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A Relentless March: The Rise of Anglo-Catholicism in the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin, 1869–1919

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Abstract

This paper explores how the Diocese of Dunedin became the Anglo-Catholic stronghold of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. It emphasises that Anglicanism in Otago and Southland tended to be Low Church until the arrival of the first bishop of Dunedin, Samuel Tarratt Nevill, in 1871. It highlights that Nevill was an aggressive Anglo-Catholic who exploited his episcopal authority and personal wealth to repress Low-Church Anglicanism and foster an Anglo-Catholic ethos. By the time Nevill retired in 1919, the paper concludes, Dunedin was the most overtly Anglo-Catholic diocese in the New Zealand Church.

Neglect of Anglo-Catholicism in New Zealand History

The Diocese of Dunedin has long been the Anglo-Catholic stronghold of the Anglican Church in New Zealand. In this paper, I provide the first in-depth explanation of this phenomenon. I highlight that Dunedin was initially Low Church, and that this changed radically under the leadership of its first bishop, Samuel Tarratt Nevill. I demonstrate how Nevill, who led the diocese from 1871 to 1919, used his personal wealth and institutional power to enact Anglo-Catholic reforms despite significant Low-Church opposition. In doing so, I hope to inspire greater interest in, and research on, Anglo-Catholicism in New Zealand.

Since its earliest days, Anglicanism has witnessed tension between believers who highlight its Protestant heritage (often termed Low Church) and those who prize its Catholic heritage (often termed High Church). In the nineteenth century, two parties exacerbated this conflict, the Evangelicals and the Anglo-Catholics.[1] Evangelicals were militant Low-Church Anglicans who emphasised the importance of a 'born again' conversion experience and an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.[2] In contrast, Anglo-Catholics stressed the catholic heritage of Anglicanism, such as the sacramental life and hallowed traditions. Their insistence that Anglicanism was a branch of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church ensured that, unlike older kinds of High-Church Anglicans, they openly scorned the Reformation.[3]

The strength of Anglo-Catholicism in the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin, which encompasses the regions of Otago and Southland, has long fascinated New Zealand scholars of religion.[4] In the period under study, Anglicanism was the second-largest denomination in these regions after Presbyterianism. In 1856, there were 1,100 Presbyterians, 250 Anglicans, sixty-one Nonconformists, and eleven Roman Catholics.[5] In 1916, when the city numbered approximately 70,000, Presbyterians accounted for 39% of residents and Anglicans 26.5%.[6] These demographics made Otago and Southland unique, for in all other regions of New Zealand, Anglicans were by far the largest religious group.[7] As noted below, this factor probably influenced Dunedin's Anglo-Catholic turn.

Owing to long-established isolationist tendencies within the New Zealand Anglican Church, each diocese has cultivated a distinct identity.[8] Most have tended to be Broad Church, oftentimes favouring one party (usually Anglo-Catholicism), but not to the extent that a party affiliation has come intrinsically to define their characters. The two exceptions are Nelson and Dunedin.[9] The first has been the Evangelical stronghold of the New Zealand Church since the late 1800s; the origins of its unique identity have been the subject of a 2010 study.[10] The second, the most vigorous and enduring Anglo-Catholic stronghold of the New Zealand Church since the late 1800s, has until now lacked a corresponding in-depth study.

The basic narrative of Dunedin's transformation is well known. At its inception in 1869, Dunedin was thoroughly Low Church and possessed a strong Evangelical element. This explains why Anglicans in Otago and Southland blocked the appointment of the Anglo-Catholic Henry Lascelles Jenner as their first bishop.[11] However, in 1871, the diocesan synod elected another Anglo-Catholic, Samuel Tarratt Nevill, without realising the extent of his party affiliation. When his true colours became known, Low-Church Anglicans protested. However, Nevill weathered all storms and transformed Dunedin into an Anglo-Catholic bastion.

Although these facts are well known, they have never been subject to rigorous scholarly analysis. Above all, there has been little discussion of how Nevill achieved his objectives despite substantial Low-Church opposition. John Evans's *Southern See* is a case in point. I demonstrate in this paper that debates over Anglo-Catholicism raged constantly from Jenner's ejection in the early 1870s to the Kerkham Ritualist controversy in the late 1880s. However, Evans averred that during this period, 'The problem of "Ritualism" … had not recurred [since Jenner]'.[12] The other major studies of Nevill's episcopate, the master's theses of Eileen Wallis and John B. Meiklejohn, are similarly problematic.[13]

Other studies that reference Nevill's episcopate have neglected the growth of Anglo-Catholicism in Dunedin. The plethora of pamphlet-sized histories of parishes in Otago and Southland have devoted little time to the subject.[14] None of the general studies of New Zealand Anglicanism provide a detailed discussion,[15] and there has been very little focus on Nevill in general histories of Otago.[16]

Michael Blain's introduction to *Clergy in the Diocese of Dunedin* is a noteworthy exception.[17] I regard many of his conclusions as correct and draw on them in this paper. However, Blain's introduction lacks detail and context, for it is brief and focuses almost exclusively on the clergy.

The Development of Anglo-Catholicism in Britain

To comprehend fully the evolution of Anglo-Catholicism in Dunedin, a general overview of Anglo-Catholicism is essential. Until the nineteenth century, global Anglicanism had been self-consciously Protestant, and Evangelicalism was becoming increasingly popular.[18] This Protestant identity was challenged in the 1830s and early 1840s, when the Tractarians of the Oxford Movement avowed that Anglicanism is a branch of the Catholic Church. They believed that the Church of England should look to antiquity rather than the Reformation for its theology, and sought to revive certain ancient liturgical practices that, while countenanced by the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, had fallen into disuse because of their association with Roman Catholicism.

The Tractarian movement suffered serious setbacks in the 1840s.[19] The Tractarians' criticism of the Protestant Reformation lost them the support of many traditional High-Church Anglicans and provoked widespread outrage among Low-Church Anglicans.[20] Dispirited, some

Tractarians, such as John Henry Newman, converted to Roman Catholicism – a phenomenon that made it all the more difficult for remaining Tractarians to continue their work.

Despite these problems, Tractarian ideas continued to inspire interest in catholicity. By the 1860s, a new movement had emerged: Anglo-Catholicism. This movement was quite broad: its influences included not only Tractarianism, but traditional High-Church Anglicanism, theological liberalism, and, perhaps most importantly, the ecclesiology of the Cambridge Camden Society.[21] The latter, which came into existence shortly after the Tractarian Movement, believed that a revival of medieval architecture and ritual would bolster orthodox doctrine and practice among modern Anglicans.[22] Consequently, Anglo-Catholics tended to be more interested than the Tractarians in liturgical reform. Those most committed to this point became known as Ritualists.[23]

However, Anglo-Catholicism remained quite broad, ranging from aesthetically minded theological liberals to Anglo-Papalists who identified with the strictures of Tridentine Roman Catholicism. For this study, the chief division to keep in mind was that between two strains of Anglo-Catholicism loyal to the Anglican tradition, one of which emphasised ritual and the other doctrine.

Anglo-Catholics fought with Protestant Anglicans, and especially Evangelicals, to have themselves recognised as representing authentic Anglicanism. During the nineteenth century, the Anglo-Catholics got the upper hand in England,[24] not least because, having entrenched themselves early in numerous seminaries and universities, bishops and lower clergy were disproportionately attracted to the movement.[25] In addition, the social initiatives of these priests earned them tolerance and respect from many non-Anglo-Catholics.[26] Lastly, their ritualism harmonised with the Victorian penchant for ostentation.[27] By the end of the century, even many Evangelicals had adopted some Anglo-Catholic reforms, such as more elaborate worship services.[28]

However, because the Church of England was the established church of the realm, the government had substantial control over ecclesiastical appointments. To minimise conflict, the government favoured compromise between the various wings of the Church. Thus, except when the Tractarian William Ewart Gladstone was prime minister, the government sought to restrain Anglo-Catholicism's influence.[29] Sometimes, it employed the force of law, as when the House of Commons passed the Public Worship Regulation Act in 1874. More subtly, it monitored clerical appointments to maintain balance. This policy of compromise, though not always successful, hindered the capacity of Anglo-Catholic bishops to reform the Church of England.

The Development of Anglo-Catholicism in White Settler Societies

The situation differed dramatically in the white settler societies of the British Empire. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the status of Anglicanism in these lands remained ambiguous.[30] Many English Anglicans migrants regarded themselves as part of the establishment and expected colonial governments to patronise and lead them. However, the influence of political liberalism and the strength of other Christian denominations ensured that colonial governments tended not to oblige, even in Crown colonies directly under British control. In 1865, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council formally decreed that the Church of England had no authority in the self-governing parts of the British Empire.[31] Anglicans in these territories could no longer claim establishment privileges, and government authorities ceased officially to have jurisdiction over their ecclesial affairs. Anglicans marooned

in colonies whose authorities did not patronise them also began to become more independent.

Colonial bishops consequently became far more powerful than their counterparts in England. This factor dramatically affected party affiliation.[32] Now the undisputed authority in their dioceses, bishops gained substantial control over clerical appointments and ecclesial discipline. Furthermore, because they tended to be upper-class Englishmen, they had more money and connections than most Anglicans,[33] which made them valuable agents for the development of settler sees. Such factors assisted settler bishops of strong party affiliation to influence profoundly the theological direction of their dioceses.[34] Occasionally, these bishops were Evangelicals. However, they were more commonly Anglo-Catholics or Tractarians, not least because the independence of settler churches allowed them to operate freely of English anti-Ritualist laws.[35]

Furthermore, Anglo-Catholic and Tractarian prelates had stronger institutional support from England than their Evangelical counterparts. The missionary society with the most influence over episcopal appointments in settler societies, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), was a bastion of High-Church Anglicanism.[36] High-Church bishops such as William Broughton disagreed with Tractarian and Anglo-Catholic denigrations of Anglicanism's Protestant heritage.[37] Nevertheless, these groups shared a common respect for catholicity, which meant that Anglo-Catholics could often secure SPG support if they avoided more extreme Ritualist views and practices. The Colonial Bishoprics' Fund, an organisation that provided financial assistance to fledgling settler dioceses, worked closely with the SPG,[38] and many of its supporters were High-Church Anglicans.[39] In consequence, it too could benefit Anglo-Catholics. Nevill offers a textbook case of an Anglo-Catholic gaining support. In 1897 alone, he – an open Anglo-Catholic – secured support from multiple High-Church organisations to help build new churches and a theological college in Dunedin.[40]

Consequently, Anglo-Catholic and Tractarian bishops could transform their sees even against strong opposition. Such opposition was common because settler Anglicanism tended to be Low Church. The arrival of an Anglo-Catholic or a Tractarian prelate could thus shock and anger the local population. In 1850s South Africa, for instance, whenever bishops tried to institute any Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic reforms, Low-Church Anglicans accused them of being tyrannical Ritualists.[41] The social gulf between ordinary settler Anglicans and wealthy upper-class English prelates frequently exacerbated this problem. South Africa is a classic example.[42]

A bishop could usually survive opposition by exploiting his wealth and episcopal authority. He could replace problematic clergymen and construct a diocesan infrastructure capable of popularising his views. In addition, Anglican moderates, perceiving the advantages of having such an active bishop at the helm, tended to acquiesce in Anglo-Catholic leadership.[43] Over time, these efforts would win over many laypeople, which would facilitate further reforms. These efforts would usually bear even greater fruit in areas where Anglicans were a minority group, since this minority status incentivised them to cultivate a distinct identity.[44]

The longevity of many Anglo-Catholic and Tractarian bishops helped them to shape diocesan identity. An early example of this phenomenon is the Diocese of Newfoundland and Labrador under the episcopate of the Tractarian Edward Feild. When the latter arrived in 1844, Low Churchmen dominated the ranks of the local clergy, but by the time he died thirty-two years later, they were extremely rare.[45] Another early example is Robert Gray, the Tractarian who from 1847 to 1873 made the

Diocese of Cape Town a haven for Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics.[46]

Dunedin's Low-Church Heritage

I contend that the rise of Anglo-Catholicism in Dunedin follows the aforementioned trend. Despite their Presbyterian heritage, Otago and Southland have always contained an Anglican minority. Several British Anglicans migrated with the first Scottish settlers.[47] Upon arrival, they found some European and Māori Anglicans already in the area.[48] Furthermore, George Grey, the governor of New Zealand at that time, was hostile to the idea of a sectarian religious colony, and deliberately appointed Anglicans to local government positions to prevent a Presbyterian monopoly of political power.[49] In 1859, a Rural Deanery was established under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Christchurch. As the Anglican population grew, the General Synod advocated the creation of a new diocese centred in Dunedin.[50] The Rural Deanery Board was more cautious. The paucity of wealthy Anglicans in Otago and Southland would make it difficult to raise a bishop's endowment fund.[51] This warning was not heeded, and in 1869 the Diocese of Dunedin was established.

Local Anglicans at this time were thoroughly Low Church, many being stalwart Evangelicals. Those who were not Low Church tended at least to be ecclesial moderates unwilling to challenge the prevailing Low-Church ethos. Hence the positive relations of many Anglicans with their non-episcopal neighbours. To be sure, certain cultural and theological differences caused tension.[52] Nevertheless, because the Anglicans lacked a resident clergyman until 1852, many felt comfortable attending Presbyterian services and receiving communion from Wesleyan missionaries.[53] These links were especially common among genteel Anglicans of a Low-Church persuasion.[54]

The parish clergy who arrived in the 1850s and 1860s did not challenge the Low-Church ethos. Some, like the Lancashire Calvinist William Oldham, were Evangelicals.[55] Others, such as the Yorkshireman John Fenton, were amiable moderates who adapted their ministry to prevailing conditions. The most notable High-Church clergyman was Edward Edwards, an Englishman educated at Oxford in the 1840s.[56] He had been sent down from Christchurch, and the lack of controversy over party affiliation suggests that he did not try to force his views on others. Thus, Low-Church Anglicanism remained strong, safeguarded above all by the laity. According to Major John Richardson, a leading synodsman and local politician, the laity considered itself 'the bulwark of Protestantism'.[57]

This Low-Church ethos was embodied in the continued good relationship between many Anglicans and Presbyterians. When Fenton arrived in 1852, he quickly befriended leading Presbyterian clerics and laypeople.[58] Even the cantankerous Captain William Cargill treated Fenton amicably.[59] This Low-Church ethos was also evident in the community's plain worship style. The anti-ritualist journalist J. G. S. Grant ruefully recalled that in Fenton's early years, there was no ritualism among Dunedin Anglicans.[60]

The Jenner Controversy

The Jenner Controversy, which refers to the Diocese of Dunedin's rejection of its first appointed bishop, has already received ample scholarly discussion.[61] I wish only to highlight that the success of the campaign against Jenner reflects the strength of Low-Church Anglicanism in Dunedin.

Certainly, the irregularity of the appointment contributed to the discontent.[62] In 1865, Bishop George Augustus Selwyn of New Zealand appealed to Archbishop Charles Longley of Canterbury for help finding a suitable candidate as bishop of Dunedin. He did so without consulting the Rural Deanery Board. Even worse, a breakdown of communications caused the

archbishop to consecrate a candidate, Henry Lascelles Jenner, without the input of Selwyn or the Rural Deanery Board.

Although this mishap created tension, intense opposition to Jenner only arose after his Ritualist views became known. Evangelical hardliners refused to accept such a bishop.[63] Broad-Church Anglicans – the clergy especially – disapproved of rebelliousness. They held that loyalty to appointed superiors should prevail over party affiliation. When Jenner visited the diocese and assured them that he would not impose Ritualism on his flock, many Broad-Church Anglicans gave him the benefit of the doubt.[64] However, this charitable attitude did not sway everyone. At the 1869 diocesan synod, the resolution to accept Jenner was defeated by fifteen out of twenty-five lay votes and three out of seven clerical votes.[65]

Electing a Different Anglo-Catholic

It might seem peculiar that the Anglicans of Otago and Southland, having rejected an Anglo-Catholic bishop in 1869, would accept another just two years later. However, Nevill seems to have initially downplayed his Anglo-Catholicism when engaging with local Anglicans. He was, after all, a lower-middle-class Englishman educated at St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead, a prominent English Evangelical institution. In his autobiography, Nevill suggested that he had attended St. Aidan's not because he was an Evangelical, because he had 'inadequate' funds to study somewhere more prestigious.[66] He did not gain wealth and connections until 1863, when he married Mary Susannah Penny, the daughter of a wealthy Liverpudlian commercial family. Whatever the reason behind Nevill's enrolment at St. Aidan's, it probably helped persuade Anglicans in Otago and Southland that he was, at most, a moderate High Churchman respectful of Low- and Broad-Church views. It is unlikely that all church members found Nevill's position convincing. However, many Broad-Church Anglicans, together with the few High-Church Anglicans, were eager to avoid another Jenner Controversy, and therefore were predisposed to accept Nevill.[67]

Consequently, the thirty representatives at the diocesan synod of 1871 elected Nevill almost unanimously.[68] Only one layman voted against Nevill's appointment. Although his identity is unknown, I suspect that he was an Evangelical hardliner who objected to Nevill for theological reasons, since Nevill's private fortune would have allayed prior doubts over financial support for a bishop.

Despite all the controversy Nevill provoked over the years, his money and social standing seem never to have been major causes of dissension. This is noteworthy considering the conflicts that often erupted in those days between upper-class Anglo-Catholic bishops and their lower-class flocks. After all, Nevill revelled in his wealth and social status, constructing a lavish mansion called Bishopsgrove and deliberately recruiting clergymen from prominent English and settler families.[69]

Although a full discussion of this subject cannot be entered into here, I suggest that Nevill's having acquired his wealth and status via marriage defused much animosity. I also think that his beneficence helped to mitigate criticism. Finally, I think that Nevill's stature in the community became a source of pride for Anglicans, so conscious of their minority status in Otago and Southland. Especially after he became primate, Nevill stood at the centre of Dunedin public life. For example, he was once seen entering a municipal banquet laughing and linking arms with Sir Joshua Williams, the eminent New Zealand jurist respected throughout the British Empire.[70]

Nevill's Early Reforms

After being consecrated in New Zealand, Nevill returned to Britain to set his affairs in order. He returned to Dunedin in 1872 and began to reform

his new diocese. He was remarkably candid about what he was doing. For example, in an 1873 lecture in Dunedin, he bluntly 'regretted' Anglicanism's association with the Protestant Reformation.[71]

Such speeches disrupted Anglican-Presbyterian relations. From now on, Anglican criticisms of Presbyterian theology became commonplace. Although these criticisms would have offended committed Evangelicals, they resonated with Anglicans who felt frustrated and intimidated by the strength of Presbyterianism in Otago and Southland. By the early 1900s, an Anglo-Catholic air of superiority towards Presbyterianism featured strongly in the diocesan newspaper.[72]

Aside from the sudden cooling of Anglican-Presbyterian relations, Nevill's most notable reforms affected the liturgy. The first service held after his return to Dunedin in November 1872 was celebrated at St. Paul's church, his future cathedral. According to one newspaper correspondent, these services testified to Nevill's 'High Church proclivities'.[73] The church was well decorated, the choir was more prominent than ever before, and the clergy and congregation now intoned many of their lines.[74] The next month, the Vestry of St. Paul's resolved that the choir would regularly wear surplices.[75] Many church members were uncomfortable with the changes. In September 1872, an unnamed Low-Church Anglican complained to the press about Nevill's 'ecclesiastical millinery, perfumery, and chandlery, in the shape of "stoles," incense, and candles on the "altar"'.[76] The author claimed that many others were likewise disturbed.[77]

However, a full-blown Low-Church rebellion did not occur. I think that there are four reasons for this. Most importantly, because Nevill was not a Ritualist, his early liturgical reforms were tolerable to many church members and appreciated by High-Church clerics such as Edwards. As the aforementioned correspondent noted, to avoid another Jenner Controversy, 'I should say that the services at St. Paul's have now arrived at as "High" a stage as it is desirable they should do'.[78]

Secondly, in 1874, Nevill helped adjudicate the Carlyon Case, the New Zealand Church's first Ritualist controversy.[79] H. E. Carlyon was a Ritualist clergyman in the Diocese of Christchurch whose liturgical reforms at St. Michael's, Kaiapoi, had caused scandal. After refusing Bishop Henry Harper's appeals to moderate his practices, Harper had him disciplined. During the proceedings, Harper conferred with Nevill, who agreed that Carlyon needed to be punished. I suspect that Nevill did so principally because Carlyon's disobedience offended his hierarchical ecclesiology, not because Carlyon was a Ritualist. Nevertheless, as Blain has noted,[80] Nevill's condemnation helped to deflect accusations that he was too Anglo-Catholic.

Thirdly, during the 1870s, Nevill demonstrated that he was a devoted pastor. For example, he travelled constantly throughout his diocese on horseback to visit isolated parishes and homesteads, often enduring great hardships in the process.[81] Lastly, as Blain has also noted,[82] Nevill's financial generosity was pivotal for the construction of diocesan infrastructure. A good example is the St. Mary's Orphan Home, which opened in 1883, and was initially based in Bishopsgrove. This activism, especially when it had a social aspect, could earn Nevill the respect of the wider community, as well as his own flock.[83]

Nevill and the Clergy, 1870s–1880s

By the late 1870s, Nevill felt secure enough to institute further reforms. He focused on the clergy, since they were an indispensable means through which he maintained contact with all parts of his far-flung diocese. Indeed, from this point on, the diocese became far more clerical. Whereas in the 1850s and early 1860s clergymen had acquiesced in the prevailing spirituality of

the laity, now the clergy began setting the standard to which all church members were expected to comply.

Nevill made the recruitment of Anglo-Catholics a top priority. Although he preferred Anglo-Catholics who emphasised doctrine, he also accepted Ritualists. The most important of the latter was Richard Algernon Kerkham, who arrived in 1879 from Truro, one of the most Anglo-Catholic dioceses of the Church of England. He served as Nevill's chaplain and as the incumbent of St. John's, Roslyn.[84] Nevill also patronised Edwards, the most venerable High-Church Anglican in the diocese, by appointing him the first archdeacon of Dunedin in 1881.[85]

Most clergy, who were Broad-Church, adapted to this new situation. Fenton is a case in point. Before Nevill's arrival, he had conducted himself as a Low Churchman. However, he now gained a reputation for being High Church – a factor that no doubt influenced his appointment as archdeacon of Oamaru in 1881.[86] Many Low-Church Anglicans also adapted. Alfred Fitchett is a good example. Originally a Wesleyan Methodist minister, Fitchett had been forced out of the Methodist Church after endorsing evolution. Always desperate for clergy, Nevill offered him a place in the Anglican Church. Articles that Fitchett wrote shortly before becoming Anglican demonstrate that his ecclesiology was typically Evangelical.[87] By 1885, however, Fitchett's ecclesiology echoed Nevill's.[88] Fitchett's former coreligionists found this change so astounding that they printed a book that used Fitchett's 1875 non-episcopal arguments to counter his 1885 Anglo-Catholic ones. I suspect that this concordance with Nevill explains why, in 1894, Nevill appointed Fitchett the first dean of Dunedin.

In addition, Nevill made life uncomfortable for Evangelical clerics. In this period, there were two Evangelical clergymen of influence in Dunedin. The first was Lorenzo Moore, an Irishman who ministered in Dunedin and Port Chalmers in the late 1870s. To protest Anglo-Catholic 'novelties',[89] Moore held unauthorised Low-Church services, which Nevill harshly condemned.[90] Soon afterwards, the disaffected Moore moved to the Evangelical Diocese of Nelson. The second clergyman was Charles Byng, the incumbent of St. Matthew's, Dunedin, from 1877 to 1883. He publicly denounced Dunedin's increasingly Anglo-Catholic ambience.[91] Nevill responded with hostility. He even accused Byng – without providing evidence – of holding a conspiratorial meeting to undermine his episcopate.[92] Byng left Dunedin soon after and ended up settling in the Evangelical Diocese of Sydney. For the rest of Nevill's episcopate, there were no more influential Evangelical clergymen in Dunedin.

Nevill's Reforms Continue

Under Nevill's supervision, therefore, the diocese became increasingly Anglo-Catholic in the 1870s and 1880s. Because they lay under Nevill's close supervision, the urban parishes of Dunedin were the most advanced. St. Paul's, whose vestry minutes are unusually detailed regarding liturgical matters, illustrate this point. From 1876 to 1879, the vestry acquired kneeling boards to encourage reverence.[93] In October 1881, the seat holders of the congregation affirmed by a vote of sixty-six to twenty-five that choristers ought to wear cassocks as well as surplices.[94] Then, in June 1887, the vestry decided that the organist should wear a surplice.[95]

Because St. Paul's was Nevill's pro-cathedral, support for Anglo-Catholicism was probably greater there than elsewhere. Furthermore, the pro-cathedral tended to attract genteel Anglicans. Owen Chadwick once noted that Anglo-Catholicism complemented the upper- and middle-class Victorian appreciation for wealth and splendour.[96] As Dunedin transformed from a rugged frontier town into a prosperous metropolis, many upper- and middle-class

Anglican residents regarded ornate buildings and elaborate services as befitting. The genteel Anglicans of St. Paul's ranked among the most esteemed individuals in the city and gave Anglo-Catholicism an attractive image. A good example is Thomas Hocken, the physician and historian, who in 1897 presented Nevill with a robe case on behalf of the Cathedral Chapter.[97]

Parish records for other churches are not so thorough. Nevertheless, the protests of disgruntled Low-Church Anglicans indicate that many Dunedin parishes were also becoming Anglo-Catholic. For example, on 5 January 1884, a parishioner from St. Matthew's lamented Nevill's policy of recruiting Anglo-Catholic clergymen 'whose teaching is directly opposed to the feelings and prejudices of the bulk of churchmen in the diocese'.[98] Objections from local Presbyterians, who were also dismayed by signs of Ritualism, suggest that disgruntled Anglicans were not exaggerating.[99]

Low-Church Anglicans claimed that Anglo-Catholicism was also penetrating urban parishes outside Dunedin. In January 1881, for example, a Low-Church Anglican lamented that the parish of All Saints', Invercargill, now contained 'mystical candles on the high altar' and the 'vanity-inflating practice of rising in adoration at the "priest's" entrance'.[100]

Information about rural parishes is sparse. However, it seems that Low-Church opposition to Nevill was more common in these areas, which often maintained close links with the Presbyterians. To cite one example, in 1892, the Anglican community of Dipton refused Nevill's offer of a parish priest, and instead chose to worship with the Presbyterians.[101] Although finances no doubt influenced the Anglicans' decision, it nevertheless reflects a Low-Church understanding of Anglicanism.

The Evangelicals Protest, 1888–1889

This dissent finally erupted into a full-scale Evangelical revolt at St. John's, Roslyn. Conflict arose because the parish, established in 1883, placed many Evangelicals under the spiritual care of Kerkham, the most advanced Ritualist in the diocese. The Evangelicals initially tolerated Kerkham because he was a devoted pastor, but they sought to moderate his Ritualism. In February 1883, for example, they banned the use of a processional cross at St. John's.[102]

However, Kerkham purchased a building with his own money and consecrated it the Church of the Good Shepherd. This church was located within the parish boundaries, but it was not under the control of the St. John's Vestry. Kerkham filled its services with ornaments, coloured vestments, and incense. In May 1888, the St. John's Vestry, claiming authority over all churches within the parish boundaries, demanded that Kerkham cease these Ritualist services.[103] Kerkham declared himself willing to make only minor concessions.

A bitter controversy ensued. In July 1888, the vestryman James Ashcroft gave a lecture attacking Ritualism.[104] Curiously, he did not directly comment on the situation in Dunedin. Nevertheless, his denunciation of Ritualism as heretical and anti-democratic indirectly criticised Anglo-Catholic clerics such as Kerkham and Nevill.[105] The fact that Kerkham's wife had recently converted to Roman Catholicism emboldened the Evangelicals even more. It persuaded them that Anglo-Catholicism leads inexorably to heresy.[106]

At an annual meeting a month beforehand, they had tried to outlaw Ritualist practices. However, Kerkham's stature as a pastor ensured that many parishioners, including nominal ones, turned up to defend him. The Evangelicals could rally only around half the members, and so no resolution against Kerkham was passed.[107] Despite this setback, they began removing Ritualist ornaments anyway. When Kerkham realised that he could not pacify them, he resigned.

The Evangelicals won some concessions for St. John's Church: as late as 1911, vestments remained taboo.[108] Nevertheless, the Evangelicals had not won a resounding victory, for a Ritualist atmosphere remained at the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the diocese more generally remained Anglo-Catholic. Indeed, while Nevill's Anglo-Catholicism retained an emphasis on doctrine, he had become far more sympathetic to Ritualism by this time. This was perhaps under Kerkham's influence, who had served as his chaplain for years. In 1888, while the conflict raged in Roslyn, Nevill even went to England and openly associated with 'the High Ritualist party'.[109] The *Evening Star* reported in astonishment, 'We read of his appearing in cope and mitre as the leading figure in processions, and generally committing himself to a variety of ecclesiastical high jinks.'[110] Nevill declared that Kerkham's Ritualism was neither 'unlawful' nor 'unseemly',[111] and continued to appoint Anglo-Catholic incumbents for St. John's – albeit slightly more circumspect ones.

Anglo-Catholicism Triumphant

Thus, the Evangelical protest at St. John's was a Pyrrhic victory. Having achieved concessions for only a single congregation, the anti-Ritualist campaign fell apart. Some rural areas, such as Dipton, remained stubbornly Low Church. Nevertheless, Low-Church Anglicans no longer possessed enough authority and support to halt the broader Anglo-Catholic transformation of the diocese.

The diocese's burgeoning infrastructure reflects this trend, as does the personnel Nevill appointed to oversee it. In 1893, Nevill finished building Selwyn College. The diocese's first theological college, its education was thoroughly Anglo-Catholic, for it was supervised by Nevill and other Anglo-Catholic clergy such as Isaac Richards, an Englishman ordained in the Anglo-Catholic Diocese of Truro.[112] Three years later, Nevill invited an Anglo-Catholic religious order, the Sisters of the Church, to Dunedin.[113] In 1896, the sisters opened St. Hilda's Collegiate School, the diocese's first secondary school. He then entrusted them with the running of St. Mary's Orphan Home. These institutions furthered the Anglo-Catholic cause by catechising those in their care. Despite being overworked, many Anglo-Catholic clergymen participated in such projects. The most notable was Vincent Bryan King, who became Nevill's chaplain in 1904.[114] He served as the Chaplain to Public Institutions and founded the Men's Mission House in 1909,[115] which provided food and shelter to destitute men.

Nevill's greatest achievement was the construction of St. Paul's Cathedral. For decades, he had agitated for its creation, stubbornly holding his ground against those who considered it a flippant extravagance. As an Anglo-Catholic, he regarded an ornate cathedral as proof that his settler diocese had come of age.[116] He also considered its extravagance evangelically useful, for its beauty would provoke a sense of awe among Anglicans and non-Anglicans alike.[117] In addition, a cathedral necessitated the creation of a cathedral staff, whose education Nevill made sure was thoroughly Anglo-Catholic. A good example is Canon Hoani Parata, an Anglo-Catholic graduate of Selwyn College, who served on the staff of St. Paul's for some time.[118]

Lay organisations also played a role. In 1902, Nevill invited the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, an Anglican lay fraternity, to help deepen the piety of Anglican men in Dunedin.[119] Although not affiliated with a particular party, in Dunedin the Brotherhood swiftly became Anglo-Catholic. Under the supervision of Anglo-Catholic prelates such as Parata and Bryan King, the Brotherhood encouraged laymen frequently to attend church and receive communion. Brotherhood members assisted in the Men's Mission House and participated in noteworthy Anglo-Catholic religious processions. Significantly, one of the bastions of the Brotherhood was the parish of St. John's, Roslyn, where men attended the services

of the Anglo-Catholic incumbent, Harry Snow, in record numbers.[120] This shows that twenty years after the conflict with Kerkham, St. John's had lost much of its Evangelical character.

By the time of Nevill's retirement in 1919, the Diocese of Dunedin had become the most overtly Anglo-Catholic diocese in New Zealand.[121] The synod elected the Anglo-Catholic Isaac Richards to replace him. In 1934, Richards retired. His successor was William Fitchett, the son of Dean Fitchett and an Anglo-Catholic alumnus of Selwyn College. His episcopate lasted until 1952. For nearly a hundred years, therefore, Nevill and those trained under him led Dunedin.

Conclusion

In this paper, I explored how the Diocese of Dunedin was transformed from being ruggedly Low Church in 1869 to overtly Anglo-Catholic by 1919. I argued that settler dioceses tended to reflect the proclivities of their bishops, since they had enormous influence over diocesan finances and clerical appointments. Especially if they stayed in office a long time, they could transform their sees even in the face of substantial opposition.

This scenario clearly applies to Dunedin. Nevill became bishop because he was rich and charismatic, and because he had downplayed his Anglo-Catholicism. Once his true position became known, Low-Church Anglicans harshly criticised him. However, Nevill used his wealth and episcopal authority to weather the storms of dissent. By the late 1880s, Low-Church critics had become a marginalised minority. After their Pyrrhic victory against Kerkham, they ceased to play a decisive role in the diocese. For the rest of his lengthy episcopate, Nevill continued to move the diocese in an Anglo-Catholic direction. He was enormously successful, which is why Anglo-Catholicism remains pervasive within the diocese today, albeit in a more liberal form.

Endnotes

[1] For a good overview, see John Shelton Reed, *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000).

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[3] Kenneth A. Locke, *The Church in Anglican Theology: A Historical, Theological and Ecumenical Exploration* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 86–87.

[4] See, for example, John M. Evans, *Southern See: The Anglican Diocese of Dunedin, New Zealand* (Dunedin: The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Dunedin, 1968), 203–204; Alison Clarke, "Feasts and Fasts: Holidays, religion and ethnicity in nineteenth-century Otago" (PhD diss., University of Otago, 2003), 102; Michael Blain, *Clergy in the Diocese of Dunedin, 1852–1919: A biographical directory of Anglican clergy who served in Otago and Southland*, 2003, 6, http://www.anglicanhistory.org/nz/blain_dunedin2003.pdf.

[5] Erik Olssen, *A History of Otago* (Dunedin: McIndoe, 1984), 40.

[6] Dickon John Milnes, "The Church Militant: Dunedin Churches and Society During World War One" (PhD diss., University of Otago, 2015), 3.

[7] Milnes, "Church Militant," 3.

[8] Allan K. Davidson, "Conclusion: Reshaping Anglican Identity," in *Living Legacy: A History of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland*, ed. Allan K. Davidson (Auckland: Diocese of Auckland, 2011), 341.

[9] Colin Brown, "Ecumenism in New Zealand: Success or Failure?" in *Religion in New Zealand Society*, eds. Brian Colless and Peter Donovan (Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press, 1980), 88.

[10] Rene Bester, ed., *Harvest of Grace: Essays in Celebration of 150 Years of Mission in the Anglican Diocese of Nelson* (Nelson: The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Nelson, 2010).

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[12] Evans, *Southern See*, 203.
[13] Eileen Wallis, "The Episcopate of Samuel Tarratt Nevill, 1871–1919" (MA diss., University of Otago, 1950); John B. Meiklejohn, "The Anglican Diocese of Dunedin" (MA diss., University of Otago, 1964).
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[15] H. T. Purchas, *A History of the English Church in New Zealand* (Christchurch: Simpson and Williams, 1914); W. P. Morrell, *The Anglican Church in New Zealand: A History* (Dunedin: Anglican Church of the Province of New Zealand, 1973); Noel Derbyshire, "'*The English Church*' Revisited: Issues of Expansion and Identity in a Settler Church: The Anglican Church in New Zealand, 1891–1945" (PhD diss., Massey University, 2006).
[16] Olssen; A. H. McLintock, *The History of Otago: The Origins and Growth of a Wakefield Class Settlement* (Christchurch: Capper Press, 1975).
[17] Blain, *Clergy*, 2–7.
[18] Locke, *The Church*, 34.
[19] A good discussion is contained in James Pereiro, "The Oxford Movement and Anglo-Catholicism," in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume III: Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion, 1829–c.1914*, ed. Rowan Strong (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 198–201.
[20] Pereiro, "The Oxford Movement," 194–196.
[21] Pereiro, "The Oxford Movement," 210.
[22] Pereiro, "The Oxford Movement," 202.
[23] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: 1860–1901* (London: SCM Press, 1987), 308–327.
[24] Hilary M. Carey, *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801–1908* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 99.
[25] Reed, *The Glorious Battle*, 128–147.
[26] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 312–313.
[27] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 310.
[28] Reed, *The Glorious Battle*, 5.
[29] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 337–338.
[30] For a general overview, see Rowan Strong, *Anglicanism and the British Empire, c.1700–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 222–283.
[31] Locke, *The Church*, 110.
[32] See, for example, Stephen Judd, "'Defenders of Their Faith': Power and Party in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 1909–1938" (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 1984), 30; David Hilliard, "Anglo-Catholicism in Australia, c.1860–1960," in *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World, 1830–1930*, eds. Stewart J. Brown and Peter Nockles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 116.
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[34] Pamela Welch, "Constructing Colonial Christianities: With Particular Reference to Anglicanism in Australia, ca 1850–1940," *Journal of Religious History* 32, no. 2 (2008): 251.
[35] Calvin Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), 13.
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[54] See, for example, Ken Booth, "Anglicanism," in *The Farthest Jerusalem: Four Lectures on the Origins of Christianity in Otago* (Dunedin: University of Otago's Faculty of Theology and Hocken Library, 1993), 13–14; Olive Trotter, *John Larkins Cheese Richardson: 'The Gentlest, Bravest and Most Just of Men'* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2010), 46, 66.
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[57] "The Diocesan Synod of Dunedin," *Otago Witness*, 17 April 1869, 6.
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[61] See, for instance, Evans, *Southern See*, 17–46; Pearce, "Introduction," 35–79.
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[79] For an in-depth discussion, see H. M. Bowron, "Anglo Catholicism in the Diocese of Christchurch, 1850–1920" (MA diss., University of Canterbury, 1975), 93–133.

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