' *Last Will and Testament* and *Certified Copy of an Entry of Death*.

¹²⁰ Michael Davis' wife Catharina Davis (nee Borini) died at Usk in 1862. The author cannot say definitively whether the children went to live with Michael Davis following their mothers' death. Perhaps they did; but only for a short time. His daughters Mary (24 years), Agnes (22 years), Gertrude (17 years), his sister-in-law Anna Borini (52 years) and two servants were living with Davis. The 1871 census reveals Jane Watkins' eldest son John Maitland Watkin's (18 years) resided in Castle Parade Usk as a lodger and 'scholar.' The author has been unable to trace the whereabouts of Jane Watkins' other two children, so it is unknown where they went to live after the death of their parents. John Maitland Watkins (1853-1931), Francis William Watkins (1854-1925) and Wilfred Edwin Watkins (1856-1935).

¹²¹ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 34. Michael Davis studied at St. Gregory's with his brother Charles Davis for one year (1826).

Xavier (Roman Catholic) which is next to Castle Vale. He only had to walk out of his home...and he was in the Church. They have a good congregation there still.”¹²²

The church, built in the Gothic style, is located in Porth-y-carne Street. Construction began on 27 August 1846 and was completed in 1847.¹²³ It replaced the original Catholic chapel in Porth-y-carne Street, almost opposite to the location of the traditional site thought to be the entrance to the town of Usk.¹²⁴ Whilst the details are scant, it was reported the “Roman Catholic Church was erected by subscription in 1847.”¹²⁵ This comment alludes to the voluntary offerings made towards the construction of the Church by people such as Michael Davis. Although Esme Weare never met Davis, his partner John Watkins would have discussed the contributions Davis made to the town of Usk in his role as solicitor, especially since Davis was also Watkins’ uncle. Esme Weare possessed memorabilia associated with Michael Davis, some of which she sent to the author of this study. The role Davis played both as a solicitor and active Catholic in the town of Usk must have been memorable. On the wall of the church near the altar there is a plaque dedicated to his memory alluding to his charity to the local Catholic community:

Of your Charity pray for the Soul / of / Michael Davis / of Usk, Solicitor/
WHO DIED ON THE 23rd OF JANUARY, 1887, / Fortified with all the Rites
of Holy Church. / ON WHOSE SOUL, SWEET JESUS, HAVE MERCY. /
R.I.P. ¹²⁶

¹²² Email from Weare to Pender, 12/3/2009. Esme Weare, aged 97 years, was the secretary of John Maitland Watkins. See Appendices, No. 13: St. Francis’ Catholic Church, Port-y-carne Street, Usk.

¹²³ Clark, *The Roman Catholic Church, Usk*, 202.

¹²⁴ Bradney, “Porth-y-carne,” 35.

¹²⁵ Clark, *The Roman Catholic Church, Usk*. 202.

¹²⁶ The photograph of Michael Davis’ altar stone was provided by Ms. Esme Weare, 12/3/2009.

Davis had five children: Charles Michael (b. 1844), Frances Mary (b. 1845), Mary Clare (b. 1847), Agnes Mary (b. 1853) and Bernard Francis (b. 1856). His two sons also studied at St. Gregory's, Downside:

1. Charles Michael Davis: August 1853 – July 1859.¹²⁷
2. Bernard Francis Davis: 1871.¹²⁸

The Davis family were passionate about their Catholic faith and had a close association with Downside Abbey for nearly eighty years: a link which began in 1823 with Richard Davis entering school at St. Gregory's and lasting until the death of their cousin Dom Joseph [George] Davis in 1900.¹²⁹

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to focus on the geographic and socio-economic contexts of nineteenth century Monmouthshire and Usk and to review Davis' ancestry, since little is known about Davis' childhood. The Davis family occupied a prominent social position in the town of Usk, possessing a significant level of wealth. Even though most of their assets were tied up in farming land, they lived a comfortable existence, enabling all sons to be educated at St. Gregory's. They were ardent Catholics and their pragmatic Catholicism in all likelihood inspired Davis' own faith journey and sense of mission.

There was some general discussion about Catholic recusancy in Britain and it was shown that Monmouthshire was largely overlooked by the local authorities,

¹²⁷ *Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's*, 41.

¹²⁸ *England 1871 census* - Class: RG10; Piece: 2472; Folio: 65; Page: 25; GSU roll: 835192.

¹²⁹ Butler, "Dear Little Charlie," 41.

probably because of its remoteness and rural nature. Many homes in Monmouthshire became the centres of Catholic worship during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries including the home of Davis' grandfather.

A Catholic chapel was built in Usk in 1806, followed later by a Catholic Church in 1847; both located in the same street as the Davis home. Twelve alms-houses were planned and built with cooperation from Davis' father. It was suggested his father's association with the alms-houses may have inclined Davis to minister to, and later challenge the immoral treatment of the convicts on Cockatoo Island, Sydney in his role as Polding's Coadjutor Bishop.

Chapter 1

Introduction

A Brief Overview of the life of Charles Henry Davis

Charles Henry Davis was born in Usk, Wales on 18 May 1815 and was enrolled as a student at St. Gregory's Monastery, Downside in England at the age of eleven years. Having completed secondary school, he entered Downside Abbey and studied to be a Benedictine priest. At Downside, his love of choral music, composition and organ playing emerged and he became monastery organist and precentor. Subsequent to his ordination in 1846, Davis became parish priest of St. Benedict's in the Parish of Downside from 1844 until 1848. In 1848, he was appointed Bishop Coadjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding, a Benedictine missionary in Sydney, Australia as titular Bishop of the Diocese of Maitland.

Davis arrived in Sydney in December 1848 and took up administrative duties at St. Mary's monastery attached to St. Mary's Cathedral. This allowed Polding and his Vicar General, Henry Gregory to pursue lengthy missionary journeys to various Catholics in remote districts. During their many absences, Davis was left in charge of the monastery. There is no evidence to suggest Polding placed Davis in charge of the Diocese during his frequent trips away from Sydney, except when Polding travelled to Rome in 1854 to resign as Archbishop. Feelings of dissatisfaction were developing within the monastery due especially to Gregory's questionable pastoral style. Davis showed leadership, compassion and understanding towards the monks at St. Mary's. His personality endeared him to everyone he dealt with. Besides Davis' daily episcopal

duties and administration tasks, he became chaplain to the Benedictine Sisters at 'Subiaco,' Rydalmere.¹

Davis' passion was music and education. Within the field of music, he restructured the cathedral choir by dismissing the professional singers and introducing young boys and monks into the choir. He composed numerous sacred works for organ and voice and performed outstanding examples of improvisation on the organ. He was also placed in charge of St. Mary's Seminary, a school for Catholic boys and those training for priesthood within the Benedictine tradition. From 1852 Davis administered St. Mary's College, Lyndhurst: a College for sons of wealthy Catholics which enabled them to matriculate and enter the University of Sydney. He was an original Fellow of the Senate of the University of Sydney and cooperated in establishing colleges of different religious denominations within the university.

Davis was subject to bouts of bad health during his six years in Australia. In particular, he suffered three life-threatening illnesses, caused by a persistent heart condition. His third bout of illness eventually killed him on 17 May 1854 whilst serving as the most senior Catholic cleric in Australia. When Davis died, Polding was in Rome offering his resignation as Archbishop of Sydney.

Davis was buried at 'Subiaco' and was later re-interred in the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral in 1945 under a policy established by Archbishop Norman Thomas Gilroy of bringing two Benedictines, Davis and Vaughan back to St. Mary's.

Key foci and methodology adopted

This study will adopt a largely eclectic and qualitative methodology in the investigation of this topic. It contains ten chapters covering the life and contribution of

¹Rydalmere is about 21 kilometres north-west of Sydney's CBD in the City of Parramatta.

Davis to the Catholic Church in colonial Australia. It is hoped that research such as this will serve as a catalyst for further studies and a deeper understanding of the early Australian Benedictine story.

It begins with a comprehensive historical background of Davis and his family from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. It seems that no one has ever attempted to trace the background of Davis and his family in such detail. Much of this section draws largely on various census data from the United Kingdom, marriage and death registers and extant wills. Contact was made with Esme Weare, the previous secretary of John Maitland Watkins who was the legal partner and nephew of Michael Davis, a brother of Charles Henry Davis.² She provided details regarding the Davis home in Porthycarne Street, Usk and Watkins' business. Similarly, a living descendant of Charles Davis' sister provided access to family wills.³

Davis' enrolment at St. Gregory's College, Downside and his subsequent formation as a Benedictine at Downside Abbey was explored. Sources such as Henry Norbert Birt's *Benedictine Pioneers and Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, Hubert Van Zeller's *Downside By and Large*, William Bernard Ullathorne's *The Devil is a Jackass* and the *Fasti Gregoriani* assisted in developing the context Davis probably experienced as a young student, and later as a postulant, novice and priest in the English Benedictine Congregation⁴.

To facilitate the examination of Davis' six years of missionary work in Sydney as Polding's Coadjutor, the author studied Davis' expertise as a musician; which included his role as cantor, composer and organist at St. Mary's Cathedral. Other aspects of Davis' missionary zeal centre on his ministry to the convicts on Cockatoo Island and

² When research began on Davis (2009), Weare was 97 years old.

³ Carole Marshall is the great, great, great grand-daughter of Charles Davis' sister Jane. Marshall lives in Canada.

⁴ Henceforth, the author will refer to the English Benedictine Congregation as the EBC.

his role as chaplain to the newly established Benedictine nuns at 'Subiaco' situated on the western outskirts of Sydney. His significant contribution to secondary education for boys at Lyndhurst and his role as a Fellow on the Senate of the University of Sydney was explored. A further aspect of Davis' immense contribution to the Catholic Church of Australia was his leadership in the Archdiocese of Sydney and St. Mary's monastery for an aggregate of three years whilst Polding and his Vicar General Henry Gregory engaged in numerous missionary journeys' inland and overseas.⁵

Finally, the three serious illnesses that affected Davis' ministry during much of his six years in Sydney, the circumstances of his illness culminating in his premature death on 17 May 1854 are described and the relocation of his remains to the crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral in 1945 are noted. This thesis concludes by reviewing all of the material presented in this study of the impact of Davis on the early Australian Catholic Church.

Literature Review

Very little has been written on the life of Davis or his contribution to the early Australian Catholic Church. Consequently, there was a reliance on an eclectic assortment of sources to gain a fuller understanding of his ministry. Surprisingly, in the past century or so, only four published articles have been written on Davis. These articles vary in length and detail but illustrate the workload he shouldered as Polding's Coadjutor given that his health was never robust. The articles are J. H. B. Curtis' "In Memoriam Reverendissimi Caroli Henrici Davis, OSB"; A. Brown's "Charles Henry

⁵ Please refer to the Appendices for a list of all their journeys during Davis' six years in Sydney.

Davis, OSB, 1815-1854: Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop"; M. Shanahan's "Bishop Davis: 1848-1854"; and J. B. Butler's "Dear Little Charlie".⁶

There are a number of books that contribute to our knowledge of Davis' influence at Downside and colonial Sydney. Dom Henry Norbert Birt's *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia* presented a detailed summary of the Benedictine story in Australia during the nineteenth century. In particular, it focused on Polding's immense impact on the early Australian Church; especially his 'Benedictine Dream.' Birt traced the arrival of Davis in Sydney and presented an invaluable perspective of Davis' six years in Sydney. Birt's research is important because his extensive use of primary and secondary sources are extensive and rich and make a significant contribution to the scholarly study of the Catholic Church in Australia.

An article by Anne Cunningham entitled, "Henry Norbert Birt's Sins of Omission: The Polding correspondence, a partial reappraisal" is an attempt to criticise Polding of social snobbery, anti-Irish prejudice and an incapacity for "real human contact"⁷ rather than focus on Birt's alleged selective use of the Polding correspondence.⁸ Terry Kavenagh responded with a scathing attack on Cunningham's article citing her charges against Polding to be "so overstated as to constitute a serious distortion."⁹

⁶ J.H.B. Curtis, "In Memoriam Reverendissimi Caroli Henrici Davis, OSB," *Austral Light*, (1/2/1902), also reproduced in Henry Norbert Birt, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911), 205-212 and "A Notice of Dr. Charles Davis, Bishop of Maitland;" *The Downside Review* 11, no. 2 (July 1902): 177-183; Alan Brown, "Charles Henry Davis, OSB 1815-1854: Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop," *ACR*, LIX no. 2 (April 1982): 212-216; M. Shanahan, "Bishop Davis, 1848-1854," *Manna*, no. 6, (1963): 50-62; J.B. Butler, "Dear Little Charlie": A Memoir of Charles Henry Davis, *Tjurunga* 73, (November 2007): 41-52.

⁷ Anne E. Cunningham, "Henry Norbert Birt's Sins of Omission: The Polding correspondence, a partial reappraisal," *Tjurunga* 46, (1994): 54.

⁸ Cunningham, "Henry Norbert Birt's Sins of Omission," 43-56.

⁹ Terence Kavenagh, "The Polding Correspondence: Norbert Birt's "Sins" revisited," *Tjurunga* 47, (1994): 45-62.

Sir Joseph Alfred Bradney's *A History of Monmouthshire: The Hundred of Usk*, contributed to the context of Davis' childhood in Usk, Wales,¹⁰ whilst the *List of boys at St Gregory's: Douay 1614-1793, Acton Burnell 1794-1814, Downside 1814-1972* recorded the students who attended Downside during Davis' time.¹¹ Another invaluable secondary source was Birt's *Downside: The history of St. Gregory's school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*. It gave an insight into daily life at Downside during Davis' time as a student, postulant and novice.¹²

Dom Hubert Van Zeller's *Downside By and Large* presented an overview of life at Downside during Davis' schooling and novitiate, comprehensively surveying the history of Downside as a developing institution.¹³ Similarly, William Ullathorne's *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop: the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne* was a valuable point of reference to the kind of education Davis undoubtedly received at Downside.¹⁴

The *Downside Review* provided a forum for scholarly discussion and debate on a range of topics and was an excellent source regarding monastic life at Downside during Davis' residency as a monk and priest.

A significant primary source was the *Benedictine Journal* 1848-51 and 1852-53 which gave an understanding of the daily lives of the monks of St. Mary's monastery, and in particular, Davis's leadership during Polding and Gregory's absences; his illnesses; and his daily duties as Coadjutor. Unfortunately journal entries ceased prior to Davis' death, so there is no information about the effects of his demise on the community at St. Mary's monastery. There are extant contemporaneous newspaper

¹⁰ Joseph Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire: The Hundred of Usk* 1, part 1, (Mitchell, Hughes & Clarke, 1921).

¹¹ *List of boys at St Gregory's: Douay 1614-1793, Acton Burnell 1794-1814, Downside 1814-1972*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1972).

¹² Henry Norbert Birt, *Downside: The history of St. Gregory's school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1902).

¹³ Hubert Van Zeller, *Downside By and Large*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1954).

¹⁴ William Bernard Ullathorne, *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop: the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, (London: Burns Oates, 1941).

articles and some private letters that offer some insight into the sadness and loss experienced by the Sydney community following Davis' death.

Based on extensive primary source material, the numerous articles on daily Benedictine life in colonial Sydney in *Tjurunga* by Terence Kavanagh presented the Catholic context under Polding's episcopacy.

The *Senate Minutes* from the University of Sydney provided an awareness of the process of the Senate and the significant contribution Davis made as a Fellow of the University.

Christopher Dowd's *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions, 1834–1884*¹⁵ is an important story that deals specifically with the early Australian Church under the episcopacy of Polding and its relationship with Rome, London, and Dublin. Dowd focuses on the development of an Australian hierarchy and its dealings with the papacy, particularly with the Congregation de Propaganda Fide. Whilst Polding tends to dominate the early story, Dowd examines Davis' leadership qualities and assesses how Davis responds to the collapse in morale at St. Mary's monastery in the early 1850s when both Polding and Gregory were absent on pastoral work in the vast Diocese. Dowd has made a thorough use of primary and secondary sources in English, Italian, and Latin and remains balanced in his judgments regarding the development of the early Australian Church.

Another valuable source of information was local newspapers. Publications such as *The Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Maitland Mercury*, *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, *Sydney Gazette* and *New South Wales Advertiser* and the

¹⁵ Christopher Dowd, *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions, 1834–1884*, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008).

Freeman's Journal provided eye-witness accounts and at times, in-depth coverage of events that concerned Davis, Polding and Catholic life in Sydney.

Another source was Cardinal Patrick Moran's massive *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*. Whilst it has been criticised for favouring the Irish over the English Benedictine elements in the Australian church hierarchy, it nevertheless, contains a remarkable collection of detailed source materials, organised with specific apologetic and polemic aims.¹⁶

Gregory Haines, Sister Mary Gregory Forster and F. Brophy's *The Eye of Faith: The Pastoral Letters of John Bede Polding*¹⁷ contains valuable historical documents which reveal important aspects of the changing nature of Catholicism and society in Australia from the 1830s to the 1870s. Moreover, these documents display something of the mind and heart of Polding and his pastoral concerns.

In relation to Davis' musicianship and improvisational skills at the organ and piano, John Whiteoak's *Playing Ad Lib* was used as a source of direct comparison with the authors' research.¹⁸ Whiteoak traced the importance of improvisatory musical practices in Australia from the early 1830s onwards. He explored in detail some of the musical genres that emerged in the Australian colonial context and assessed their contribution to improvisatory practice. Kavenagh's article, "Popular Music, Colonial Culture and the Sydney Benedictines" focused on the performance of sacred music at St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. It laid particular emphasis on the musicianship of Davis

¹⁶ Patrick F. Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, (Sydney: The Oceanic Publishing Company, 1895).

¹⁷ Gregory Haines, *The Eye of Faith: The Pastoral Letters of John Bede Polding*, ed. Mary G. Forster, and Frank Brophy, (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing, 1978).

¹⁸ John Whiteoak, *Playing Ad-Lib*, (Sydney: Currency Press, 1999).

and the influence of the Benedictines on liturgical music and its performance during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁹

Sources: availability and limitations

Other than Bradney's cursory outline of the 'Davis Family Tree,' there have been no attempts to research Davis' family in depth. Through the help of census records, birth, deaths and marriage certificates, wills and probate records; a 'Davis tree' covering two centuries was created in order to present a visual representation of who Davis was and where he came from. Limitations caused by human fallibility enter into record searches. The lack of Davis' baptismal record in Usk and the lack of a Will or probate documents – when some sources suggest there was a Will - is another example. Davis' official burial record was located and a copy can be found in the Appendices.

Additional limitations relate to the deficiency of archival material about Davis at Downside. Save for the names of classmates, the dates of his various appointments as a student, and as a novice and priest, it was necessary to rely on Ullathorne's autobiography and occasional articles in *The Downside Review* to draw assumptions about Davis' life at Downside.

Much of the research material came from the *Benedictine Journal*, 1848-51 and 1852-53. A large number of diverse sources on Davis are located at the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives, whilst the State Library of Victoria has possession of the *Downside* microfilm collection containing correspondence between St. Mary's Monastery and Downside.

¹⁹ Terence Kavenagh, "Popular Music, Colonial Culture and the Sydney Benedictines," *Tjurunga* 58, (May 2000): 63-70.

Since he has been described in various sources as an 'outstanding musician,' it was very disappointing to be unable to locate any extant music of Davis' from Downside's Archives. It is possible he brought his compositions and arrangements to Sydney in 1848 and stored them in St. Mary's Cathedral. If this was the case, all of his music would have been destroyed in the fire that engulfed the Cathedral in 1865.

It is impossible to know to what degree improvisatory practices occurred in Davis' organ and piano playing, especially when the words "improvise" or "extemporise" were sometimes not even mentioned in contemporary reports. In these cases, one must attempt to interpret the comments regarding his playing. Descriptions of his performances indicate his capacity for improvisation even without mention of the term itself.

In his doctoral dissertation, Whiteoak discussed similar difficulties encountered in his study of secular improvisatory musical practices during the colonial period. Primary sources tended to disregard the more informal elements of a performance, giving only pale, "highly refracted glimpses of the musical highlights of a concert and are therefore not necessarily representative of what actually took place."²⁰ Equally, the scarcity of references regarding improvisation in Davis' music may obscure practices that were far more frequent and widespread than previously considered. Often, the most common things such as glissandi, vibrato and rubato were not mentioned because they were always present.

Whilst access to copies of letters on microfilm from the Downside Archive was possible, it was disappointing that many of the images were of poor quality and difficult to read. Thankfully most of the extant letters of Polding were transcribed and

²⁰ John Whiteoak, "Australian Approaches to Improvisatory Musical Practice 1836-1970: a Melbourne Perspective," PhD diss., La Trobe University, 1993: 28.

assembled into a three volume publication.²¹ Many of Davis' letters were likewise transcribed and published in a single volume along with other correspondence from Polding.²² These volumes do not include Polding's Episcopal Pastoral Letters.

An outline of the study

Chapter One explains the methodology of this research and provides a literature review relative to this study. Chapter Two explores Davis' background by presenting a contextual overview of his childhood and a historical study of his family. Chapter Three is divided into two parts. Part One focuses on his secondary education at Downside and Part Two explores Davis' novitiate, ordination to the priesthood and later his episcopal ordination. Discussion focuses on his appointment as Polding's Coadjutor. Chapter Four examines the musicianship of Davis. Chapter Five investigates the establishment of the Benedictine nuns at Subiaco and Davis' chaplaincy to them. Chapter Six explores three significant areas of Davis' ministry during the early years of his appointment to Sydney: Cockatoo Island; the Roman Catholic Orphan School and the Irish Orphan girls at Hyde Park. Chapter Seven studies his contribution to Catholic education; in particular, his connection with St. Mary's Seminary, Lyndhurst and the University of Sydney. Chapter Eight investigates Davis' leadership role within the Sydney Catholic Church and specifically, the various changes instituted by him at St. Mary's during Polding's frequent absences. Chapter Nine examines Davis' three life-threatening illnesses beginning in 1849, culminating in his premature death on 17 May

²¹ M. Xavier Compton, *The Letters of John Bede Polding, OSB 1, 2 & 3*, ed. Terence Kavenagh, Pam Pullen, Marie Gregory Forster, Doreen Dyson, Clare Condon, M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Ursula Trower, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 1996).

²² M. Xavier Compton, *Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding, OSB 1*, ed., M. Peter Damian McKinlay, Doreen Dyson, (Glebe Point, NSW: Sisters of the Good Samaritan, 2000).

Introduction

1854, and draws together these various strands in the life and ministry of Davis and seeks to assess his importance.

REFERENCES

Newspapers and Magazines:

Australasian Bandsman

Australasian Chronicle.

Austral Light.

The Australian.

The Australian Band of Hope Review, and Children's Friend.

The Catholic Weekly

Catholic Worker

The Colonial Observer.

Empire.

Freeman's Journal.

Goulbourn Herald.

Illustrated Sydney News

Launceston Examiner.

Maitland Mercury.

The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser.

Morning Chronicle.

Moruya Examiner

The Port Phillip Gazette

Punch.

Queanbeyan Age and General Advertiser

South Australian Register.

Sydney Chronicle.

Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser.

Sydney Herald (supplement).

The Sydney Morning Herald.

The 1830 *Usk Gazette*, [Page unknown].

The 1842 *Usk Gazette*, [Page unknown].

Letters:

Charles Davis Correspondence:

Davis to Brown, 6/1/1840.

Brown to R. Davis, 8/1/1840.

Davis to Brown, 27/7/1840.

Davis to The Colonial Office, London, 10/1/1848.

Davis to The Society for the Propagation of the Faith – Lyon, 1/3/1848.

Davis to M. Choiselat-Gallien, 6/4/1848.

Davis to The Colonial Office, London, 10/7/1848.

Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848.

Davis to Heptonstall, 9/12/1848.

Davis to Heptonstall (?), 3/2/1849.

Davis to Brown, 6/1/1840, 27/7/1840, 3/2/1849.

Brown to Davis, 8/1/1840.

Davis to Wilson, 9/12/1848.

Davis to Wilson, 12/12/1849.

Davis to Wilson, 28/2/1849.

Davis to the Prior of Downside, 28/2/1849.

Davis to Willson, 7/1/1850.

Davis to Sweeney, 28/2/1850.

Davis to Heptonstall, 28/2/1850.

Davis to Heptonstall, 1/3/1850.

Thomson to Davis, 12/6/1850.

Davis to Colonial Secretary, 6/7/1850.

Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, 21/8/1850.

Davis to Heptonstall, 22/8/1850.

Davis to The Society of the Propagation of the Faith – France, 7/10/1850.

W. Elyard, Jun. to Davis, 26/5/1851.

Farrelly to Davis, 28/11/1851.

Address of Davis, Gould and Murphy to Pope Pius IX, n.d. (re Farrelly).

Davis to Colonial Secretary, 9/7/1852.

Davis to Br. Laurence, 15/10/1852.

Davis to Colonial Secretary, 20/10/1852.

Davis to Provincial, 25/2/1853.

John Polding Correspondence:

Polding to Phillips, 7/9/1827.

Polding to Brown, 25/2/1833.

Polding to Brown, 14/6/1837.

Polding to Heptonstall, 25/6/1838.

Polding to Heptonstall, 20/05/1839.

Polding to Heptonstall, 25/06/1839.

Polding to Propaganda Fide, 12/3/1842.

Polding to Fransoni, 8/5/1842.

Polding to Gregory, 16/8/1842.

Polding to Srs Scholastica Gregory and Benedict Edgar, 30/7/1844.

Polding to L. B. Barber, 6/12/1844.

Polding to Fransoni, 29/1/1846.

Polding to Fransoni, 22/2/1847.

Polding to Fransoni, 16/4/1847.

Polding to Fransoni, 5/3/1848.

Polding to Fransoni, 8/3/1848.

Polding to Society for the Propagation of the Faith [France], 16/5/1847.

Polding to L. B. Barber, 10/8/1847.

Polding to The Lady Abbess, Stanbrook, 6/10/1847.

Polding to Society for the Propagation of the Faith (Lyon), 7/10/1847.

Polding to Fr. Thomas Grant, 11/8/1847.

Fransoni to Polding, 30/9/1847.

Polding to Fransoni, 5/3/1848.

Polding to Fransoni, 8/3/1848.

Polding to Heptonstall, 20/10/1848

Polding to Von Hugel, 1/11/1848.

Polding to Barber, 18/11/1848.

Polding to Heptonstall, 18/1/1849.

Polding to Heptonstall, 31/1/1849.

Polding to Barber, 21/5/1849.

Polding to Barber, 22/5/1849.

Polding to Heptonstall, 5/6/1849.
Polding to Heptonstall, 19/6/1849.
Polding to Willson, 3/11/1849.
Polding to Casaretto, c. May 1851.
Polding to Farrelly, 29/11/1851.
Polding to Farrelly, late November 1851.
Polding to Cardinal Fransoni, 10 -12/12/1851.
Polding to Cardinal Fransoni, 29/12/1851.
Polding to de Chastelat, 6/3/1852.
Polding to Prioress of Princethorpe, 6/3/1852.
Fransoni to Polding, 3/1/1853.
Fransoni to Polding, 12/4/1853.
Polding to Fransoni, 20/3/1854.
Polding to Propaganda Fide, 1/7/1854.
Polding to Pope Pius IX, 8/7/1854.
Polding to The Warden and Members of the Guild of St. Mary and St. Joseph,
8/11/1854.
Polding to Barnabo, 11/8/1858.
Polding to Heptonstall, 26/2/1869.
Polding to Gregory, 1869.
Polding to Gregory, 6/10/1871.

Other Correspondence:

Morris to Lorymer (n.d.)
Lawson to Lorymer, 28 July 1815.
Lawson to Lorymer, August 1815.
Barber to Jenkins, 25/2/1822.
Jane Davis to Brown, 10/1/1839 [1840?].
Brown to R. Davis, 8/1/1840.
R. Davis to Brown, 10/1/1840.
Le Clerc to Barber, 14/2/1840.
Barnabo to Pius IX, 5/9/1847.
Grant to Barber, 29/9/1847.
Barber to Prest, 21/12/1847.

Barber to Wiseman, *Allanson Records IV*, Record CCCXXIV, 436, 626; see *Allanson History*, Vol. III, Pt 2.

Gourbeillon to his parents, 7/2/1848.

Moore to Morrall, 18/2/1848.

Sr. Scholastica to Reverend Mother, Princethorpe, 22/3/1848.

Sr. Scholastica to Reverend Mother, Princethorpe, 13/8/1848.

Moore to Morrall, 9/12/1848.

Moore to Morrall, 18/4/1849.

Le Clerc to Abbess of Stanbrook, June 1849.

Moore to Father President, 18/10/1849.

McEncroe to Pope Pius IX, 12/3/1851.

Thomson to McEncroe, 6/5/1851.

Farrelly to Frasoni, 24/12/1851.

Woolley to Deas Thompson, 1/9/1853.

Le Clerc to unnamed recipient, 21/5/1854.

Sr. Mary Walburge to Lady Abbess at Stanbrook, 22/5/1854.

Gleeson to Kelly, 16/11/1939.

Administrator to Secretary, Board of Health, Sydney, 1/6/1945.

Boyle (Secretary, Office of the Director of Public Health) to Rev. McCooe (Administrator, St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney), 21/6/1945.

Gilroy to Monsignor Davis, 25/8/1945.

Method Books (Published):

Czerny, Carl. *A Systematic Introduction to Improvisation on the Pianoforte, Opus 200*. Translated and edited by Alice L. Mitchell, (New York: Longman, Inc., 1983).

Edeson, J. S. *The Training of Catholic Choirs: a short treatise for choirmasters and organists*, (London: Cary & Company, N.D.).

Evans, E. (1844 - 1923), *Technics of the Organ: an illuminative treatise on many points and difficulties connected therewith*, (London: The New Temple Press, N.D.).

Nathan, I. *An Essay on the History and Theory of Music; and on the Guidelines, Capabilities and Management of the Human Voice*, (London: Whittaker, Ave Maria Lane, 1823).

_____, *The 1st, 2nd and 3rd of a Series of Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Music*, (Sydney, no publishers, 1856).

Patton, E. *Harmony Simplified for Popular Use: An Original Method of Applying the First Principles of Harmony to the Object of Accompanying the Voice on the Pianoforte*, (London: Novello, Ewer & Co. and Melbourne: Allan & Co. 1880).

Perrier, W. M. *W. M. Perrier's Harmonizer or, Instructions in the Art of Vamping, or Extemporizing on the Piano or Organ*, (Melbourne: Spectator Publishing, c. 1890).

Sawyer, F. J. *Extemporisation*, (London: Novello, c.1890).

References (published and unpublished):

Adjutor Deus, Documents and Resource Material: relating to the Episcopacy of Archbishop John Bede Polding, OSB, Vol.1, (2000 Sisters of the Good Samaritan).

Australian Government – Department of the Environment and Heritage, Australian Heritage Database, Places for Decision: Hyde Park Barracks, File No: 1/12/036/0105, Place ID: 105935, Date: 30/01/2007.

Barnewall, W. *The Downside Review, Music and Musicians at St. Gregory's*, Vol. VII, July 1888.

Benedictine Journal 1848-51

Benedictine Journal, 1852-53

The Birt Collection Index Cards.

Birt, H. N. 'Some Letters of Archbishop Polding', *Downside Review*, July 1902.

_____, *Obit book of the English Benedictines, 1600-1912*, (Edinburgh: J. C. Thomson at the Mercat Press, 1913).

BMD Index, (GRO reference: September, District: Birmingham, Vol. 16).

Clark, J. *The Roman Catholic Church, Usk - Past and Present, Antiquities - Castle, Church - Customs and Claims – Priory – Charters – Charities - Scraps and Facts*, (County Observer Office), 1891.

_____, *Erection of the Almshouses, Usk - Past and Present, Antiquities - Castle, Church - Customs and Claims – Priory – Charters – Charities - Scraps and Facts*, (County Observer Office), 1891

'Chronicles', *Subiaco*, Volume 1, 1849-1899, np. Courtesy of the Benedictine Congregation, Jamberoo Abbey, NSW.

'C. H. Davis' [box] - (no date), SAA.

Colonial Secretary, Correspondence received from Cockatoo Island 1848, 4/2794.4 (State Records NSW).

Cullen, J. H. "Bishop Willson and Norfolk Island," *Tasmanian Historical Research Association, Papers & Proceedings* 1, no. 2, (1952).

Downside Review, 'Memories II,' Volume VI, January 1887.

Downside Review, 'Music and Musicians,' Volume VII, July 1888.

Downside Review, Vol. XXI.

Downside Review, 'An Old List of Boys,' July 1904.

Downside Archives: 'Congregation History' folder.

Dolan, D. G. 'At the Dawn,' *Downside Review*, July 1901.

1832 Monmouthshire Electoral Registers, "Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2788."

1832 Monmouthshire Electoral Registers, "Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2786."

England 1871 Census - Class: RG10; Piece: 2472; Folio: 65; Page: 25; GSU roll: 835192.

Fasti Gregoriani (Brief Notices) respecting the members of St. Gregory the Great, of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation, from the time of its re-establishment in England, A.D. 1793.

"I Benedetti di Sydney. Il Risultato della Visitazione Apostolica fatta Maggio, 1877", Scritture Riferite nei Congressi SC, Oceania, 1877-8, Vol.II, 296-303, Archives of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples – formerly Propaganda – Rome.

Jones, W. - *Last Will and Testament* (1797): Proved 12/10/1797.

Jones, W. - *Last Will and Testament* (1829): Proved 18/8/1829.

Llangwm Bishop Transcripts: 1696-1801, entry numbers 203, 130, 158, 175, 193 and 223.

Monmouthshire Electoral Registers (1832) Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2786 [Michael Davis].

Monmouthshire Electoral Registers (1832) Langwm Ycha Parish, No. 2788 [Francis Evans].

'Old Time Gaol to be Pulled Down', 1/8/1908, 'Newspaper Cuttings', Mitchell Library, Q991/N, Vol: 6 – 10, [85-87, Vol. 9].

New South Wales - Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 – Burials, 1782 Vol: 119, 9/11/2008.

New South Wales Returns of the Colony, 1851 (Mitchell Library).

"Reports of Visiting Magistrate 1848-1853," *Cockatoo Island*, 4/1149.3 (Reel 608), (State Records NSW).

Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, Part 2: Brecknock, Cardigan, Radnor and Monmouth, 'Report on Monmouthshire,' (William Clowes & Sons, Stamford Street, For Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1847).

Royal Australian Historical Society, Journal 18, 1932 [991R Mitchell Library].

Senate Minutes (1851-1854) – Sydney University.

Sheridan M.S. (n.d. but c. 1878) in the Sheridan Papers, SAA.

Tithe Certificate of Michael Davis in the parish of Trostrey.

Vatican Council II, *Musica Sacram*, "Instruction on Music in the Liturgy," (5/3/1967), n. 67 in *Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979).

Wales 1841 Census - Class: *HO107*; Piece *749*; Book: *23*; Civil Parish: *Usk*; County: *Monmouthshire*; Enumeration District: *1*; Folio: *5*; Page: *1*; Line: *18*; GSU roll: *438845*.

Wales 1851 Census - Class: *HO107*; Piece: *2450*; Folio: *137*; Page: *2*; GSU roll: *104190*.

Wales 1881 Census - Class: *RG11*; Piece: *5257*; Folio: *4*; Page: *2*; Line: GSU roll: *1342265*.

Watkins, J. F. - *Last Will and Testament* (nee Davis), 4 June 1867.

Watkins, J. F. - *Certified Copy of an Entry of Death* (nee Davis), 1868. Application Number COL666691, dated 7/1/2008.

Reference Works (Secondary Sources):

Abercrombie, N. *The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop*, (London: Longmans, 1959).

Abraham, G. (ed.), *Handel, a Symposium*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

Attwater, D. *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales – a record of the past century*, (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1935).

Aveling, J. C. H. *The Handle and the Axe*, (Blond and Briggs: London, 1976).

Baker, T. *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians Compiled And Edited By With Portraits From Drawings In Pen And Ink By Alex Gribayedoff*, (New York: G. Schirmer, 1900).

Benson, C. I. *A Century of Victorian Methodism*, (Melbourne: Spectator Publications, 1935).

Bertie, C. H., *Isaac Nathan: Australia's First Composer*, (Sydney: Angus & Roberston, Ltd. 1922).

Birt, H. N. *Downside: The history of St. Gregory's school from its commencement at Douay to the present time*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1902).

_____, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, Vol. I, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911).

_____, *Benedictine Pioneers in Australia*, Vol. II, (London: Herbert & Daniel, 1911).

Blocker, J. S., Fahey, D. M., & Tyrell, I. R. *Alcohol and temperance in modern history: a Global Encyclopaedia*, (ABC-CLIO, 2003).

Bongiorno, F. *The Sex Lives of Australians: a History*, (Black Inc. 2012).

Bradney, J. *A History of Monmouthshire: The Hundred of Usk - Part 1*, Volume 1, (Mitchell, Hughes & Clarke, 1921).

_____, *A History of Monmouthshire: The Hundred of Usk - Part 1*, Volume 3, (Academy Books, 1993 – facsimile edition of the original edition 1921).

Brine, G. A. *A History of the Parish and Church of St. Benedict, Stratton on the Fosse, Somerset*, (Private publication: 1972).

Brown, C., *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750-1900*, (Oxford: Oxford University, 1999).

Cameron, J (Rev.), *Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales*, (Sydney: 1905).

- Campion, E. *Australian Catholics*, (Melbourne: Viking, 1987).
- Chittister, J. *The Rule of Benedict – Insights for the Ages*, (Crossroad – New York, 1992).
- Crook, P., Ellmoos, L. & Murray, T. *Assessment of Historical and Archaeological Resources of the Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney*, Volume 4 of the Archaeology of the Modern City Series, A Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales Publication, 2003.
- Cox, G. "Church Music in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, 1847-1997," *People of the Past? The Culture of Melbourne Anglicanism in Melbourne's Culture*, (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, 2000).
- Downside Abbey, List of boys at St Gregory's: Douay 1614-1793, Acton Burnell 1794-1814, Downside 1814-1972*, (Bath: Downside Abbey, 1972).
- Ember, M. & Ember C. R. (ed's.), *Wales, Countries and their Cultures*, Vol. 4, (2001 Macmillan Reference, USA).
- Daniels, F. *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Burials 1851-1915*, Number 26, 2008.
- _____, *South Western Catholic History, Stratton on the Fosse, Marriages, 1848-1915*, No. 25, 2007.
- Dowd, B. T. (Editor), & Foster, W. (Co-editor), *The History of The Waverley Municipal District*, Published by The Council of the Municipality of Waverley, 1959.
- Dowd, C. *Rome in Australia: The Papacy and Conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions 1834-1884*, (Leiden Boston, 2008).
- Estcourt and Payne, *The English Catholic Nonjurors of 1715* (London, n.d., c. 1885).
- Finn, E. ('Garryowen'), *The Chronicles of Early Melbourne, 1835-1852: Historical, Anecdotal and Personal*, (facsimile ed. Melbourne, Fergusson & Mitchell, 1888).
- Flannery, A. (ed.) 'Instruction on Music in the Liturgy,' *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, (Minnesota: The Liturgical press, 1979).
- Fogarty, R. *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*, Vol. II, (Melbourne University Press, 1957).
- Fowles, J. *Sydney in 1848*, (originally published in 1848, facsimile copy published by Ure Smith, Sydney 1973).
- Fry, T. (ed), *RB 1980: The Rule of Benedict, In Latin and English with Notes*, (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota: 1981).
- Griffiths, D. C. *Documents on The Establishment of Education in New South Wales*, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, 1957.

- Haines, G. (ed.) Polding, 'Pastoral Letter on St. Mary's Seminary, 7/4/1850,' *The Eye of Faith: The Pastoral Letters of John Bede Polding*, (Melbourne, 1977).
- Havran, M. *The Catholics in Caroline England*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).
- Herbert, T., *Bands: the Brass Band Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991).
- Hirst, J. B. *Convict Society and its Enemies: A History of Early New South Wales*, (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1983).
- Jenkins, D. *The Agricultural Community in South-West Wales at the turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Cardiff: 1971).
- Knowles, D. *The Historian and Character*, (Cambridge, 1964).
- Lane-Mullins, J. 'Memories of Lyndhurst,' *Manly*, (Journal of St. Patrick's Seminary), 1933.
- Laqueur, T.W. *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850*, (Yale University Press, 1976).
- Latta, D. *Lost Glories, The Vineyard-Subiaco*, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1986).
- Long, K. *The Music of the English Church*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971).
- Mansfield, J. "Music – A Window on Australian Christian Life," *Re-Visioning Australian Colonial Christianity: New Essays in the Australian Christian Experience 1788-1900*, (ed.) E. Campion and M. Hutchinson, (Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1994).
- Matthews, E. N. *Colonial Organs and Organ Builders*, (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1969).
- Moran, P. F. *The History of the Catholic Church in Australasia from Authentic Sources*, (The Oceanic Publishing Company, Sydney, 1896).
- Morrison-Low, A.D. *Making Scientific Instruments in the Industrial Revolution*, (Ashgate Publishers, Ltd. 2007).
- Morey, A. *Davis Knowles: a Memoir*, (London: 1979).
- O'Brien, E. M. *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1922).
- O'Day, R. *Education and Society, 1500-1800: The social foundations of education in early modern Britain*, (Longman: London & New York, 1982).

- O'Farrell, P. *The Catholic Church in Australia*, (Melbourne: Nelson, 1968).
- _____, (ed), *Documents in Australian Catholic History, Volume 1: 1788-1884*, 'Music and Liturgy in St. Mary's Cathedral under Bishop Davis, 1848-1854: A Memoir,' (Geoffrey Chapman, London: 1969).
- Pike, D. (ed), *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 1788-1850, A-H*, (Melbourne University Press, 1966).
- Richards, R. *Church and Priory of St. Mary, Usk*, (London: Bemrose & Sons, Ltd. 1904).
- Ritson, J. *Gammer Gurton's Garland or The Nursery Parnassus: A Choice Collection of Pretty Songs and Verses for the Amusement of all Little Good Children who can neither read nor run*, (London: 1810).
- Rodriguez, V. F. A. *The Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection*, Vol. 1–3, (St. Athanasius Press: 2000).
- Rouse, W.H.D. *A History of Rugby School*, 1898.
- Routley, E. *A Short History of English Church Music*, (London: Mowbrays, 1977).
- Rupp, E. G. *Religion in England 1688-1791*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986).
- Rushworth, G. D. *Historic Organs of New South Wales: The Instruments, Their Makers and Players, 1791-1940*, (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1988).
- Shanahan, M. *Out of Time, Out of Place*, (Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1970).
- Southerwood, W. T. *The Convict's Friend: a Life of Bishop Robert William Willson*, (Stella Maris Books, George Town, Tasmania, 1989).
- Suttor, T. L. *Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia 1788-1870: The formation of Australian Catholicism*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966).
- Turney, C., Bygott, U. & Chippendale, P. *Australia's First: A History of the University of Sydney*, Vol. 1 1850-1939, (Hale & Iremonger, Sydney: 1991).
- Ullathorne, W. B. *From Cabin-Boy to Archbishop: the autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne*, (Burns Oates, 1941).
- _____, *The Devil is a Jackass*, (Herefordshire: Gracewing Publishing, 1995).
- Van Zeller, H. *Downside By and Large*, (Sheed & Ward: London & New York, 1953).
- Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979).

Wade, G. W. and Wade, J. H. *Monmouthshire*, (London Methuen & Co. Strand, 1909).

Walsh, K. J. *Yesterday's Seminary: A History of St. Patrick's Manly*, (Allen & Unwin, 1998).

Whiteoak, J. *Playing Ad Lib*, (Sydney, Currency Press, 1999).

Whiteoak, J. & Scott-Maxwell, A. (eds.), 'Improvising Music,' *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia*, (Sydney: Currency House Inc., 2003).

Willson, R. "Report on Norfolk Island, 10 December 1849," in *British Parliamentary Papers, Crime & Punishment, Transportation*, 8, 1847-50, (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969).

Wright, D. & Clancy, E. *The Methodists: A History of Methodism in NSW*, (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1993).

Published Articles and Unpublished Papers:

Andrews, B. 'Polding's English Architects,' *Tjurunga*, No. 47, December 1994.

Aveling, J. C. H. 'The marriages of Catholic Recusants, 1559-1642,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14, 1 (1963).

'Band Life in Early Australian Days,' *Australasian Bandsman*, 26/10/1923.

Barnewell, W. 'Music & Musicians at St. Gregory's, II – 1838,' *Downside Review*, 90.

Bellenger, A. "Revolution and Emancipation," from D. Rees, ed., *Monks of England. The Benedictine's in England from Augustine to the Present Day*, (London: SPCK, 1997),

Brown, A. 'Charles Henry Davis, OSB, 1815-1854: Sydney's First Coadjutor Bishop,' *The ACR*, Vol. LIX April 1982, No. 2.

Butler, J. B. 'Dear Little Charlie,' *Tjurunga*, No. 73, November 2007.

Campbell, H. 'St. John's Chapel, Maitland,' (N.D. unpublished booklet from the Maitland Diocese).

Campbell, J. F. 'Journal and Proceedings,' *Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 15, 1929.

Carleton, F. R. L. 'Bishop C. H. Davis, OSB and Two Sixteenth Century Missals of a Common Provenance,' *ANZTLA Newsletter* 13, Sydney, July 1991.

"Cockatoo (Biloela) Island," *Royal Australian Historical Society*, Journal 18, 1932 [1991R Mitchell Library].

Cunningham, A. E. "Henry Norbert Birt's Sins of Omission: The Polding correspondence, a partial reappraisal," *Tjurunga* 46, (1994).

Curtis, J.H.B. 'In Memoriam Reverendissimi Caroli Henrici Davis, OSB,' *Austral Light*, 1/2/1902.

_____, "A Day in a Monastery," *The Austral Light*, 1/3/1902.

Donovan, J. J. 'On Church Music,' *First Australian Catholic Congress*, (Sydney: William Brooks & Co., 1900).

Fitz-Walter, M. F. 'Benedictinism in Australian Education,' *Tjurunga*, 1974/8.

Forster, M. Gregory, 'Magdalene le Clerc,' *Tjurunga*, Vol. 8 (1974).

_____, 'Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part I,' *Australasian Catholic Journal*, Vol. 23, October 1946, No. 4.

_____, 'Lyndhurst and Benedictine Education, Part IV,' *Australasian Catholic Record*, July 1947, No. 3, Vol. 24.

Gallegos, A. M. 'Spiritual Improvisation,' *Sojourners*, Vol. 28, July-August, 1999.

Gammon, V. & S. 'From 'Repeat and Twiddle' to Precision and Snap: the Musical Revolution of the Mid-Nineteenth Century' in Herbert, T., *Bands: the Brass Band Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991).

Gilchrist, C. "Space, Sexuality and Convict Resistance in Van Diemen's Land: 'The Limits of Repression,'" *Eras Journal*, Edition 6, 2004.

Gome, D. 'Australian Hymnody, 1821-1901: An Annotated Checklist of Sources in Australian Libraries,' *Continuo*, 24, 1995.

Guy, J. R. 'The Anglican patronage of Monmouthshire recusants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: some examples,' *Recusant History*, Vol. 15, No. 6, October 1981.

_____, 'Eighteenth-century Gwent Catholics,' *Recusant History*, Vol. 16, 1982.

Haines, G. 'Reflections on Polding,' *The Australian Catholic Historical Society*, Volume 5, Part 1, Sydney 1975.

Hastie, K. 'The Organ in Australia 1788-1888,' *The American Organist*, January 1988.

Hellings, T. L. 'Reminiscences of Band Life,' *Australian Band News*, 26/1/1917.

Holt, T. G. 'A note on some eighteenth century statistics,' *Recusant History*, Vol. 10, No. 1, January 1969.

Inglis, K. 'Religion and Society in Colonial Australia,' *Tjurunga*, May 1978/15.

Jenkins, D. 'A Welsh Lancashire'? Monmouthshire Catholics in the eighteenth century,' *Recusant History*, Vol. 15, No. 3, May 1980.

Kavenagh, T. J. 'Appendix 1 – Polding's Monks,' *Tjurunga*, 1974 – 8.

_____, 'My Dear Alphonsus...', *Tjurunga*, 1975/10.

_____, 'The Sydney Benedictine Journals,' *Journal of the Australasian Catholic Historical Society*, Vol. 6, Part 1, 1978.

_____, 'Aspects of Monastic Observance at Old St. Mary's,' *Tjurunga*, No. 27, 1984.

_____, 'Profession Dates (and Others) of the Monks of St. Mary's Sydney,' *Tjurunga*, No. 48, May 1995.

_____, 'Popular Music, Colonial Culture and the Sydney Benedictines,' *Tjurunga*, No. 58, May 2000.

_____, "Monk Voyager, Shipboard diary of Dom Gregory Kendal, November 1874-February 1875," *Tjurunga* 60, (2001).

_____, 'Polding Among the Germans,' *Tjurunga*, 69/2005.

_____, 'St. Mary's Seminary,' (unpublished hand written notes), n.d.

_____, 'The 1855 Declarations of St. Mary's Sydney: Adapting "RB" to Colonial Australia?' *Tjurunga*, 34 (1988).

_____, 'Obit List/History – "Subiaco" Rydalmere & Pennant Hills 1849-1985,' *Tjurunga* 30 (1986).

_____, "The Polding Correspondence: Norbert Birt's "Sins" revisited," *Tjurunga* 47, (1994).

_____, 'Distant Echoes: Aboriginal and Islander Boys at St. Mary's Sydney in the Mid-Nineteenth Century,' *Tjurunga* 76, May 2009.

Kope, K. 'Improvisation Remembered,' *Sacred Music*, Spring 1992, Vol. 119.

Livingstone, K. 'Anselm Curtis,' *Tjurunga*, 8 (1974).

Lunn, D. 'The English Benedictines in the XIXth Century,' *Tjurunga*, No. 8 (1974).

MacDonnell, F. 'Lyndhurst 1: Its History,' *Leichhardt Historical Journal*, No. 2, July 1972.

Mansfield, J. 'Music – A Window on Australian Christian Life,' *Re-Visioning Australian Colonial Christianity: New Essays in the Australian Christian Experience 1788-1900*, (ed.) E. Campion and M. Hutchinson, (Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1994).

Matthews, J. H. *Names of Catholic's presented at the Monmouth Quarter Sessions for the non-attendance at Protestant worship in the Parish Church*, 'Miscellanea,' Vol. IX, (Aberdeen University Press, London: 1911).

_____. *Appointment of a Committee for the erection of the Catholic Chapel at Monmouth*, Publications of the Catholic Record Society, 'Miscellanea VII,' Vol. IX, (London, Aberdeen University Press: 1911).

Meredith, J., Covell, R., and Brown, P., *Folk Songs of Australia and the Men and Women Who Sang Them*, Vol. 2, (New South Wales University Press, 1987).

Partington, G. 'Cannibalism: A White Colonist Fiction?,' *Quadrant*, 2008.

Prendergast, A. 'The Benedictine Schools and Students of Colonial Sydney,' *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, Vol. 21, 2000.

Ritchie, J. 'Towards Ending an Unclean Thing: the Molesworth Committee and the Abolition of Transportation to New South Wales, 1837-40,' *Historical Society*, Vol. 17, No. 67, October 1976.

Shanahan, M. 'Bishop Davis: 1848-1854,' *Manna*, No. 6, 1963.

Sternbeck, M. 'Will the Real First Bishop of Maitland Please Stand Up?,' 21 July 1989, (unpublished article from the Maitland Diocese Archives).

T.B.S. 'At the Dawn,' *Downside Review*, July 1901.

Turner, B. 'The Story of the Abbey Land,' *Ampleforth Journal*, 46:1 (1941)

Turner, B. 'The Story of the Abbey Land,' *Ampleforth Journal*, 47:1 (1942).

Turner, B. 'The Story of the Abbey Land,' *Ampleforth Journal*, 48:2 (1943)

Waldersee, J. 'The Colony Polding Found,' *Tjurunga*, 1978, Vol. 16.

Augustine Watts, "Downside," *Downside Review*, (July, 1903).

Whiteoak, J. 'Australian Brass Band History and the Arthur Stirling Collection,' *Continuo: Journal of the International Association of Music Libraries*, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Vol. 24, 1995.

_____, 'The Improvisatory Process,' *Sounds Australian*, 1996, Vol. 14, No. 48.

_____, J. *Pity the Bandless Towns: Brass Banding in Australian Rural Communities before World War Two*, (unpublished article, 2003).

Williams, J. A. 'English Catholicism under Charles III: the legal position,' *Recusant History*, Vol. 7, No. 3, October 1963.

Theses:

Bubacz, B. *The Female and Male orphan schools in New South Wales, 1801–1850*, (PhD Thesis, University of Sydney, 2008).

Compton, M. E. *A Life of John Bede Polding, OSB*, (Master of Arts Thesis (Hons): University of New England, 1977).

Dowd, C. P. *Papal policy towards conflict in the Australian Catholic Missions: The relationship between John Bede Polding, O.S.B., Archbishop of Sydney, and the Sacred Congregation De Propaganda Fide, 1842-1874*, July 1994, (Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University, Canberra).

Gilchrist, C. *Males Convict Sexuality in the Penal Colonies, 1820-1850*, (PhD Thesis, University of Sydney, 2004).

Hastie, K. J. *Music-Making in the Wesleyan Churches of New South Wales, 1855-1902: Origins, Attitudes and Practices*, (Unpublished M.Mus. Thesis, University of Sydney, June 1991),

Pender, G. *Improvisatory Musical Practices in Melbourne Colonial Christian Churches: 1835–1914*, (Master of Theology Thesis: Department of History, Catholic Theological College, East Melbourne, November 2004).

Whiteoak, J. *Australian Approaches to Improvisatory Musical Practice 1836-1970: a Melbourne Perspective*. (PhD Thesis, La Trobe University, 1993).

Websites:

<http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=thebluebooks>, accessed 4/3/2009.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/property/3342777/A-towering-achievement.html>, accessed 9/4/2009.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~monfamilies/grooms-d.html>, Monmouthshire Marriages, 1725-1812, accessed 9/4/2009.

Trostrey: St. David's – *The Graves*, surname: Davis,
<http://www.cefnennar.com/trostrey/church.htm>, accessed on 9/4/2009.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/legacies/heritage/wales/w_se/index.shtml, accessed 9/4/2009.

Trostrey: St. David's, *The Graves*, <http://www.cefnpennar.com/trostrey/church.htm>, accessed 10/4/2009.

www.burtonlatimer.info/Glossary.html; and
www.chaddsfordhistory.org/history/glossary.htm; and
wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn, accessed on 14/4/2009.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitchel_Troy, accessed on 14/4/2009.

<http://www.ancestry.it/learn/library/article.aspx?article=6345>, accessed 14/4/2009.

<http://www.ancestry.it/learn/library/article.aspx?article=6345>, accessed 14/4/2009.

Catholic Encyclopaedia, *The Roman Catholic Relief Bill*, see
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13123a.htm>, accessed 17/4/2009.

<http://www.virtualtenby.co.uk/town.asp?name=Trostrey>, accessed 20/4/2009.

Lawrence H. Officer, 'Purchasing Power of British Pounds from 1264 to 2007,'
Measuring Worth, 2008. <http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/>, accessed
23/4/2009.

http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/place_page.jsp?p_id=1136, accessed
25/4/2009.

http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_cube_chart_page.jsp?data_theme=T_REL&data_cube=N_REL1851_attend&u_id=10039691&c_id=10001043&add=Y,
accessed, 25/4/2009.

http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/data_rate_page.jsp?u_id=10039691&c_id=10001043&data_theme=T_REL&id=7, accessed, 25/4/2009.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_school_\(England_and_Wales\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_school_(England_and_Wales)), accessed
28/4/2009.

Edwards, O. M. *A Short History of Wales*,
<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/gutbook/lookup?num=3260>, accessed
1/5/2009.

http://www.circeinstitute.org/definitions%202.shtml#Classical_Education, accessed
10/6/2009.

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05140a.htm>, accessed on 13/6/2009.

<http://www.catholictradition.org/Classics/combat.htm#PREFACE>, accessed on
13/6/2009.

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03564a.htm>, accessed 18/6/2009.

<http://oldbuckenham.blogspot.com/2010/07/robert-cocks-music-publisher-and-local.html>, accessed on 20/1/2011.

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01341a.htm>, accessed 4/4/2011.

<http://cla.calpoly.edu/~lcall/enclosures.html>, accessed 4/4/2011.

http://www.chantcd.com/lyrics/o_saving_victim.htm, accessed on 7/8/2011.

Nairn, B. Australian Dictionary of Biography, *Macarthur, Hannibal Hawkins (1788–1861)*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macarthur-hannibal-hawkins-2388>, accessed 27/12/2011.

Preston, H. Australian Dictionary of Biography, *John Verge (1782-1861)*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/verge-john-2757>, accessed 27/12/2011.

<http://www.helium.com/items/2201085-a-brief-history-of-caverswall-castle-uk>, accessed 28/12/2011.

'History in Australia', <http://www.jamberooabbey.org.au/html/aboutus/history.htm>, accessed 28/12/2011.

Fletcher, P. 'Cockatoo Island', http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/cockatoo_island#page=3&ref, accessed 10/1/2012.

Crockett, G. 'Irish Orphan Girls,' http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/articles/irish_orphan_girls, accessed 18/1/2012.

'Van Diemen's Land Total Abstinence Society' membership card with pledge; see <http://eprints.utas.edu.au/1995/>, accessed on 23/1/2012.

Australian Dictionary of Biography, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/makinson-thomas-cooper-2423> and <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sconce-robert-knox-2637>, accessed 28/1/2012.

Dictionary of National Biography, Volume 37.djvu/191 (Mazzinghi) accessed on 1/2/2012.

<http://sydney.edu.au/senate/fellows1850on.shtml#1850>, accessed 18/12/2012.

<http://www.pauahtun.org/Calendar/money.html>, accessed 1/10/2012.

<http://www.unitconversion.org/currency/british-pounds-to-australian-dollars-conversion.html>, accessed 1/10/2012.

Nairn, B. "John Bede Polding," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/polding-john-bede-2557>, accessed 2/1/2013.

<http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/>, accessed 2/1/2013.

http://coinmill.com/AUD_GBP.html#GBP=334,000, accessed 2/1/2013.

http://coinmill.com/AUD_GBP.html#GBP=171,000, accessed 2/1/2013.

<http://intranet.cbhslewisham.nsw.edu.au:82/sor/concepta.asp?resource=12&conid=10>, accessed 4/1/2013.

http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/result.php?use%5B%5D=CPI&use%5B%5D=NOMINALEARN&year_early=1854£71=800&shilling71=&pence71=&amount=800&year_source=1854&year_result=201, accessed 4/1/2013.

http://www.measuringworth.com/ppoweruk/result.php?use%5B%5D=CPI&use%5B%5D=NOMINALEARN&year_early=1854£71=800&shilling71=&pence71=&amount=800&year_source=1854&year_result=201, accessed 4/1/2013.

http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/place/grose_farm, accessed 4/1/2013.

Dictionary of Australian Biography, "Willson, Robert William (1794-1866)," <http://gutenberg.net.au/dictbiog/0-dict-biogWe-Wy.html>, accessed 5/1/2013.

Dictionary of Australian Biography, "John Joseph Therry, (1790-1864)," <http://gutenberg.net.au/dictbiog/0-dict-biogT-V.html>, accessed 5/1/2013.

<http://forum.wordreference.com/showthread.php?t=102270>, accessed 6/1/2013.

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/willson-robert-william-2800>, accessed 6/1/2013.
Salmanticensis and Complutenses, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13401c.htm>, accessed 6/1/2013.

"Unit Eight, Austerity," *Exordium*, 14, <http://www.scourmont.be/exordium/unit8.pdf>, accessed 19/10/2013.

http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=5230, accessed 3/1/2014.

http://www.downside.co.uk/Abbey/about_us/local_parish_service_times_detail.php?Little-Malvern-10, accessed 4/1/2014.

<http://www.burkespeerage.com/home.php>, accessed 5/1/2015.

http://www.downside.co.uk/Abbey/about_us/local_parish_service_times_detail.php?Little-Malvern-10, accessed 4/1/2014.

Pope Paul VI, *Address to the Associazione Italiana di Santa Cecilia* (September 18th, 1968), [Notitiae 4 (1968), 269-273], <http://www.ekaristi.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=3817>, accessed 12/2/2014.

<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/friendlessfemale/significance.html>, accessed 24/2/2014.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/records.aspx?cat=1480-z6_2&cid=-1#-1, accessed 3/3/2014.

<http://www.roughwood.net/ChurchAlbum/Monmouthshire/Usk/UskCatholic2004.htm>, accessed 17/4/2014.

<http://pioneersites.wordpress.com/journey-with-us-to-the-pioneer-sites/polding-residence-4/>, accessed 24/3/2014.

<http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/catholic-record-society-great-britain/miscellanea-volume-9-hta/page-16-miscellanea-volume-9-hta.shtml>, accessed 1/4/2014.

<http://www.blennerhassetfamilytree.com/INSCRIPTIONS-at-Downside-Abbey,-Co-Somerset.php>, accessed 10/4/2014.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Llangwm,_Monmouthshire, accessed 10/4/2014.

<http://www.doctorsend.info/2012/01/anasarca-causes-symptoms-and-treatment.html>, accessed 12/4/2014.

<http://mongenes.org.uk/theworkhouse.html>, accessed 18/4/2014.

<http://miriamhakedosha.blogspot.com.au/>, accessed 19/4/2014.

<http://monkallover.blogspot.com.au/2006/05/suitable-habits-for-benedictine-monks.html>, accessed 19/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an5924561>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://www.parragirls.org.au/roman-catholic-orphan-school.php>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/picture/result?q=Hannibal+hawkins>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://143.119.202.10/item/itemLarge.aspx?itemID=52527>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an2815663>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an2772460>, accessed 24/4/2014.

http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/heritage/photodb/imagesearch.pl?proc=detail;barcode_no=dig010608, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://www.photochronicles.net/cockatoo%20island.htm>, accessed 24/4/2014.

http://www1.waverley.nsw.gov.au/library/localstudies/historical/wav_house.htm, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/system/files/pages/a186ca72-f8a5-4ee9-8418-986f964e52a2/files/educationkitfeb2014.pdf>, 21, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an2292675>, accessed 24/4/2014.

<http://www.ohta.org.au/confs/Sydney/STMARYSCATHEDRAL.html>, accessed 24/4/2014.

http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband_07_britishbrassband.htm, accessed on 24/4/2014.

<http://mapco.net/sydney1836/sydney09.htm>, accessed 25/4/2014.

<http://vexilla-regis.blogspot.com.au/2012/02/two-admirable-tough-cookies-cardinal.html>, accessed 28/4/2014.

<http://srmarynoonan.wordpress.com/father-julian-interviewed-1/>, accessed 28/4/2014.

<http://foundingdocs.gov.au/enlargement-eid-54-pid-39.html>, accessed 28/4/2014.

http://sydney.edu.au/heraldry/origins_of_the_arms/the_first_seal.shtml, accessed 28/4/2014.

<http://atributetoaustralianchristians.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/mcencroe.jpg>, accessed 28/4/2014.

http://digital.slv.vic.gov.au/view/action/nmets.do?DOCCHOICE=2618474.xml&dvs=1398734883519~604&locale=en_US&search_terms=&adjacency=&divType=&usePid1=true&usePid2=true, accessed 28/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an9860722>, accessed 28/4/2014.

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an8021120>, accessed 3/5/2014.

<http://puginfoundation.org/demolished/>, accessed 3/5/2014.

<http://parramattaheritage.blogspot.com.au/2013/11/the-history-of-vineyard-and-subiaco.html>, accessed 3/5/2014.

www.geograph.org.uk, accessed 5/5/2014.

<http://www.canopyandstars.co.uk/britain/wales/powys/ty-gwyn-farm/the-straw-cottage>, accessed 5/5/2014.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Vincent_Wallace, accessed 10/6/2014.

http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/system/files/styles/slideshow-scale/private/promo/8d9f53d3-c3e8-41fe-b75d-92846a6328bf/images/wide.jpg?itok=H_jnB46C, accessed 15/4/2015.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Lewis_\(Jesuit\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Lewis_(Jesuit)) accessed 20/5/2015.

<http://www.cockatooisland.gov.au/about/history>, accessed 9/7/2015.

http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/hyde_park_barracks, accessed 9/7/2015.

<http://www.measuringworth.com/australiacompare/>, accessed 9/7/2015.