Catholic Church Music in England and Wales 1778-1963

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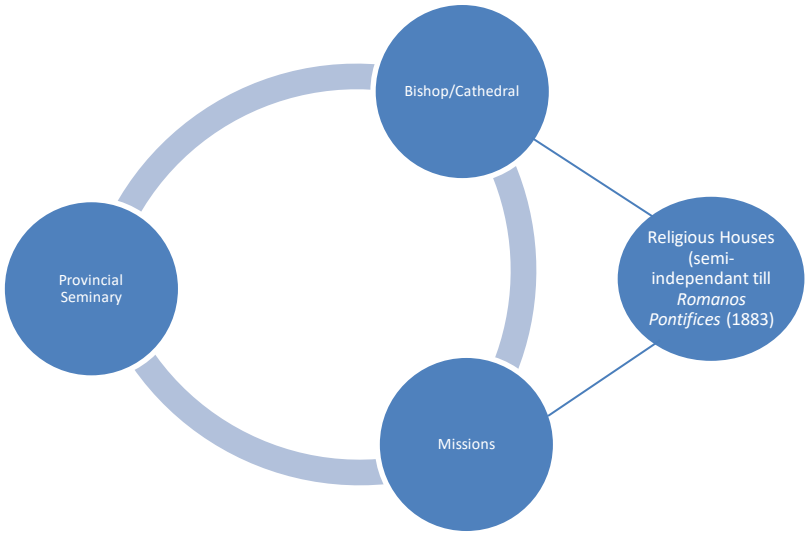
Part 2

1850-1903: God Bless Our Pope! The Ultramontane Onslaught.

In 1850 Catholics faced a choice. They could either engage with the outside world and adopt a 'modern' repertoire at least partially in tune with British national culture; or they could opt for an inward-archaising repertoire that, paradoxically, looked further afield to a Catholic Europe centred on Rome The Restoration of the Hierarchy brought matters to a head, given that each diocese became the orbit within which musical culture developed. Cathedrals were supposed to set examples of excellence; so naturally, with music as well as everything else, bishops sought to assert their authority, even if they were not Ultramontanes. Many of them of course were just that, including the first Archbishops of Westminster – Nicholas Wiseman, Henry Manning and Herbert Vaughan. The pattern was set at the First and Third Synods of Westminster (1852 and 1873). Primacy was given to Plainchant in a hierarchy descending through Renaissance Polyphony down to the simpler forms of 'modern' music. Seminarians would be taught it, congregations encouraged to sing it, and boys trained to replace women in choirs.[1] Events in Birmingham showed how this might be enforced. In 1854 Bishop William Ullathorne and John Moore, the Cathedral Administrator, set up an endowed all- male salaried choir at St Chad's Cathedral, the first in Catholic England since the Reformation. Together with the Organ it was moved from the West Gallery to the Chancel. John Lambert and Henry Formby were recruited to advise and an exclusive diet of Plainchant and Renaissance Polyphony prescribed. The previous year Moore, as President at Oscott, restricted the seminarians to Plainchant.[2]

Such gestures were all very well, but out on the Missions implementation was quite something else. To make the policies stick Ultramontanes needed two things: the enthusiastic support of a powerful promotional organisation – the Cecilian Movement; and a publishing industry willing and able to supply enough sheet music of the 'right' sort.

The Diocesan Pattern (after 1850)



The German Society of St Cecilia was founded in 1867 by Franz Xavier Witt (1834-1888), and officially recognised by the Papacy in 1870. Affiliated societies appeared elsewhere, but attempts in England proved somewhat ephemeral; so considerable influence was exerted from outside, notably the USA (Cincinnati especially) and Ireland.[3] Its plainchant activity built on earlier work by John Lambert and the Mechlin Chant books. Lambert's volumes show the transition between Renaissance and Medieval styles. His *Grammar of Ritual Music*, for example, is based on N. Jansen's *Les Vrais Principes du chant Grégorien* of 1845, and therefore predates the discovery of the Montpellier Codex. His volume of Plainchant Organ accompaniments though dates from 1853 and therefore to some degree anticipates later Solesmes thinking. Tempi are speeded up and modal elements incorporated; but these are still note-for-note block harmony arrangements. All use 'modern' notation; and as such remained in use until the 1890s. The Mechlin books, notably the Vesperal (1843) and Gradual (1856), were prepared by Edmund Duval under the auspices of Cardinal Sterclx and used measured neume notation. These became standard issue in many monastic communities.[4]

The trouble with the Mechlin books was that they drew partially on the 1599 Plantin and other Flemish Renaissance publications, so they were not fully 'Roman'. Accordingly a complete new series, drawing exclusively on the Medicean volumes, was initiated by Friedrich Pustet in 1871. These were edited by Franz Xavier Haberl (1840-1910), who became President of the German Cecilian Society after Witt's death, under supervision by the Sacred Congregation of Rites. Pustet's editions were granted a Papal monopoly that lasted till 1901. For both sides it was an inspired deal. An Ultramontane Papacy got a standardised approved version of Plainchant distributed to the whole Church; and it largely

avoided development costs. Pustet stood to recoup his investment and more besides from a captive market pressured by blandishments from high ecclesiastical authority. As such it was recommended to all English dioceses at the Synod of Westminster in 1873. Indeed Salford and Beverley made them compulsory.[5]

Renaissance Polyphony followed a similar pattern, building on earlier work by Vincent Novello and Lambert.[6] Novello set the ball rolling with *Fitzwilliam Music* (1825 and 1827). However his definition of 'ancient' music extended forward well into the eighteenth century. Such 'deficiencies' though were remedied in his revised edition of John Moore Capes' *A Periodical Collection of Sacred Music, selected from the works of Palestrina, 'Prince of Music'*. Next, from 1848, there was James Burns' publication *The Ecclesiastical Choir Book, Selections from the Great Masters of the Sixteenth Century*, dedicated to Wiseman. He also, in 1868, produced *Masses and Motetts of the Great Vocal Schools of Italy*.[7]

More important though were products from the Continent. As early as the 1830s Wiseman was forwarding manuscript copies of Sistine Chapel repertoire to Charles Newsham, Rector at Ushaw College. In 1841-7, whilst under Wiseman's Presidency, Oscott obtained Pietro Alfieri's seven volume series *Racolta di Musica Sacra*, published in Rome. This included several works by Palestrina. These were followed by Caspar Ett's *Cantica Sacra* (1855) and Karl Proske's monumental *Musica Divina Sive Concertuum Selectissima* (Pustet, Ratisbon, 1854, 1855, 1859 and 1861). Excerpted and complete sets can be found in several English collections. Both were revised and added to by Witt and Haberl respectively.[8]

Haberl's *magnum opus* however was the publication of virtually the entire known *oevre* of Palestrina and Lassus. These included several previously forgotten items; and as with Proske many individual items were published separately. [9]

Cecilian activity did not stop there. Following Guiseppe Baini, Ett and John Richardson, some members composed imitative works themselves. Avidly self-promoted, many such pieces found their way into English collections. German Cecilians – for example Raphael Molitor and Michael Haller – used a fairly strict approach; discountenancing settings by Anton Bruckner and Joseph Rheinberger. This explains why *these* composers had so little impact amongst British Catholics. However the Irish Cecilians, notably Joseph Seymour, adopted a more flexible approach, incorporating many 'modern' devices in their compositions, which proved more popular.[10] Why not? If Pugin and his contemporaries used modern construction methods behind Gothic (or Renaissance) façades surely composers could do the same.

English Catholic responses to all this were a mixture of dutiful compliance, evasion and compromising adaptation, all of them mirrored by the behaviour of a vastly more powerful publishing industry.[11] The key here was the development of improved moveable type in the 1840s by William Clownes, making possible the mass production of cheap music in modern notation. Joseph Alfred Novello was first to perceive its implications. In 1849 he

republished 'Haydn's Mass No. 1' (Hob. XXII) as the first of his *Cheap Musical Classics* series. Moveable type meant longer print runs which, when combined with warehouse storage, drove down prices and increased sales in a dynamic 'virtuous circle'. Every choir member could therefore be supplied with a complete vocal score. Armed with this, they could 'find' their notes by reference to other parts and *see* the vertical chordal connections between them. As a result sight-reading capability, work-rate *and* performance quality must have improved.[12]

Mass production on this scale drove other competitors to the wall or forced them to adapt. For example Boosey shifted to the Classical Orchestral/Instrumental market. Meanwhile Burns and Lambert in its later manifestations concentrated on non-musical religious books and hymnody. Novellos therefore came to dominate the Catholic scene; and because Joseph reprinted his father's editions Embassy Chapel and Viennese Classical repertoire acquired a new lease of life.

From there it was a short step to supplying the growing Choral Society Movement. Indeed Vincent Novello had prepared the way with editions of Masses equipped with Piano reductions. Re-edited with additional English translations these formed part of a semi-secular *Concert Oratorio* repertory attractive to Catholics and Non-Catholics alike. Indeed many such editions were then used in Catholic churches.

The result was that it proved well-nigh impossible to eradicate such music from the Catholic canon. Yet, after Joseph Novello had retired in 1856, the company ceased to be an overtly Catholic firm, especially after its takeover of other companies with all their stock. By the 1890s such comparative neglect therefore opened up a gap in the Catholic market. With Plainchant it had been filled by Mechlin and Pustet; in choir music it was filled by Cecilian publications and Cary and Co.

The latter was founded by Alphonse Cary (c.1886-1940), the son of a Belgian instrument maker from Newbury, who concentrated on publishing short practical motets and Masses. These were a mixture of Embassy Chapel music, its immediate successors and 'Modern'-Renaissance Polyphonic hybrids; such as music by W. Sewell, F. M. de Zulueta, J.C. Forrester, J. Barratt. A.E. Tozer and himself. Some, like Seymour's *Mass in Ab*, were Cecilian; but he did not hesitate to publish the four Masses by Joseph Turner. Practical, Haydnesque in inspiration, but incorporating more modern – sometimes vulgarly popular – clichés, and without orchestral parts, they remained a Catholic staple up till Vatican II.[13]

Meanwhile a new sphere opened due to the proliferation of Devotions; the consequence of the Ultramontane promotion of Schools, Guilds and Confraternities to combat 'wastage'.[14] These needed music, especially Benediction, which largely replaced Vespers as the principal Sunday evening service. Musically its principal elements were *O Salutaris,* a Litany and *Tantum Ergo*. Unfortunately the Plainchant repertory was limited; but this did not matter because such Devotions were extra-liturgical. Simple practical block

harmony in modern style were acceptable, especially as the first and third elements were hymns.

As with so much else the initial moves came from the Embassy Chapels. Webbe's publications though show that Benediction was usually regarded as something added on after Mass. It was Vincent Novello with his *A Complete Collection of Tantum Ergos for every Sunday of the Year* who inadvertently signalled its partial decoupling from this role.[15]

The next development came from Ushaw. Two figures are outstanding. First, Charles Newsham (President 1837-1863) built on home-grown compositions with *A Collection of Music Suitable for the Rite of Benediction*. Later additions were made by John Richardson, who worked at St Nicholas' Pro-Cathedral, Liverpool; and it was in this guise that it spread across Northern England. Both Richardson and Newsham were interested in Renaissance Polyphony, so there are compositions by Palestrina and Anerio; but most of its contents are from Ushaw, Liverpool or the Embassy Chapel tradition. Just as important, though, was the work of Henry Hémy, a freelance musician based in Newcastle who was also music master at Ushaw.[16] His *Crown of Jesus Music* (1864), the first Catholic hymnal to achieve a national circulation, contains 20 Benediction Services and 6 Processional Litanies. The mix of styles is different; with 12 items from Plainchant, 11 from Embassy Chapel and Ushaw compositions, but 32 adapted from music by established Classical composers. A key point is that the concept of an integrated musical 'service' – implicit in Newsham – is now overt.[17]

Active Religious Orders were not idle, as one might expect. For example Oratorians produced two major collections by William Schulthes and William Pitts.[18] Amongst Jesuits there are three major figures: William Maher (1823-1877) and Henry Farmer (1849-1928) and Zulueta. All produced integrated settings – in Maher's case for double choir. In addition Zulueta produced publications for other Devotions.[19]

At the end of the century the whole process was rounded off with Augustus Tozer's *New and Complete Benediction Manual*. 9/80 items are Plainchant; but the rest is up-to-date, and solidly British, albeit with a Southern orientation, as Tozer worked at Hove, Sussex. This became the standard collection across Britain till Robert Hasberry's wholesale revision of 1931. In Hasberry only 41/213 items come from Tozer, the gap being filled with Embassy and Ushaw repertoire; but virtually nothing from Jesuit or Oratorian sources. Plainchant items were doubled to 18; but only 11 pieces date from after 1898. Stagnation was setting in. [20]

Afternoon Devotions needed linking material; and this was provided by hymns. Catholics had inherited from the Middle Ages a stock of Latin-Plainchant items, and some translations had been attempted in Penal Times; but this was stymied by Ultramontane disapproval of vernacular material at Mass. The real growth of Catholic vernacular hymnody therefore took place in the mid nineteenth century. Right from the start even Ultramontanes realised that hymn texts could be used in conjunction with the Breviary as

meditational material at home. The leading figure was Edward Caswall (1814-1878) with his *Lyra Catolica* (1849), but there were others, notably Henry Newman, Frederick Oakeley and Henry Formby. The effect was to decouple texts from their original Plainchant melodies. After that it was only a step to use them, with new tunes, in Devotional services. At the same time new texts were composed, the most influential being those by Caswall and Frederick Faber (1814-1863). Inevitably the Holy Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary loomed large; so the music had to be low key – 'Sweet Sacrament Divine' being a classic example. However Faber also wrote for schools; and by extension, outdoor processions. For such venues Latin Plainchant was inherently unsuitable. What was needed was loud aggressive proclamations of Catholic solidarity – in other words simple catchy tunes in a modern idiom, the most notorious being 'Faith of Our Fathers'. [21]

The first hymnal to gain any traction was an Irish publication: *The Catholic Choralist* (1840). This shows a situation in embryo. There are 170 items for Prime and Vespers, but only 10 for Benediction, 30 Latin texts (some with English translations), but only 3 plainchant settings, and 17 hymns assigned for after Holy Communion. Much more important was Hémy's *Crown of Jesus Music*, the musical counterpart to the *Crown of Jesus Manual*, an omnibus assemblage of all the liturgies, prayers and devotions that a Catholic might need – 98,000 copies were alleged to have been sold! Apart from Benediction Services it has a substantial children's section and numerous hymns for other Devotions; but it also has a largely Latin section for Vespers. However the presence of music for a 'Children's Mass' and a supplement containing Masses suggests that some vernacular hymns might still have been used there. In his selection of melodies Hémy blithely ignored Ultramontane strictures and incorporated quantities of music adapted from modern Classical repertoire, local folk tunes and compositions by himself. As with *The Catholic Choralist* and later, the *Notre Dame Hymn Tune Book*, many melodies are laid out as a tune – sometimes with a second line for two-part choirs - with Bass and 'filler' harmonies. Others though use four-part block harmony, although even here it is designed for keyboard players rather than singers. This is Catholic hymnody in transition.[22]

The remaining story is one of consolidation – in contents, organisation of material and musical layout. The leading hymnals here are those produced by Tozer and *Arundel Hymns* by Charles Gatty. Their most important features are the substitution of home-grown melodies for the Classical repertoire favoured by Hémy and the general adoption of four-part block harmony. However there remained some ambivalence about who would do the singing; something inherent in *The Crown of Jesus Music*. Devotional hymnody, after all, was an invitation to treat it as a choral anthem, as Tozer himself admitted.[23]

By the 1900s Ultramontanes had made considerable progress; but they had not carried the day. Classical-Viennese Masses and their successors were still being performed, especially on grand occasions. Likewise the simpler Embassy Chapel repertoire held its ground, along with more up to date additions. As a result many churches had mixed

collections of Renaissance Polyphony, Cecilian imitations and music in 'modern' style.[24] Meanwhile modern four-part vernacular hymnody may have been largely driven from High Mass, but it had found a new home as part of Devotions.

Typically the Ultramontane response was to tighten the screw. More Plainchant would have to be introduced at Benediction and a standard hymnal imposed nationwide. Most importantly a renewed appeal was made to Papal authority; and Pius X responded in the most gratifying manner. In 1903 he promulgated his Motu Proprio (by my own decree) *Tra Le Sollecitudini*. This is discussed in Part 3.

Supplementary Select Bibliography and Discography

Hayburn, R. *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music 95AD to 1977AD*. Roman Catholic Books, Harrison, NY. 1979.

Muir, T.E. *Roman Catholic Church Music in England, 1791-1914: A Handmaid of the Liturgy?* Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008/2016R (London, Routledge)

Recordings of music familiar to English Catholics before Vatican II are hard to come by, particularly recordings made at the time. For example I know of no performances of Pustet or Mechlin chant, and very little of Webbe or many of the items published by Vincent Novello. The list here then is by no means comprehensive or balanced. Many recordings have been made by modern professionals; so they do not necessarily give the authentic sound heard by Catholics in their local churches. On the internet some music is becoming available (e.g. extracts from Turner Masses); but distinctions should be drawn between music popular with English Catholics before 1963 and other items – such as music by Bruckner – which, although composed at the time, were barely known by them. At all times allowance should be made for the imposition of current taste on such repertoire. For example the amount of vibrato and 'swooping' up to or away from notes used at the time remain debatable, and probably unanswerable, questions.

Catholic Latin Classics. The Cathedral Singers. Dir. Proulx, R. GIA Pubs. Chicago. 2000. CD-486. This is an American collection, so some items would not have been known well in England. In some cases the arrangements are more elaborate than in the original scores.

Choral Classics from St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst. Boys Choir of St Mary's Hall, Stonyhurst and the Arrowsmith Singers. Dir. Conyngham. St Mary's Hall 2002. CD. This contains a number of pre Vatican II Catholic 'standards' (Kitson, Richardson, Niedermeyer, Perosi), as well as some other non-Catholic material.

Lead, Kindly Light. Selected by Lord St John of Fawley. Emmanuel College Choir, Cambridge. Dir. Latham, R. University of Bristol Church Choir. Burrows, S. Opera Omnia 1999. No number. CD. This is a selection of Catholic Music performed in honour of Cardinal Basil Hume. This gives a good cross-section of traditional English Catholic repertoire, despite a

few exceptions. The performance style, of course, is professional and very different from the average pre-Vatican II establishment.

The Music of Westminster Cathedral Choir. The Choir of Westminster Cathedral, dir. O'Donnell, J. Hyperion 1998 CD WCC100

Turner, J. Mass of St Cecilia, excerpts. Carmine Lavinia. You Tube Recorded 23/10/2014 and 15/10/2011. Accessed by typing 'Turner Mass of St Caecilia' on Microsoft Edge search engine 3/7/24.

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[1] Arranged by Guy, R. under the supervision of Bishop Cuthbert Hedley: *The Synods in English being the text of the Four Synods in English translated into English.* Stratford on Avon. St Gregory's Press, 1886.

[2] Comp. Cathedral Clergy (St Chad) 1904: 123-129. Champ, J. *Oscott College Chapel.* Oscott 2002: 47. Later Renaissance Polyphony was reinstated.

[3] A Society of St Gregory and St Cecilia was attempted in 1876, followed by a branch at Olton (whence the seminary at Oscott had temporarily moved), and an English Society of St Cecilia (both in 1888). A London Society of St Cecilia was set up in 1906. Muir, 2008: 129. For the Irish and American societies see Daly, K.A. *Catholic Church Music in Ireland 1878-1903: The Cecilian Reform Movement*. Dublin. Four Courts Press, 1995. For Cecilian activity in Germany and Austria see Mager, S. *'Music becomes a prayer': The movement for the reform of Catholic Church Music in late Nineteenth-Century Germany and Austria*. Cambridge. M. Phil 1994.

[4] Muir 2008: 100-103. Zon 1999: 202-211. The Mechlin books were edited and published by H. Dessein and P. Hanicq. Hayburn, R, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music 95AD to 1977AD*. Roman Catholic Books, Harrison, NY. 1979: 145.

[5] Muir, 2008:105-107. Hayburn, R. 1979: 149-152.

[6] Muir, 2008: 110-114. Ed. Ett, C. and Hauber, J.M. *Cantica Sacra in usum studiosae juventatis*. Monarchii, 1855. Witt's revision of 1869 was published from Ratisbon by Pustet.

[7] Muir, 2008: 100-103. Ed. Capes. J.M. rev. Novello, V.: *Selection from the works of Palestrina, 'Prince of Music'* London, Novello N.d.. Ed. Capes, J.M. et al: *The Ecclesiastical Choir Book: Selections from the Great Masters of the Sixteenth Century*. London, 1848. See also, by the same editors, *The Choir: Collection of Church Music, Original and Select*. London, Burns and Lambert. 1852 & 1853.

[8] Ibid. 112 Ett was a pupil of Giuseppe Baini, Master of Music at the Sistine Chapel.

[9] Ed. Haberl, F.X et al.: *Palestrina's Werke*. 15 Vols. Leipzig. 1874-1888 with supplements – 1891, 1892 and 1907. *Orlando di Lasso's Werke, Magnum Opus Musicon von Orlando Di Lasso*. 10 Vols. Leipzig. 1894-1908. Further additions were made up till 1931 bringing the total up to 30 vols.

[10] See, for example his *Mass in Ab.* London, (Cary and Co.) n.d. For a detailed comparison of German and Irish approaches see Muir, 2008: 114-125.

[11] Ibid. 131-2 for discussion and analysis of material in selected collections.

[12] Ibid. 80-1 and Hurd , 1981: 29-43, 50-52, 62-3, 68, 70-71 86.

[13] Muir, 2008: 82-89, 126-128 for discussion of Sewell and Zulueta's style.

[14] Heimann, M. *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England*. Oxford. Clarendon Press 1995: esp. 4-9, 172-182.

[15] The only reference to this I have been able to find so far is in an undated Novello and Ewer catalogue. However, it must predate 1861, when Novello died.

[16] Ed. Richardson, J. and Newsham, C. *A Collection of Music for the Rite of Benediction*. London. Burns and Lambert. N.d.

[17] Ed. Hémy, H. *Crown of Jesus Music*. London. Thomas Richardson 1861 (pts 1-3) Burns Oates and Washbourne 1890R (with pt 4 added).

[18] Schulthes, W. *Benediction Service and a collection of Thirty Six Litanies with Organ accompaniment*. London, 8161. Ed. Pitts, W. *One Hundred and Thirteen Litany Oratories.* London, n.d. Muir: 2008: 178.

[19] Maher, W. *Nineteen Benediction* Services. London. n.d. Farmer, Henry: *Fourteen Benediction* Services. N.p. N.d. Zulueta, F.M. *Benediction Services for Choir and Congregation with music for the 'Via Crucis'.* London n.d. *Choral Devotions for the League of the Sacred Heart* Church of the Holy Name, Manchester 1891. *Catholic Evening Services* Roehampton 1891/R1919. Muir, 2008: 175-177.

[20] Ed. Tozer, A.E. *New and Complete Benediction Manual*. London, Alphonse Cary, 1898. In fact this is a revision of an earlier, and so far undiscovered volume. Ed. Hasberry, R. *The Complete Benediction* Manual. London, Cary and Co. 1931.Muir, 2008: 178-81.

[21] Muir, 2008: 137-147. Caswell, E. *Lyra Catolica, containing all the Breviary and Missal Hymns with others from various sources*. London, Burns and Oates, 1849. Faber, F. *The Oratory Hymn Book,* London, T. Richardson 1854. Faber, F. *Jesus and Mary, or Catholic Hymns for singing and reading*. James Burns, London, 1849. Oakeley, F. *Lyra Liturgica*, *reflections in verse for Holy Days and Seasons.* London, 1865 et al.

[22] Ibid. 53, 140-1, 145, 147, 159-162 Ed. Young: *The Catholic Choralist*. Dublin, 1840. Ed. Sisters of Notre Dame: *Convent Hymns and Music as used by the pupils of the Sisters of Notre Dame*. Liverpool, Rockcliff Bros, 1891. However see also the revised edition by Birtchnell, F. and Brown, M. London, Cary and Co. 1905, which uses four part harmony. Ed. Groom, A. et al: *The Crown of Jesus Manual: A complete Catholic Manual of devotion, doctrine and instruction.* London, Thomas Richardson, 1862.

[23] Ibid. 159-60, 162-3. Tozer, A.E. *Catholic Hymns, Original and Translated*. London: Novello, Ewer and Co/ Boosey/Cary and Co. 1898 (Preface). Gatty, C. and Howard, H (Duke of Norfolk). *Arundel Hymns*. London, R. Washbourne/Boosey. Gatty, as a good Oratorian, also used large numbers of Italian Laudi Spirituali. Tozer's other publications include a revised edition of *The St Dominic*'s *Hymnal.* London. Cary and Co./Burns and Oates/R. Washbourne 1881/1886R and *Catholic Church Hymnal*. London, Cary and Co. 1906.

[24] For example music in the choir loft at St Hubert's, Great Harwood, Lancs. includes the following: Perosi, L. (Choirmaster of the Sistine Chapel): *Missa Pontificalis*. Milan, Ricordi, 1898, Casciolini, C. (18th century *stile antiqua* composer): *Panis Angelicus*. Paris. Procure Generale de Musique Religieuse. c.1900. Webbe, S. *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. Novello, Cheap Musical Classics. N.d. but belongs to the 1850s. Novello, V. *Sancta Maria*. London, Cary and Co. Motets Ancient and Modern No. 59. No. 39. N.d. but the low number suggests it was edited by Tozer placing it in the 1890s. Mozart, W. *Jubilate Deo*. London, Cary and Co. Motets Ancient and Modern, No. 5. N.d. but with a reference to Tozer on the back, placing it in the 1890s. Many thanks to David Cockett, the organist, for showing me this impressive collection.