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Te Rōpu Hītori o te Hāhi Mīhinare ki Aotearoa

A Quiet Beginning: How the Oxford Movement Discretely Infiltrated its Way into the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin

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Part Two

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Abstract

This paper deals with the wider diffusion of the Oxford Movement throughout the Anglican Dunedin diocese from the inter-war period on. It highlights two major influences; the ministry of the Revd Vincent Bryan King, one of New Zealand's premier social worker priests in the inter-war years, and the infection factor generated by the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary, a holiness club that encouraged priestly vocations and high standards of elaborate liturgical worship. It will assess the limits of the spread of the Oxford Movement in the Dunedin Anglican diocese and will conclude that the Christchurch Anglican diocese was the vanguard diocese of introduced Oxford Movement religion.

A Mood Shift

The 1870s and 1880s had seen significant opposition to the arrival of ritualist religion in the Anglican diocese of Dunedin yet by the inter-war period the diocese had become quietly receptive to some key ideas of the Oxford Movement. How can this significant shift of ethos and opinion be explained?

We have noted in **Part One** the profound effect that the publication of *Lux Mundi* had on the theologically aware world, and the consequent opinion shaping influence of Charles Gore. From 1898 on, the Revd Curzon-Siggers, Vicar of St Matthews, Dunedin, and a convinced Anglo-Catholic, became editor of the Diocesan magazine *The New Zealand Guardian*. Amid reporting on parish and diocesan events and routine news he interspersed articles about Gore and short pieces by him and other luminaries of the Anglo-Catholic world. In a reasonably subtle way the explanatory articles, and items of interest reported on, would present an Oxford Movement thought world as the diocesan norm.

The establishment of Selwyn College as the diocesan theological college in 1893 was another influence. Its ordinands tended to be of the high church variety, in part because of the influence and style of their theological mentors and perhaps by the cachet and hint of daring avant-garde ritualism. The most influential of its Wardens was L. G. Whitehead in a long-stay ministry stretching from 1919 to 1950, Vicar also of All Saints Dunedin from 1935 to 1948. He described his churchmanship and theological influences in this way: *'Although I had what might be called an 'evangelical' upbringing from my parents, I was an Anglo-Catholic of the school of Bishop Gore. But I was very interested in the modernist movement in the Roman Catholic Church and my views later became those of Tyrell, Von Hugel and to some extent Inge ... But the War also had a devastating effect on my mind. Hitherto, I had, like most people in those days believed that not only was our civilisation secure, but that real progress was inevitable. This horror*

*disillusioned me. In 1913, I had read Neville Figgis' book, 'Civilisation at the Cross Roads' with its solemn warnings. If they disturbed me, I comforted myself with the thought that the crash would not come in our time.'*¹

The 1910 General Mission of Help had left its mark on the diocese. The two Mirfield monks, Frs Timothy Rees CR and J. E. Fitzgerald CR had been impressive figures. They had been given key preaching opportunities at the Cathedral and at All Saints, Dunedin. A Confraternity of the Community of the Resurrection came into existence after their departure, its meetings often advertised in *The Church Envoy*.

The re-emergence of religious communities in the Church of England in the 19th century had been a fruit of the Oxford movement and this took local expression when the Sisters of the Church sent nuns from London in 1896 to open St Hilda's school for girls in Dunedin. They would continue to staff the school until 1931. Sister Mary and Sister May became valued parish workers at St Peter's Caversham before the Great War. All Saints Dunedin also had the assistance of a religious sister as a parish worker. Religious communities, or 'ritualistic sisterhoods' as their detractors had called them, had become an established part of the Dunedin and diocesan scene.

Finally, the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin is unique in New Zealand in being a minority protestant denomination surrounded as it is by a sea of Presbyterianism. 19th century Presbyterians had spoken of 'the wee enemy' in their midst. Asserting your difference by elevating your churchmanship may well have been a factor in denominational rivalry and brand differentiation. The Diocese of Dunedin was after all one of the few amongst its sister dioceses to reject Church Union later in the 20th century.

Thus, by the 1920s the ethos of the diocese had shifted to become more receptive to the ideas of the Oxford Movement. Two other major influencers would assist this transition in the years ahead. The Revd Vincent Bryan King and his inspiring ministry as one of the premier social worker priests of the inter-war period. A holiness club for young men known as the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary that would become embedded in the structures of several parishes with consequences for their liturgical life.

Ju-Jitsu Christianity

A photograph in the December 1918 edition of *The Church Envoy* shows the committee of the newly opened Memorial Home for orphaned boys at the opening ceremony. Seated next to Bishop Nevill is his Chaplain, a tall, thin, bespectacled man who looks somewhat frail.² This is the Revd Vincent Bryan King who had already become one of the most well-known and respected clergymen in Dunedin, whose prestige would increase still further in the inter-war years as he became the Dunedin Diocese's premier social worker priest. King junior would be ordained a Deacon in 1904, licensed as a private Chaplain to the Bishop, a most unusual position for a newly ordained clergyman to hold. He appears to have enjoyed a close relationship to the Nevills because when the bishop's first wife, Mary Susannah, died in 1905 she left him a bequest of 2,000 pounds, equivalent to 6 - 7 year's stipend for a reasonably remunerated Vicar.³ In 1906 he was licensed as Chaplain Visitor to Public Institutions, which gave him specific pastoral responsibility for the hospital, the prison, the law courts, the industrial school, and the benevolent

¹ K.F.S. Cox, *Archdeacon L.G. Whitehead: A Biography*, Christchurch: Pegasus, 1977, 24-7. Neville Figgis CR was one of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield's foremost theologians.

² *Church Envoy*, 15 December 1918, 258.

³ Blain Biographical Directory, Nevill's first wife was the source of the substantial private income with which he would finance much of his struggling infant diocese. She had been ailing for some time and was cared for by a companion Miss Fynes Clinton, the daughter of a diocesan clergyman. Nevill would marry her in late 1906.

institution. He appears to have been a man of prodigious energy for he soon became President of the City Relief Association, Chairman of the Red Cross and the St John Ambulance Association, a member of the Society for the Protection of Women, on the executive of the Hospital Saturday Association and Children and Brigade Chaplain to the Boys Scout organisation.⁴ Unusually, he was not priested until 1909.

In that year he opened a Mission House in Filleul St, the first of his major achievements. 46 Filleul St had formerly been the Liverpool Arms. It lost its licence in 1894 and became one of the most unsavoury houses in a quarter of Dunedin with a bad reputation. In King's words, '*It had become tenanted by rogues, vagabonds, gamblers and half-caste Chinese girls. It was filthily dirty; when it was being cleaned the accumulation of years had to be scraped off the floor with spades. In an upstairs room 12 or 14 ferrets had been kept, and long after their removal there remained in their vicinity an odour that forcibly reminded one of the polecat tribes.*'⁵

The local roughs and toughs did not take kindly to the opening of a Mission House in their immediate vicinity and immediately challenged its right to be there.⁶ King would be obliged to reveal a side of his personality unusual in a clergyman. Several times gangs of roughs invaded the mission house and wrecked the furniture. These invasions ceased when the tall, pale and slightly built King deployed his skill in Ju-jitsu that enabled him to deal easily with some of the roughest visitors to his establishment.⁷

A landmark trial of strength and skill secured King's reputation as one whose authority was not to be challenged and as one who had the knack of turning foes into allies. A large man refused to leave the mission house at closing time and after arguing the toss with King, declared his entire independence, and said that he would be gratified to meet the person who could eject him. Then ju-jitsu was brought into use, and the big man found himself suddenly and unaccountably outside. He came back and shook hands with Mr King. 'Parson,' he said, 'you're something more than you look. After this I'm your man,' and so he proved to be.⁸

The Mission House provided meals and a letter-writing service, dispensed clothes and furniture, offered some accommodation, and had a Games and Reading room. A Service was held there on Sunday evening. King acted also as an employment agency and provided railway tickets to those en-route to a job opportunity. He was renowned for his ability to discern the difference between a bogus hard luck story and a case of genuine need,⁹ and was forthright in strongly advising the public against indiscriminate giving to those who lived off the gullibility of the naive.¹⁰ Much of the manpower to staff the Mission House was provided by the Brotherhood of St Andrew, an association of idealistic, altruistic young Anglican men united around a service ethic and a rule of life.¹¹ The Mission House would evolve into a City Mission and would remain in continuous existence until 1944 when it closed a year after King's retirement.

⁴ *Evening Star*, 25 October 1916, 8.

⁵ *Otago Witness*, 10 November 1909, 89.

⁶ The Police had warned King against opening the Mission House in that locality. *Evening Star* December 1916, 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Evening Star*, 30 March 1911, 4. 11 July 1913, 7.

¹⁰ *Evening Star*, 20 July 1910, 6.

¹¹ *Mataura Ensign*, 29 October 1909, 3.

The Flu Tsar of Dunedin

As the November 1918 influenza pandemic spread throughout the country, Dunedin showed more initiative than any other New Zealand city, getting in ahead of the Minister of Health's telegram to all mayors on 12 November authorising local government to set up epidemic relief organisations. Dr Irwin Faris, the District Health Officer, took it upon himself to bypass the mayor and directly approached King in his capacity as local president of the Red Cross and St John Ambulance Association asking him to be the city's chief organiser of epidemic relief. This turned out to be a good call as many of the council's staff, including the town clerk and his assistant came down with the flu.

King swung into action making the Red Cross shop in the old post office building his headquarters. This central bureau rapidly developed into a considerable organisation of several hundred volunteers with a nerve centre and office staff of ten.¹² King was answerable only to Dr Faris and the hospital board chairman W.E.S. Knight, with the three of them functioning as an informal steering committee. King was authorised to incur any expenses he thought necessary. He had become almost overnight the Flu Tsar of Dunedin.¹³

Dunedin was fortunate in having just over half the death toll of Christchurch and was the least affected of the four main centres. 701 flu victims were admitted to Dunedin hospital, 530 of which were pneumonic with 172 deaths resulting. It was different too in having a more gradual build-up to the pandemic's peak and a slower return to normal. The worst day came on 26 November 1918 when 16 people died.

It is impossible to say whether Dunedin's early and well organised preparedness was an important factor in this lesser mortality. The death rate declined the further south the disease spread. However, the people of Dunedin were clear where their debt of gratitude lay. In early 1919, Vincent Bryan King was presented with a cheque for 1,000 pounds raised by public subscription, together with a new motor car to assist with his continuing social work ministry. The money would have been appreciated because King was paid the princely annual sum of 102 pounds, way below the usual Vicar's stipend.¹⁴

Subsequent Career

King would be prominent in organising relief efforts after the two major floods of 1923 and in the South Dunedin flood of 1929, visiting house to house in 12 streets. He would receive the Prince of Wales at the Monticello Home for war veterans in 1923 and the King in 1927. His name would appear with dreary frequency in the court pages in cases relating to wife desertion and non-payment of maintenance orders where his testimony, based on his extensive pastoral contact with broken families, was often the basis of judicial decisions. He would be at the organising centre of relief work projects for the unemployed.

Given his tendency to spread himself too thin, it is not surprising that his health collapsed in 1922, 1923, 1929 and then so seriously in 1930 that he would be granted 12 months leave of absence for a holiday in

¹² Information derived from Geoffrey W. Rice, *Black November: The 1918 influenza pandemic in New Zealand*, (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press 2005), 124-125, 131, 133, 139-140. Interestingly he confuses Vincent Bryan King with his father Bryan, who had died in 1915, a surprising mistake for a professional historian.

¹³ *ODT*, 14 November 1918, 4; *Evening Star*, 14 November 1918, 6; 15 November 1918, 4; 18 November 1918, 4; 19 November 1918, 4; 21 November 1918, 4; 27 November 1918, 4; 14 December 1918, 9.

¹⁴ *Otago Witness*, 22 June 1910, 16; *Evening Star*, 25 April 1919, 2.

England with his son.¹⁵ There he would visit St Georges in the East, London, where the King ritualist saga had begun. His wife had died the year previously.¹⁶

King retired in 1943. The Mission House would close in 1944. He died in 1945.

At the beginning of Vincent Bryan King's ministry, the Chair of the Advisory Board for the Men's Mission had spoken of his 'accustomed self-denial, vigour and tact.'¹⁷ At the midpoint of his ministry the New Zealand Truth, not a newspaper noted for its enthusiasm for the Church, wrote of him: *'Dunedin is fortunate in the possession of a fine band of social workers, and it is nothing to the detriment of the others to say that Bryan King is king of them all. He wears the clerical garb of the Anglican priesthood, but there is no such thing as a barrier of creed in his mission of mercy. He has a penchant for finding the most-needy cases, and he responds to the cry of distress at any hour in the twenty-four, the motor car with which he was presented by his host of admirers seeming to be always on the road. His pet hobby appears to be the straightening out of domestic differences, and many a broken-hearted wife has had occasion to bless him for turning the footsteps of her wayward husband into the paths of rectitude again. Every movement and society that has for its object the uplifting of humanity generally has his active support, while in him the war-battered inmates of Montecillo Home have the warmest of friends. His aim in life is to bring a little sunshine into the lives of those burdened by sickness or sorrow, and in this, judged by the Biblical pronouncement, 'By your deeds shall ye be known' Bryan King is a man among men.'*¹⁸

His obituary in the diocesan newspaper harked back to his Oxford Movement origins and concluded, *'Mr King tried in his life to show the social implications of the Catholic faith.'*¹⁹

The Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary

Anglo-Catholic parishes tended to have a variety of lay associations called guilds and confraternities, the names harking back to the Middle Ages, the era that Anglo-Catholics saw as the golden age of faith. Mortimer began the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary at St Peter's, Caversham at some stage during his 1914 to 1920 tenure. It was an organisation that had existed in English parishes influenced by the Catholic revival since 1898. Its four aims were to encourage more frequent attendance at the Holy Eucharist, to promote friendship and brotherhood among altar servers, to raise the spiritual tone of altar servers and to promote a disinterested and conscientious performance of the duties of altar servers.

These aims were a subset of an overall mission statement that, 'The Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary was founded upon, and exists for ... the propagation, maintenance and active witness of the Catholic Faith and Practice of our English Church.'²⁰

Three photographs tell the story of the evolution of the GSS during the inter-war years. In the first, the one that hangs in the Caversham sacristy, Fr Mortimer sits in the midst of seven servers, each clad in cassock and surplice, wearing the distinctive medal of the GSS. A differently attired older man is evidently the master of ceremonies. Two of these young men would go on to become priests – Stanley Hurd, who would briefly be the curate of St Peter's and would then serve his entire ministry in the diocese of Dunedin, and Edward McLevie who would eventually become the vicar of St Barnabas, Roseneath, and

¹⁵ ODT, 21 October 1922, 4; 8 May 1923, 8; 2 February 1929, 8; 17 March 1930, 10; 27 March 1930, 12; 20 May 1930, 3.

¹⁶ ODT, 17 December 1929, 10.

¹⁷ ODT, 22 June 1910, 16.

¹⁸ NZ Truth, 12 April 1924, 6.

¹⁹ Church Envoy, July 1945, 86-87.

²⁰ GSS Annual Report, 1950-1, Church Envoy, May 1951.

would transform it into the Anglo-Catholic parish of the Wellington diocese. So keen was McLevie on Anglo-Catholic associations that he would later become a member of the Church Union and the Guild of All Souls. In 1947 he would become the deputy-chaplain of the Epiphany chapter of the GSS, the Wellington branch.

This is the most important point about the GSS. It not only encouraged holiness of life amongst young men; it was also an incubator of vocations to the priesthood. The 1932 photograph of Canon Button, inter-war vicar of Caversham, has him surrounded by 15 servers, 11 of whom are GSS members. Two of them would become priests. Herbert Hook would serve his entire ministry in the diocese of Dunedin and Neville Titchener would become the Vicar of Khandallah in the diocese of Wellington. While Khandallah parish church would not become a haven of high church religion it would definitely go 'up the candle' during his tenure. It is evident that the GSS appealed to young men. The 1924 photo of the servers has 13 of them flanking the interregnum priest, all of them GSS members.

St Peter's as a Vocation Rich Parish

It is worth staying with the vocations theme for a while. A remarkable number of St Peter's laymen would become priests. Des Erwin, a 1950s vestryman would be ordained. He, too, had been a parish GSS member. Vivian Fisher, a vestryman during Dering-Evans time, would also be ordained, and after serving many of the inter-war years in the Dunedin diocese, would conclude his ministry at St Mary the Virgin, Addington, from 1937 to 1948. Charles Foreman was a painter in South Dunedin during the Great War, with something of a reputation as a singer. Ordained in 1920, he would be vicar of the Maniototo, and then Waikouaiti, before departing to Britain in 1936, where he would die a year later. George Moreton had been leader of the choir at Holy Cross, St Kilda, when it was still a mission church attached to St Peter's. He would be a social worker priest, chaplain at first to the Vauxhall diocesan boy's orphanage at Waverley, then assisting the Rev'd Vincent Bryan King, and after that, for most of his ministry, being the chaplain of the Mount Eden gaol in Auckland. He would become an advocate of prison reform. Frank Waldron would become vicar of All Saints, Gladstone in the 1950s, thus making him available to be chaplain to the Invercargill chapter of the GSS. Leslie Groves had a distinguished career in the Dunedin diocese from 1928, culminating in being a chaplain to the 2nd New Zealand Division overseas 1940-44, and then vicar of St John's, Roslyn from 1945-53, dying there of cancer in 1953 at the age of 48.²¹ He is memorialised by the Leslie Groves retirement home that was founded, and is managed by the parish of St John's, Roslyn. What is significant about all these ministries is that they went the distance, with all of them remaining in the priesthood until retirement or death.

The Infection Factor

Noticeable amongst the clergy generated by St Peter's is what could be called the 'infection factor'. Some of them became promoters of the Anglo-Catholic religion they had experienced in Caversham and would endeavour to generate and replicate in the parishes they would lead. We have already noted McLevie and Titchener's efforts in the Wellington diocese. Stanley Hurd would try to raise the liturgical and sacramental tone of all the parishes that he served in, as did, no doubt, Herbie Hook. George Coates, curate to Dering Evans at St Peter's, would then become Vicar of St Michael's, Anderson's Bay, and would begin that parish's enduring Anglo-Catholic tradition.²² This, in turn, helps to explain the extending Anglo-

²¹ Information for these priests obtained from the Blain Biographical Dictionary of Clergy in the Pacific.

²² Eileen Wallis, *Otago Peninsula Saints: A History of the Anglican Parish of St Michael and All Angels, Otago Peninsula*. (Dunedin, Progress Print Ltd) 1989, 12.

Catholic tone of the Dunedin diocese, albeit in a moderate way, and would assist with the further development of GSS cells in other parishes.

The Diocesan Expansion of the Guild

For a few years the St Peter's, Caversham GSS Guild soldiered on alone, but by the mid-1920s cells were developing in other parishes, mostly in Dunedin, but then extending to Southland. Now, regional chapters could be established, the Dunedin one taking the name of the Chapter of the Most Holy Sacrament, and the Invercargill one, the Chapter of George Augustus Selwyn. This, in turn, meant that regular regional meetings of combined GSS groups could meet for mutual encouragement.

The essential ingredients for the beginning of a GSS Guild were the active encouragement and leadership of a parish priest supported by an enthusiastic layman, generally the sacristan. From the 1920s through to the 1950s, these key ingredients were present in an increasing number of Dunedin diocese parishes. Now the Caversham group was not on its own, but had associate groups at St Michael's, Andersons Bay, St Martins, NorthEast Valley, All Saints, Dunedin, Holy Cross, St Kilda and later, even at St Mary's Mornington and St Johns, Roslyn, not parishes normally associated with a catholic tradition. There was now a constellation of Anglo-Catholic clergy that made for a mutually reinforcing development pattern for the GSS, names such as Harbour, Harding then Hurd at Andersons Bay, with Harbour then moving to Roslyn, Harrison bringing in the golden age of Anglo-Catholicism at All Saints, and Curzon-Siggers at NorthEast Valley. Curzon-Siggers would be particularly significant because by the early 1950s he would be the Warden of GSS for the entire Province of New Zealand. Also helpful was the presence of Fr Perkins, a Mirfield trained Englishman, and member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd²³, as Warden of Selwyn College, who was proficient in plainsong chant, a useful assistance factor in the singing of the Guild office. The stars were also in alignment further south with Alan Jacquierey, having completed his Caversham curacy in the early 1950s, moving south to become curate of Gore, and chaplain to the Invercargill chapter. His vicar, Herbert Hook, was, of course, only too happy to make Holy Trinity, Gore, a host church for GSS liturgical gatherings. Additional Caversham reinforcement elements were present with Ross McCrostie, the curate who succeeded Jacquierey at St Peter's, now in-situ at Winton, and John Fitzpatrick, an ordinand of St Peter's, now curate of All Saints, Gladstone and then vicar of Riverton. These two were now GSS priest associates and often attended the Southland regional gatherings. McCrostie would succeed Jacquierey as chaplain to the Southland chapter.

What exactly did GSS members do when they came together at their quarterly Saturday gatherings in one another's churches? They sang the Guild office, which was then followed by a business meeting, the admittance of probationers and full members, and some teaching. On the feast of Corpus Christi, the Dunedin cells would come together for a High Mass with elaborate ceremonial. The minutes often recorded appreciative remarks about the quantity, and quality, of food provided by host parishes women's groups.

The Culture of the Guild

What was the culture of these gatherings of mostly young men with unusual tastes and interests? In 1951 the Dunedin chapter celebrated its silver jubilee of 25 years of existence with a solemn Eucharist at the

²³ The Oratory of the Good Shepherd is a dispersed international religious community, within the Anglican Communion. Members of the Oratory are bound together by a common rule and discipline, which requires consecrated celibacy. They do not normally live together but meet regularly in chapter and retreat and report to one another on their keeping of the rule.

Cathedral. The chaplain gave an interesting report about the internal life of the Chapter. Having pointed to the kind of servers who diminished the reputation of this holiness club, 'the inconsistent, lazy, the careless' he then pressed on to describe 'the server who becomes a 'spike', who devotes immense pains to the acquisition of all the minute details of serving and becomes immersed in ceremonial for its own sake but neglects the inner life of devotion and balanced study. Such a server is often to be found 'tasting' the ceremonial of neighbouring Churches and is often disloyal to his own priest and parish.'²⁴ What is described here is one of the manifestations of what could become a somewhat hothouse culture of, sometimes, liturgical obsession, of young fogies with a precious sense of liturgical drama, and an overdeveloped interest in ceremonial minutiae.

The Rise and Fall of the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary

We do not know when the GSS ceased to be a reality in the life of Caversham parish. We know that it was alive and flourishing in the 1950s, and that it quietly expired sometime during the long vicariate of John Teal from 1962 to 1982. However, the story of what happened to the Dunedin chapter is almost certainly a parallel one with the fortunes of the Caversham group. It is worth noting that the 1951 silver jubilee celebration reports paid tribute to Button, dean of the Cathedral who had recently died. It noted that during his tenure at St Peter's, Caversham, 1925-35, he had frequently chaired GSS meetings and officiated at the Guild Office at a time when the interest of clergy and servers in the Guild was at a very low ebb and thus had helped to save the GSS from becoming defunct. Clearly the fortunes of the Guild had ebbed and flowed at various times.

However, at the 1951 celebrations the Dunedin chapter could boast of having eight priest associates, 49 brethren and six probationers. Attendances at ordinary meetings had been good with an average of 45 attendees. The GSS rose to its apogee in 1963. At the Corpus Christi celebrations at All Saints that year there were 80 present, including the bishop, 11 priests, a deacon and 68 servers, including servers from Milton and Oamaru. Of the eight servers admitted to full membership on that occasion it is interesting to note the names of two future priest of the diocese, Noel Derbyshire and Kenneth Light, and a future leading light of the Otago history department Erik Olszen. Noel Derbyshire writes of this period of the life of the GSS, 'The GSS was an important element for a generation of Dunedin ordinands, a meeting ground for those of an Anglo-Catholic persuasion.' He goes on to list Ken Booth and Michael Hurd as two other diocesan ordinands involved in and influenced by the Guild.²⁵

Earlier that year on 11 May, Dunedin delegates had attended a meeting of the New Zealand district council in Wellington, that had turned out to be a grand affair. The High Mass at St Thomas, Newtown was presided over by the archbishop, the bishop of Wellington, and the assistant bishop. The church was full, with delegates present from all parts of the country. The AGM revealed that there were now six chapters in New Zealand. In addition to the Dunedin and Invercargill chapters, there were the chapters of St Augustine, Christchurch, of the Epiphany, Wellington, Frederick Augustus Bennett, Rotorua, and the Transfiguration, Wanganui. Oamaru was received as a sub-chapter. However, there were Provincial limits to further growth. It was reported that, according to the bishop of Auckland, their diocesan servers' guild had no wish to amalgamate with the GSS, and the bishop of Waikato had vetoed the institution of a GSS chapter at Hamilton. Dunedin could take pride in returning five times the amount of subscription dues and had almost as many members as any other chapter. However, this would turn out to be the last

²⁴ *Church Envoy*, May 1951.

²⁵ Email to author, 27 April 2020.

hurrah. From now on it would be downhill all the way, with a steady process of attrition in the following decades.

The Withering Away of the Guild

In 1965 the retiring Dunedin chapter chaplain, Walter Southward, would deliver a bracing report to the AGM. Attendances at quarterly gatherings were down and erratic. He recommended that after contacting the rarely seen members, there should be a purging of the roll of those who did not attend, and who did not pay the annual subscription. Of the 24 parishes in the chapter's area, only six had guild members. It was evident that many clergy did not encourage their servers into GSS membership. The very traditional style of Guild services, of High Mass, plainsong chant and incense, did not reflect the liturgical norms of the kind of worship that GSS members encountered back in their home parishes. He had tried a new look for the Guild with a more relaxed, informal, hospitable style, but this had produced only modest results and had met with an unenthusiastic response from the traditional minded amongst the membership. He wondered if many of the things the Guild had stood for, and for which it had to fight for in earlier times, were now accepted as normal and as part of the worship of the church generally. He raised the possibility of changing the role of the GSS completely to become, instead, a fellowship of all servers in the diocese.²⁶ This was a suggestion too challenging for the organising committee to accept. Southward's report had statistics to back it up, and they are helpfully revealing about the state of play at Caversham. St Peter's had 20 servers, 5 of whom were GSS members. This put it near the top of the league table with All Saints at 20 servers and 7 GSS members.

1966 brought a particularly thorny issue into high relief – the possibility of women members. The district council resolved to take up the matter with the General Council in England and received a firm ruling. *'Whilst we must recognise that Ladies play a large part in the church and its life there is a long-standing Minute of General Council against the enrolment of Ladies into the Guild. Their enrolment as Servers is frowned upon and unless in a closed order/Nunnery they should not have access to the sanctuary as Acolytes etc.'* This condescending response did not make the issue go away, and in 1974 it was resolved *'that girls would be admitted to the Guild.'*²⁷

The problem for the Guild was that the Anglican church had set out on a path of liturgical reform that embraced the teachings of the liturgical movement, which had been developing for much of the 20th century. It was intent on removing the barnacle-like encrustations that had adhered to the liturgy in previous centuries. It sought to return to the time of origins when Eucharistic liturgies had first developed in the patristic era, so that the Eucharistic action would be simpler, less complex, and would offer greater theological clarity. But the GSS members loved the barnacle-like encrustations, the complex choreography of the High Mass, and the high plainsong chant content of the Guild Office which, in turn, required more skill than most servers now possessed. There were still plenty of servers around in the diocese but, by and large, they were used to the more informal style of liturgy that now obtained in many parishes, with servers often now not even wearing distinctive liturgical dress, a development that horrified GSS members. It was also harder to find clergy who were prepared to be chaplains or priest associates. Increasingly, the younger generation of Anglo-Catholic clergy took their liturgical bearings from the liturgical lead of the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council. Now Rome, the standard bearer and gold standard of liturgical excellence for many Anglo-Catholic clergy, was also embarked on a programme of

²⁶ Chaplains report the 1965 GSS AGM, Hocken Library.

²⁷ GSS minutes 16 November 1974.

simplifying its worship and leaving behind the glory days of high medieval and Tridentine liturgy. As the supply of clergy willing to be priest associates dried up, the Dunedin chapter took the extraordinary step of inviting Jack Whitbrock, the local Syrian Orthodox priest, and a convert from Anglicanism, to be a priest associate, a step inconceivable in earlier, sunny days.

By the 1980s it became clear that the Dunedin Chapter was the only one in existence in New Zealand. It limped on for two more decades until in 2001 its last chaplain, Geoff Hughes, vicar of Port Chalmers, and the rump committee, decided to wind up the group.²⁸

Why had the GSS died? Cambridge historian Jeremy Morris offers a perceptive analysis of why Anglo-Catholicism has languished in recent times, and it applies just as much to the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary: *'Here, it is surely the case that the very distinctiveness of High Churchmanship as an approach to piety and practice proved to be a weakness when confronted with the revolution in popular culture after the Second World War. It was, after all, a religiously demanding way of life requiring the kind of regular, institutional commitment which people increasingly fought shy of. Unlike popular Evangelicalism, what had made Anglo-Catholic worship so distinctive was not readily adaptable to elements of popular culture. Its characteristic mode was a kind of self-conscious formality, supported by a 'high' culture of choral music, distinctive dress, and a hierarchical reading of ministerial authority, which could not adapt easily to the casual, informal and somewhat subversive mood promoted by the new media.'*²⁹

To put it simply, from the mid-1960s on, it was no longer 'cool' for a young man to belong to such a medieval sounding and oriented lay association.

A Vanguard Diocese?

Given the gradual diffusion of the Oxford Movement throughout the Dunedin diocese did this make it the vanguard diocese of Anglo-Catholic religion? Not so, this honour must go to the Christchurch diocese. Although Carlyon had been ejected from Kaiapoi in the 1870s, William Augustus Pascoe at Holy Trinity, Avonside and Charles Coates at Holy Trinity, East Lyttleton had quietly carried the torch forward in a gradualist non-controversial manner. When Carlyon wrote to Pascoe a few years later and asked if the time was right for him to return, he was advised not to do so because this would imperil what he and Coates were quietly achieving.³⁰ Nor was the Movement a purely clerical enthusiasm. Benjamin Mountfort, the premier gothic architect of Christchurch, had been a prominent defender of Carlyon. After Mountfort fell out with the Avonside vestry over supposed pro bono work he transferred his allegiance to the new parish church of the Good Shepherd Phillipstown, which he had designed and built.³¹ As a highly influential churchwarden he persuaded the Revd H.J.C. Gilbert, the first vicar and a recent convert from the Methodist ministry, to become the first priest in the diocese to wear Eucharistic vestments.³²

However, what put Christchurch on the map was the 1910 arrival of Burton at St Michaels, a barnstorming mission priest invited in by the vestry with an agenda to change the churchmanship of the parish since

²⁸ Letter Geoff Hughes to GSS members, 2 June 2001, Hocken Library.

²⁹ Jeremy Morris, *The High Church Revival in the Church of England: Arguments and Identities* (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2016), 253.

³⁰ Michael Blain, 'Testing the Constitution,' in *Shaping a Colonial Church*, ed. Colin Brown, Marie Peters and Jane Teal (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 2006), 158-9.

³¹ This church was a miniature version of the Napier Cathedral that would be destroyed in the famous 1931 Hawkes Bay earthquake.

³² Hugh Bowron, 'Anglo-Catholicism in the Diocese of Christchurch 1850-1920,' Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of Master of Arts History in the University of Canterbury, 1975, 184.

this was supposed to be the royal road to congregational development and growth. Having brought in the Oxford Movement revolution with the full suite of ritualist religion Burton moved on a few years later. His successor Perry would have to deal with the prosecution for ritual offences brought by Archdeacon Gossett. This case, that ran throughout 1918-19, would vindicate many of the liturgical practices at St Michaels and would bring national attention to St Michaels as the standard bearer and gold standard of Oxford Movement religion.³³ The case had gone all the way up the line to the New Zealand bench of bishops but the first ruling by Churchill Julius, one substantially upheld by his colleagues, had revealed the Christchurch diocesan as a protector of this controversial brand of Anglican religion. What was remarkable was the reality that if one had to pigeonhole the churchmanship of Julius it would be that of liberal evangelicalism. Like Nevill he was a big picture man keenly aware of developments back home, such as the groundbreaking Lincoln judgement and the immensely influential publication of *Lux Mundi* and wanted to see the best features of the Movement evident in the life of the diocese. We can note the positive encouragement he provided for the arrival of the Deaconess Sisters whose small beginnings would morph into the Community of the Sacred Name, an enduring religious community in the life of Christchurch. The revival of religious communities was a key agenda item for the Oxford Movement, one strongly opposed by critics of the Movement who denounced them as 'ritualistic sisterhoods.'

The comparatively new inner-city parish of St Lukes³⁴ would have an enduring Anglo-Catholic character confirmed and assisted by the long-stay ministries of F.N. Taylor³⁵ and Peter Witty. Canon Wilford, Principal of the diocesan theological college, College House³⁶ and founder of St Georges hospital, was a prominent inter-war diocesan personality and follower of the Oxford Movement.

It is important not to overstate the influence of the Oxford Movement in the history of the Christchurch diocese. An equally prominent diocesan personality was the evangelical Canon Orange who would inspire a generation of Orange 'pips' to follow him and extend evangelical influence throughout the diocese.³⁷ As in the diocese of Dunedin, many if not most parishes followed a middle of the road path making occasional borrowings from non-controversial liturgical features of the Oxford Movement while eschewing what was condescendingly referred to as 'bells and smells' religion. Nevertheless, St Michaels, St Lukes, Holy Trinity, Avonside, Holy Trinity, East Lyttelton, the Church of the Good Shepherd, Phillipstown, formed a kind of biretta belt that put the Anglican diocese of Christchurch in the vanguard position of introduced Oxford Movement religion.

The Limits of Oxford Movement Infiltration

David Hilliard takes the view that, '*By the 1950s almost every parish church in Dunedin diocese had eucharistic vestments, sung Eucharist was the main Sunday Service, and many clergy were called Father.*'³⁸ Yet it is important to note that by no means all Dunedin Anglican parishes had been captured by the ideals

³³ Marie Peters, *Christchurch-St Michael's: A Study in Anglicanism in New Zealand 1851-1972*, (Christchurch: The University of Canterbury, 1986) 99, 106-122.

³⁴ The Cyril Mountfort church was built in 1908.

³⁵ Peters, *Christchurch-St Michaels*, 103.

³⁶ Like Selwyn College it was a mixture of undergraduates of the university of New Zealand and theological students who were ordinands.

³⁷ Stuart M. Lange, *A Rising Tide: Evangelical Christianity in New Zealand 1930-65*, (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2013) William Orange and the Orange Pips 57-71. See also Latimer Fellowship website, 2024 (14 August 2024).

³⁸ David Hilliard, *Anglo-Catholicism in Australia and New Zealand: A Short History*, (Anglo-Catholic History Society, www.achs.org.uk, 2004), 99.

and practices of the Oxford Movement. While St Michaels, Andersons Bay had been started on an enduring Anglo Catholic path by the Revd George Coates, a former curate of Dering Evans, most continued quietly on their way while slowly adopting some non-controversial features of high church worship. The hillside suburbs of Mornington and Roslyn were middle of the road in their religion. St Pauls Anglican Cathedral would continue to have Sung Matins as its main Sunday Service until the advent of Timothy Raphael, Dean from 1965 to 1973. This Mirfield trained New Zealander would make a Sung Eucharist the main Sunday offering.

Parishes waxed and waned in their enthusiasm for the Oxford Movement. St Matthews, Dunedin was very much an Anglo-Catholic parish during the incumbency of William Curzon-Siggers from 1896 to 1922, but he was succeeded by William Hamblett whose middle to low churchmanship took the parish in a different direction from then on to 1952.³⁹ All those who have followed him have been very evangelical in their churchmanship to the point where St Matthews became Dunedin's premier evangelical parish. Yet Curzon-Siggers remarkable son William Arthur would combine teaching in the Otago Law Faculty with being Vicar of St Martin's, NorthEast Valley, Dunedin from 1934 to 1956 and would quietly inculcate the teachings and practices of the Oxford Movement there. All Saints, Dunedin would eventually become something of a standard bearer for Anglo-Catholicism, particularly during the incumbency of Fr Charles Harrison 1948-1963 whose ministry there is still looked back on as the golden age of the parish.

However, there was a bigger issue at stake than the influence and impact of clergy personalities on parishes. To what extent did the ideals and priorities of the Oxford movement take root in the parishes they served in? The Revd Philip Williams was a Prayer Book catholic who tried to introduce a daily mass in every parish he ministered in and who pursued and promoted the disciplined search for holiness that is a hallmark of the movement. He was vicar of Wakatipu from 1942-47, Tuapeka 1947-56, Waikouaiti 1956-60 and finally Gore 1960-70.⁴⁰ Yet none of these parishes (with the possible exception of Gore where Herbert Hook, a former Caversham GSS member) had preceded him, could be described as Anglo-Catholic. It would appear that much of what he cared about had simply glissaded off the hearts and minds of his parishioners.

The verdict of David Hilliard in this regard is convincing: *'Anglo-Catholicism did not flourish in New Zealand. Unlike Australia, no diocese (with the partial exception of Dunedin) had a succession of High Church or Anglo-Catholic bishops who appointed and promoted Anglo-Catholic clergy and established a dominant and self-confident tradition. Few Anglo-Catholic parishes remained strong and vibrant for long periods, thus creating a base of committed lay supporters, to become centres of influence in either their own diocese or the national church. Anglo-Catholicism in New Zealand was essentially a clerical movement. It produced few lay leaders with the confidence and skills to become leaders in the church outside their own parishes. Lay people with Anglo-Catholic sympathies were devout but not many of them were activists. This was very different from Evangelicalism.'*⁴¹

³⁹ Hamblett's most enduring claim to fame is perhaps the marriage of his daughter Anne to Colin McCahon at St Mathews in 1952.

⁴⁰ Blain Biographical Dictionary of Anglican Clergy in the Pacific, 2474-5. See also Jean Caradus Williams, *Comfortable To Be With: The Story of Philp Charles Williams*, Self-Published 2001.

⁴¹ David Hilliard, *Anglo-Catholicism in Australia and New Zealand*, 103.

Conclusion

The stimulus for writing these two articles has been a recent article that appeared in the June edition of this journal entitled 'A Relentless March: The Rise of Anglo-Catholicism in the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin, 1869-1919'.⁴² I have presented a different perspective and an alternative point of view.

The core of my argument is that Bishop Nevill did not mastermind the imposition of Anglo-Catholicism on the diocese. It was a movement from below initiated by some remarkable individuals. Nevill allowed this to happen, but he did not make it happen.

The Oxford Movement did not capture the Anglican diocese of Dunedin by 1920; it was a much patchier outcome than that. Dunedin was not the premier Anglo-Catholic diocese of New Zealand, that honour belonged to Christchurch.

Far from sweeping all before it, the Oxford Movement in the end failed because it did not attract and mobilise lay animators and activists who would carry it far and wide throughout the New Zealand Anglican church. That is the Hilliard thesis, and I agree with it.

Anglicanism is a gentle form of Protestantism that is renewed from time to time by holiness movements that often provoke conflict at first while at the same time providing fresh spiritual energy and theological resources. The Oxford Movement was one such. Anglicanism deals with these holiness movements in a Hegelian triple move. First it opposes them, then it tolerates them, then it swallows them whole spitting out the bits it finds uncongenial and integrating the easy bits to assimilate. So, for instance, not a few Anglican clergy now wear Eucharistic vestments when celebrating the Holy Communion Service without necessarily understanding that this implies that they thereby subscribe to the doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice or even knowing what that is. Aesthetic considerations govern their choice without realising that this opens them up to the accusation historically levelled at many Oxford Movement clergy that they were dressing up for trivial or effeminate reasons.

In the end the Aotearoa adherents of the Oxford Movement failed to convince the New Zealand Anglican church that it is a variety of reformed Catholicism. Nor did they inculcate and embed in many New Zealand Anglican parishes the particular features of the disciplined search for holiness that is the unique style of the Oxford Movement. New Zealand Anglicanism has become a variety of liberal Protestantism and New Zealand Anglo-Catholics must choose whether they can comfortably belong in such a church. Yet for all this some individual New Zealand Anglicans still feel drawn to such a liturgical, sacramental variety of Anglicanism that has the latent potential to be a religion of transcendent mystical power.

⁴² Martin George Holmes, *A Relentless March: The Rise of Anglo-Catholicism in the Anglican Diocese of Dunedin, 1869-1919*, The Anglican Historical Society of New Zealand, June 2024.