

# Pusey House and the Welsh Connection

An Address given to the Friends of St David's Cathedral

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"Dr Pusey was not in the least a picturesque or tremendous character, but only a sickly and rather ill put together English clerical gentleman, who never looked one in the face, or appeared aware of the state of the weather."<sup>1</sup>

Those of you familiar with the *Vanity Fair* cartoon of Dr Pusey by Ape, will recognize that description by the art critic and cultural *savant* John Ruskin. Another contemporary observer, William Tuckwell, was equally disobliging, although probably accurate, in his description of Dr Pusey's "always ruffled hair ... exceeding slovenliness of person, dusky always, as with suggestions of a blunt or half-used razor."<sup>2</sup> This unprepossessing academic, scholarly figure, however, died full of years and greatly beloved, revered and respected by vast numbers. His pall-bearers at his funeral in Christ Church Cathedral included three theological professors, including Edward King, later the saintly Bishop of Lincoln, Charles Wood, later Viscount Halifax, the Earl of Glasgow, the Warden of Keble College and the Prime Minister, William Ewart Gladstone. A future Prime Minister, the Marquis of Salisbury was to head the appeal committee which raised funds for a permanent memorial in Oxford, Pusey House. But Dr Pusey also died as one of the most controversial and abhorred men of his age. To his detractors he was a traitor to the Church of England, a fifth columnist intent on its subversion, a radical and stubborn reactionary.

On the Sunday after his funeral Richard Church, Dean of S. Paul's, preached in the University Church of S. Mary the Virgin on the High, and said that "one of the great men has passed away from us. No man was more variously judged, more sternly condemned, more tenderly adored. What," Church asked, "is the judgement upon him ... on the man? ... there is but one answer from those whose hearts thrill at the memory of all that he was to them, and from most of those ... who stood against him, disapproved, resisted him ... he was one who lived his life, as above everything, the servant of God. They will see in him one who sought to make religion a living and mighty force over the consciences and in the affairs of

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<sup>1</sup> John Ruskin, *Praelerita* [1978 Edn] Vol 1 Ch 11 p 190

<sup>2</sup> William Tuckwell, *Reminiscences* pp 136, 138

men, not by knowledge only and learning and wisdom and great gifts of persuasion, but still more by boundless devotedness, by the power of a consecrated and unfaltering will.”<sup>3</sup>

Pusey was born on 22 August 1800 at Pusey House in the village of Pusey in Berkshire. His father was the Honourable Philip Pusey, the youngest son of Viscount Folkestone, who had taken the surname Pusey as a condition of inheriting the Pusey estate. His mother was Lady Lucy Sherard daughter of the fourth Earl of Harborough and she had been, at the age of twenty-one, the widow of Sir Thomas Cave before marrying Pusey’s father. Pusey was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. He became a Fellow of Oriel, then the most academically prestigious college in the University. In the Oriel Senior Common Room he joined John Keble and John Henry Newman to form a triumvirate of life-long friends. Their relationship continued when Pusey left Oriel to become, at the age of twenty-eight, the Regius Professor of Hebrew to which Chair was attached a Canonry of Christ Church. He died in office fifty-four years later. After Keble’s withdrawal from Oxford as Vicar of Hursley and Newman’s conversion to Rome in 1845, Pusey became *force majeure*, the leader of the Oxford Movement: that movement to recover the Catholic heritage of the undivided church that had seemed lost at the Reformation. In that Movement Pusey’s voice was one that articulated “the terrible candour of insistent orthodoxy.”<sup>4</sup>

Pusey was not, unlike Keble, Newman and Richard Hurrell Froude, the iconoclastic *enfant-terrible*, one of the initiators of the Oxford Movement. The Oxford Movement began as a rallying together of young Fellows and tutors, academic “Young Turks” in defence of the High Church or Catholic tradition of the Church of England in response to and in defiance of a liberal, erastian challenge to the apparent rights and independence of the Church as a divine society. Their weapons of choice were tracts and sermons. Pusey was not long delayed in joining the Tractarians. His transformation which began in late 1830 and was largely effected between 1833 and 1835 has been characterized by one writer as “a second intellectual revolution.”<sup>5</sup> In those years he abandoned his liberal principles and his broader churchmanship. Although he had always been a serious and somber individual, perhaps tending to the depressive, he became markedly less worldly in those years and subsequently: he became more personally austere in his habits and routines. His first contribution to the Tracts was a learned and intensely felt treatise on fasting.

Pusey was much sought out for spiritual advice and direction both in personal encounters and in correspondence. The Oxford Movement’s call to the holiness of living was given practical effect in Pusey’s ministry. He was concerned with a practical spirituality and was much influenced by continental Catholic devotional spiritual books, some of which he translated and edited. Although he was never attracted to the popular expressions of devotion of post-Tridentine Catholicism, he was drawn to the example of the *devotio moderna* of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. To a large extent these personal encounters are part of the hidden life of any priest and for Pusey the spiritual life itself was essentially a hidden and interior disposition, a struggle to combat evil and to seek after good and this, for him, militated against external expressions of piety and devotion, and even undue ceremonial in worship.

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<sup>3</sup> Quoted in H. P. Liddon, *The Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey* Vol IV p 389

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Keates, *Smile Please* London, Chatto and Windus [2000] p 5: a phrase used in an entirely different context in the novel but which seems entirely appropriate as a description of Dr Pusey.

<sup>5</sup> Gabriel O’Donnell OP, *The Spirituality of Edward Bouverie Pusey in op cit Pusey Rediscovered* p 231

For Pusey, as for most Tractarians, two mysteries of faith were central to his belief and understanding, the Incarnation and the Cross, the glory of Christ's Passion. He had been baptized on Holy Cross Day and kept it devotedly throughout his life. The themes of imitation of the crucified Christ and the efficacy of the Precious Blood run through his spiritual life, public and private, and they are drawn from those Catholic devotional sources with which he was so familiar but they were also drawn from the writings of the Early Fathers of the Church.

Pusey, Keble and Newman discovered through their study of the Early Fathers the rule of orthodoxy, the safeguard against erroneous doctrine, the test against which faith and belief should be judged, the Catholic tradition. The Tractarians adopted the formulation of S. Vincent of Lerins: *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est* ("what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all"). For the Oxford Movement Fathers, the lived experience of faith was set out in the Scriptures as interpreted by the Church and the Tractarians pursued continuity with the Early Church Fathers in the restoration of a sacramental and ecclesiological economy of the patristic era.

For the Tractarians, as in patristic thought, there was no clear distinction between Scripture, the theological, the doctrinal and the spiritual: there was a common unity of vision. This placed the Church of England in a wider context and a longer historical perspective and its life was to be lived in the Catholic tradition, rather than as the offspring of a protestant Reformation. Particularly in the breadth of Pusey's writing and expression there is a fusion of the Early Fathers and a post-Reformation continental spiritual ethos. To understand the Tradition and to stand consciously within it, become part of it, there needed to be continuity with the past and with the previous developments of the Tradition and familiarity with interpretations of the Tradition.

Once Newman had converted to Rome, once Keble had dedicated himself to his country parish, the leadership of the Oxford Movement fell on Pusey. In most of the political battles for the thirty-five years from 1845 until his death in 1882, he was a reluctant leader but in one crucial area he struck out boldly. His concern with the call to the holiness of living (it was the subject of his first sermon in Pusey Church), his interest in the devotional material from the Continent, his conviction that the spiritual life was an interior disposition brought him to a realization that the religious life ought to be revived in the Church of England. In 1848 Priscilla Lydia Sellon formed a community in Devonport and some of the Park Village Sisters, eight in number, went to help her during the Plymouth cholera epidemic. In 1854, when Florence Nightingale appealed for nurses to go to the Crimea, sisters from both communities volunteered their services. In 1856 the two communities amalgamated as The Congregation of Religious of the Society of the Most Holy Trinity. Pusey had been much involved in discussions and plans and worked closely with Miss Sellon. Money from her father and from Pusey bought forty acres of woodland and gardens outside Ascot in Berkshire and a new priory, designed by William Butterfield, was built as well as an orphanage and a convalescent home. Pusey was Warden of the Community, spending most University vacations there, until his death there in 1882.

Other, more political and contentious aspects of the Oxford Movement as it developed and changed after 1845 did not sit so easily with Dr Pusey, nor elicit the leadership that some may have expected. As the most prominent remaining member of the Tractarians, the leadership and its accompanying deference fell on him but he never regarded himself as a

leader. As an ecclesiastical politician Pusey ploughed an idiosyncratic but powerful furrow. He had no wish to encourage a spirit of party or faction within the Church. He believed entirely and completely in the Catholic nature of the Church of England and it was always this that he was anxious to defend and to promote.

Pusey's pre-eminent position may help to explain one of the inherent weaknesses of the Catholic Movement in the Church of England. There was no obvious leader. There were too many separate societies with different sectional interests, representing different shades of Catholic opinion and they found it difficult to act in unison. The only possible leader had no wish to act as a leader.

The sustained and bitterly contested disputes about ritual and ceremonial saw Pusey, reluctantly, embroiled in public conflict. The attempt to "put down ritualism ... the Mass in masquerade," in Benjamin Disraeli's opportunistic phrase, which came to be focused on the Public Worship Regulation Act (1874), highlights several of Pusey's characteristics and complexities. He could feel sympathy for those priests who suffered episcopal disapproval and discipline for liturgical innovations (or revivals, depending on your point of view) as he had been similarly the subject of what was regarded as persecution by the University authorities and bishops. He had been inhibited from preaching in the University for two years. He had been attacked by Bishop Blomfield of London for using Roman Catholic devotional books and for the use of the sacrament of confession. He had been inhibited by Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford from preaching in his diocese. He had defended Catholic Eucharistic doctrine. So he had suffered the slings and arrows of episcopal displeasure even if, by his own lights, he was not a party man.

Yet he was "thrown headlong into ecclesiastical politics,"<sup>6</sup> and it was a new, more divisive and more violent form of ecclesiastical politics after the Public Worship Regulation Act. Pusey came gradually to change his mind about ritualism. He had always been sympathetic to Father Mackonochie in his ritual difficulties in the years before the Act. He appealed to liberty of conscience, as he had in his own defence of his sermon on the Holy Eucharist, a comfort to the penitent, for those prosecuted for their use of ceremonial and ritual. Pusey's mind was also changed by the continued relentless pursuit of the ritualist clergy by the protestant Church Association, and as the court continued to make decisions within an ecclesial and a spiritual sphere, and to enforce compliance to its orders by imprisonment for contempt of court unless and until the priest had purged his contempt by compliance. In the face of the grotesque and painful sight of priests languishing in prison, "prisoners for conscience sake" as the *Church Times* put it, Pusey became more vocal and more public in his support of persecuted ritualist clergy, if not of ritualism itself.

Pusey remains something of an enigma, a man of paradoxes, if not contradictions. He was much misunderstood in his lifetime and has been much misrepresented by hagiographer and opponent since. A remote and cloistered academic but one who tended cholera victims in Bethnal Green. An unnatural and reluctant leader but one to whom many looked for leadership and guidance on public and private matters. An establishment grandee by background, upbringing and temperament but one of immense humility and one who denied the authority of the state within the sphere of the spiritual and ecclesial life. An academic insider constantly at odds with the University which he served piously and diligently. He

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<sup>6</sup> Peter G. Cobb, *Leader of the Anglo-Catholics? In op cit Pusey Rediscovered* p 354

sought to avoid controversy but was one of the most controversial men of his age. A prose writer of stunning prolixity, lacking the lapidary literary grace of Newman but one who could rise to a pitch of prophetic, ecstatic abandon. Painfully shy and retiring but who lived the most public of lives. A life marked by tragedy, sadness and grief but one whose every "sentence was instinct with his whole intense purpose of love, as he struggled to bring others into communion with the truth and person of him who had purified his own soul."<sup>7</sup>

Pusey had a familial connection with Wales as he was a grandson of the Earl of Radnor but also gained a further one when his eldest sister, Elizabeth, became engaged to one of his Eton contemporaries John Henry Montagu Luxmore, the son of the Bishop of St Asaph. They married on 24 October 1827 and Pusey commented that someone as "pious and right-minded as Luxmore must be a means of improvement to anyone." I am not sure what that says about Elizabeth Pusey.

Luxmore was one of the bishop's several children in a large family. The bishop, also John, had been born in 1756. He was educated at Ottery St Mary School, Eton and King's College, Cambridge where he became a Fellow. He was a tutor to the Earl of Dalkeith who was the source of his patronage and preferment. He married in 1780 and began his ecclesiastical career in 1782 by becoming Rector of St George's, Queen Square, London. In 1793 he became a Prebendary of Canterbury and in 1799 the Dean of Gloucester. He acquired the Rectory of Taynton in 1800: all these held in plurality. In 1806 he exchanged the Living of St George, Queen Square for that of St Andrew, Holborn. In 1807 he became Bishop of Bristol and was translated to Hereford in 1808, only then resigning the Deanery of Gloucester. He was translated to St Asaph in 1815 and only then resigned the Benefice of St Andrew, Holborn.

Given that ecclesiastical career, it does not surprise us to learn that his reputation was gained less from his intellectual powers (which were considerable enough as a Fellow of King's) than as an egregious example of eighteenth century episcopal avarice. He was "quite simply, the worst offender in the matter of nepotism and pluralism" in the annals of St Asaph. As was usual at the time he held the Archdeaconry of St Asaph while bishop, as well as many other lucrative offices besides. He treated his family with the same liberality he accorded himself and it is estimated that some £27,000 per annum of church income from the dioceses of St Asaph and Hereford sustained his family coffers. He died on 21 January 1830 but not before he had, in 1826, installed his son, Charles Scott Luxmore, as Dean of St Asaph. Charles Luxmore distinguished himself by maintaining the family tradition in most particulars. He was educated at Eton, at St John's College, Cambridge where he was a classical scholar. He owed his early ecclesiastical advancement and preferment to his father and became a noted pluralist. He held several Livings in Montgomeryshire, Bromyard, Cradley, Darowen as well as a Prebendal stall in Hereford. He occupied the Deanery of St Asaph until his death on 27 April 1854. The *Clerical Journal* noted that the death of the Dean of St Asaph "removes another gigantic pluralist."

John Luxmore himself, Pusey's brother-in-law, had a more modest career but only slightly less lucrative and one provided by his father. He went to Pembroke College, Cambridge after Eton and graduated B.A. in 1825 and proceeded M.A. in 1829. He was made Deacon in 1825 by his father and ordained priest in 1826 by the Bishop of Exeter. In 1827 he

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<sup>7</sup> *Op Cit* Liddon Vol II p 61

was appointed to the Living of Berriew as Vicar, the patron being his father and he held that in plurality from 1829 with the Rectory of Llanymynech [CLAN - UM - UNECH], the patron being his father. His income from these two Livings in 1865, when he was still in office, was £917/7/6.

After that excursion to North Wales, perhaps we can return to our second question, "What is Pusey House?" On the afternoon of his funeral in September 1882 Dr Pusey's friends gathered in Dr William Bright's house in Christ Church to consider what form his memorial would take. It was decided to raise £50,000 to purchase Pusey's library and to provide a suitable building for it in Oxford and to provide an endowment for two or more priests to act as librarians and who would seek to promote theological study and the holiness of living within the University. It was Henry Parry Liddon's suggestion and was loosely based on the Ambrosian Library in Milan. The twin aims of the House, scholarship and pastoral care, which were at the heart of Dr Pusey's life and ministry, were to be the basis of the mission of the House and they remain central to the work of the House today.

There is, however, no easy answer to the question "What is Pusey House?" because there is nothing quite like it. It is in part University chaplaincy, albeit an unofficial one: it is in part a research institute: it is in part a theological and historical resource in its library and archive: it is in part a centre for pastoral activity and care. The then Bishop of Oxford, in 1884, permitted the Priest Librarians to offer pastoral care to those who sought them out and who crossed the threshold of the House. It is in part a centre for political activity in the murky world of ecclesiastical politics; a cross between Central Office and the court of a Borgia Pope, only more ruthless. There the Anglo-Catholic opposition to the 1928 Prayer Book was orchestrated and today the House plays a central role in opposing virtually whatever is proposed from General Synod. But above and beyond all that, that heady and varied mixture which makes no day the same, Pusey House, for thirty weeks of the year in Full Term, is a worshipping community of undergraduates and graduate students, who still seek us out, who gather around a dining table as well as at the altar every day when the Mass is offered. The House's most public functions are the saying of the Daily Offices, the Opus Dei, and the saying of Mass daily, with a High Mass sung on Sundays and Solemnities: and all complemented by an extensive ministry of hospitality. And that description really only scratches the surface: add in preparation of numerous individuals for the Sacraments, lecturing, preaching, hearing confessions, giving spiritual advice, guidance and direction, welcoming visitors and visiting groups, hosting meetings of societies, conducting Quiet Days and retreats, sitting on committees, writing articles, background papers, commissioned works and essays, editing books and journals, reviewing books, maintaining and developing ecumenical relations, supporting individuals in their journey of faith, and cooking, lots of cooking. Sometimes I feel more like a Priest Cafetarian rather than a Priest Librarian.

The House is also a hidden architectural gem. From 1884 the House occupied two eighteenth century houses on St Giles but in 1906 a Leeds solicitor, John William Cudworth, left a substantial legacy which enabled the building of the present Chapel, Library and House. The Chapel and Library were completed on the eve of the First World War and after the War the rest of the House as it appears today was completed. The architect was Temple Moore and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel was later beautified by John Ninian Comper with his golden altar under a golden ciborium and a glorious east window.

The liturgical and pastoral underpinning of the House, its scholarship and piety, its communal life and wider engagement remains constant but each Principal and each Librarian brings specific gifts and emphases to the work and ministry of the House. Two of its Principals have been from Wales and have brought to the House characteristics from the Church in Wales.

Archibald Frederic Hood (known universally as Freddy) was a Priest Librarian from 1922 until 1934 when he was appointed Principal in which office he served until 1952. For thirty years his influence shaped the House and its ministry. He was born into an extremely wealthy South Walean family and could have devoted himself to a life of leisure and pleasure. Rather he exercised a priestly ministry of generosity and sustained Pusey House from his private wealth.

He took a First in Theology at University College, Oxford, having held the prestigious Liddon Scholarship in 1916. He trained for the priesthood at Bishop's College, Cheshunt, was made Deacon in 1920 and ordained priest in 1921. He was Vice Principal of St Stephen's House from 1920 to 1922 when he went to begin his long tenure at Pusey House. He brought to the House a Tractarian outlook formed in the Church in Wales and a Catholic liturgical heritage which, having served at the consecration of the House Chapel, he was keen to provide as a Catholic supplement to the Anglicanism of the college chapels. He also brought a wealth of social connections, to which he added year by year. He seemed to know everybody because he did know everybody. His ministry was particular to individuals and personal. He had an enormously large network of friends and social contacts, sprinkled with a number of celebrities for whom he had an engaging penchant, and a dash of royal blood did not go amiss. He was the most hospitable of men not only during Term but also during vacations at his house in Porthcawl where a succession of undergraduates would visit during the summer months.

Hood's Anglo-Catholicism included a strong emphasis on social concern and of Catholic social doctrine. At a time of harsh economic depression, during which the heavy industries and coal-mining of South Wales were particularly affected, Hood's Catholic social conscience found a cause to support through Fr Kent White. White had been born in 1905 and while at Oxford reading Theology at St Catherine's Society and training for the priesthood at St Stephen's House, he came to know Hood and they remained friends. White was a Priest Librarian from 1937 to 1941 and followed Hood as Vicar of St Mary Aldermary years later, doubtless on Hood's recommendation, from 1962 to 1975. However, from 1928 to 1937 White was the curate at St George, Tredegar. The town had been hard hit by the depression and White aimed to turn the offices of a disused colliery into a centre for the care of the unemployed. The Church supplied the social concern and welfare provisions that were so lacking from the state. The provision of a regular hot mid-day meal was a practical expression of the friendship, care and support that the project afforded. Hood invited him to Pusey House where he spoke and preached. During his sermon he vividly outlined the conditions found in his parish.

“Imagine yourself a stranger from another planet arriving in London or South Wales on a Saturday evening. Your first impression, as you pass hoardings covered with advertisements of pleasures and delicacies, and queues coming away from football matches or waiting to enter cheap cinemas and dance-halls, may well be that you have come to a gay world. But wait for your Sunday paper next morning, and that

impression will soon be changed. The gaiety of the world is no more than a drug to dull a torture. You will read of crimes of every conceivable sort – unnatural, revolting, pathetic; you will hear of people homeless, workless, hungry, despairing. Consider the very people who seem so cheerful at their football or their cinema; and if at first you blame them for a useless extravagance when their means is obviously little, any knowledge of their circumstances which is more than superficial will remove all but the very least fraction of that blame. Most of them are attempting to find a relief from conditions which are almost unbearable. Some live crowded in houses whose only function seems to be the exclusion of fresh air and the provision of rent for a far-distant landlord. The roof leaks, the walls are damp and verminous, the windows are patched with brown paper, and an oppressive smell of decay and unsatisfactory drains makes the whole house foul. Some, and these are mostly quite young, are grossly overworked and underpaid. The days of sweated labour are by no means past, and the law allows a low wage for a young employee, while he dare not complain for fear of losing his work altogether. Others, and these are nowhere few, spend their whole time in looking aimlessly and hopelessly for work, or standing idle and unwanted at street corners. These are in the worst case of all. Unemployment, evil both in itself and in its economic consequences of depression and unemployment, is disastrous in its spiritual consequences of bitterness, indifference and depravity. For it is unfortunately true that the majority of those who suffer have no experience of the vitality of the Catholic religion. There is all the difference in the world between the holy poverty of S. Francis and the wretched poverty of Bethnal Green. Whoever has been to blame in the past, and it is easy to blame almost anybody, the present victims seem caught in the wheels of a tremendous machine from which they can see no possibility of escape, except for a few moments at a cinema, a beer-shop or a dance-hall. The responsibility for curing the disease rests not with the impotent sufferers, but with the Catholic Church, from whom alone the necessary miracle can legitimately be expected.<sup>8</sup>

He also spoke to the Oxford University Church Union. He not only raised funds for the project but also recruited a large number of undergraduate volunteers who went to Trededgar in the University vacations to give their practical assistance and support. The St George's project continued with local success and national recognition until the War transformed the economic scene.

Hood's support for this project undoubtedly sprang from his regard for Kent White, as well as from his Catholic social concern, which exemplifies the personal nature of his ministry, but also from his love of Wales and from his devotion and commitment to the Church in Wales. He was a protege of Charles Alfred Howell Green, the first Bishop of Monmouth, and later Archbishop of Wales, whom Hood revered, and he was a great friend of Bishop Alfred Edwin Monahan who became Bishop of Monmouth in 1940, in which same year he made Hood a Canon of Monmouth. For many years Hood, from St Stephen's House and Pusey House, and Arthur Couratin, the Principal of St Stephen's House, who had served his first curacy in Roath, sent a steady stream of ordinands to the Church in Wales, and not least to the diocese of Monmouth. They were known as "Freddy's Boys" and, given Hood's

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<sup>8</sup> Catholic Sermons Edited by Humphry Beevor London, SPCK [1932] pp 109 – 111 Kent White Incarnation and Social Conditions

capacious gift of friendship, made him an influence in the diocese. Monahan himself was greatly influenced by Hood but Hood became caught up in divisions which engulfed Monahan's short episcopacy.

Monahan was a tall, well-built, rugby-playing Irishman described as "full of Irish humour and scheming." He was a full-blown high-churchman, highly conscious of the episcopal office. Rather than a safely Catholic diocesan bishop, of whom there were a few in the Church of England and the Church in Wales, Monahan had some of the colour and Catholic trappings of the high-church colonial bishops who were liberally scattered during the Twenties and Thirties, often along the south coast of England. Monahan presided over real growth in the diocese but his autocratic nature and authoritarian personality brought him into conflict. He attracted and repelled according to taste. His relations with the Cathedral were sour and he and the Dean, J. L. Philips did not speak. He also launched a prosecution against the Revd Edmund Loftus Macnaughton, the Vicar of St Thomas, Overmonnow for installing a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in his church and instituting a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament; both without episcopal permission or approval. He inhibited Macnaughton, who died before the case could come before the Provincial Court. His widow, in the bitterness of her grief, alleged "malice, spite, personal ill-will and animosity" by Monahan. It left a bitter taste all round which had not disappeared when Monahan himself died in 1945.

Edwin Morris succeeded as Bishop and saw a need for radical change. Dean Philips had remained in his post to prevent Monahan from appointing Hood as Dean but he resigned once assured by Morris that Hood would not be appointed. There then began what was described as a purge of Freddy's Boys by the new Bishop and Hood was deeply wounded that Morris had dispensed with his services without a word of thanks. It was after this stinging rebuff that Hood turned his attention more to English Church affairs, through his membership of the Council of the Church Union, through the Anglo-Catholic Ordination Candidates' Fund and The Society for the Maintenance of the Faith. He retired from Pusey House to his house in London and two years later, in 1954, he accepted an appointment as Vicar of St Mary Aldermary and then became a Canon of St Paul's Cathedral in 1961. He was also asked by Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher to help with the care of priests who were under discipline for one reason or the other. This private, personal, unsung, hidden, taxing ministry was one where Hood excelled. He introduced an extensive scheme of secular employment which led many to rehabilitation in their priestly ministry. He retired from St Paul's in 1970. An article in the *Church Observer* in September 1951, before he left Pusey House, gives some sense of the scope of his personal influence and the attraction of his personality: "A truly international sweep of interests marks Freddy Hood's pastorate. As a trusted friend and advisor, he is known by people of all ages from San Francisco to Singapore, from Scandinavia to Central Africa: equally at home in Welsh cottages, New York apartments or London clubs. He is sought as a skilled confessor and spiritual guide." He died in 1975 and by a divine coincidence his final obsequies were conducted by a curate who would himself become Principal of Pusey House in 1982, Philip Ursell.

He was born in 1942 and is happily still with us as Warden of Ascot Priory in Berkshire. He was Principal of Pusey House for twenty years, from 1982 until his retirement in 2002. He found Anglo-Catholicism through the liturgy which he has always considered a missionary tool for conversion. He read music at the University of Wales in Cardiff and

trained for the priesthood at St Stephen's House in Oxford where in Chapel, so he once told me, he was obliged to sit in the naughty boys row immediately in front of the Principal, Fr Derek Allen. He was often accompanied on that bench, so Fr Ursell told me, by David Thomas, recently retired as the Provincial Assistant Bishop. I cannot verify that but pass it on as gossip on a non-attributable basis. Ordained to the diaconate in 1968 and to the priesthood in 1969 he served his title at Newton Nottage in Porthcawl. I should add that last term, on Trinity Sunday, he celebrated his fortieth anniversary of priesting by returning to Pusey House to celebrate the High Mass, when another Welsh exile, the Archbishop of Canterbury, preached the sermon. After his curacy he became Assistant Chaplain to the University of Wales, Cardiff and later added the Chaplaincy to Cardiff Polytechnic. So began an ecclesiastical career spent entirely in academic environments: an interesting life for one who says that he dislikes the young and despises dons.

He seems to have been something of a golden boy in the Church in Wales, if a boisterous and argumentative one. He grasped the importance of broadcasting and the media and became an accomplished contributor to religious programmes on radio and television in an age when they still dealt seriously with the Christian religion and not just another dose of Dawkins. As a young priest he was prominent in the opposition to the proposed covenant with the Methodists, an experience which was useful in his later battles on the same and similar issues. He was close to Glyn Simon when Bishop of Llandaff and Archbishop of Wales and it was the Bishop who vetoed several proposed appointments after his curacy to send him to the Cardiff Chaplaincy. It may not be without significance that around the time of Glyn Simon's retirement, Fr Ursell left Wales to become Chaplain at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. You may leave the Church in Wales but the Church in Wales rarely leaves you and Fr Ursell retained many of the Tractarian characteristics and liturgical rites and ceremonial practices of the Church in Wales. The Tractarian principle of reserve was much in evidence in Fr Ursell's liturgical and ceremonial style, where the virtues of restraint and simplicity were manifest. These attributes he brought to Pusey House where he was determined that it should flourish as a centre of liturgical and scholarly excellence and of pastoral engagement and hospitality and should make a contribution not only in Oxford but in the national Church and beyond that, internationally. He had to do so against a compromised background not faced by any of his predecessors.

In the previous decade, under his predecessor, the House had entered an uncertain period in uncertain times. The historic endowment was no longer adequate to maintain a chapter of priests and a household staff. This financial uncertainty emerged against a background of substantial changes in the Church and in Oxford. Anglo-Catholics were striving to come to terms with the changes and reforms introduced after the Second Vatican Council. Doctrinal debate within the Church of England such as the "death of God" theology, "Honest to God" South Bank religion, the development of situation ethics challenged Catholic orthodoxy. Although the student upheavals of the late Sixties and early Seventies had been mild in Oxford there was a feeling abroad in the University that changes were necessary and inevitable. Many colleges were about to experiment by becoming mixed, admitting men and women: a movement completed only last year when St Hilda's College admitted men. Pusey House shared this sense of uncertainty and disorientation. It was also exacerbated by considerations of personality. One Priest Librarian describes the mood and operation of the House in dystopian terms, as he found it: "The first thing that struck me about Pusey House

... was that [the Principal] seemed to have given up on it and Anglo-Catholicism so that we were playing out our assigned roles but without hope or energy." There seemed to be a deliberate policy, "a self-conscious campaign to make [the] worship ugly" part of a general "ministry of denigration" and the Principal's endeavour "to overcome the aestheticism which, in his view, had ruined Anglo-Catholicism." There was "an extraordinary misery, antagonism, bitterness, purposeless[ness]" everywhere." These are hard and harsh words, painful to hear but, even if there is a degree of hyperbole, they speak of an unhappy House and one in the midst of an institutional nervous breakdown.

While various options were being considered, a proposal came from St Cross College, a graduate student college, which was looking for a site in central Oxford to move from its temporary accommodation. There was a period of complicated and protracted negotiations before an agreement was reached which proved to be highly unsatisfactory to the mid- and long-term interests of the House so that its very existence was far from assured.

This was the situation into which Fr Ursell was invited in 1982. It was clearly a moment of difficulty but there was some optimism that the agreement entered into with the University, that St Cross would have a 999 year lease of the Pusey House site for a modest lump-sum payment and a peppercorn rent, and license back some rooms to the House, would prove advantageous and that the difficulties faced by the House might be resolved within a new context. It rapidly became obvious to Fr Ursell that the agreement was disadvantageous, unsatisfactory in its broad outline, fraught with areas of contention in its details, and unworkable. Few of the anticipated advantages materialised. As those who had brokered and negotiated the arrangement and who had allowed several matters to be resolved by a gentleman's agreement in the future faded from the scene, the atmosphere and the relationship swiftly deteriorated into antagonism, territorial dispute, administrative disagreement and institutional division.

Within that context, and with the possibility of expensive litigation always in the background, Fr Ursell maintained the robust independence of the House, fought a sustained rear-guard action, and continued the many and varied roles that the House had historically exercised albeit within more constraints and frustrating limitations. He improved the funding of the House by an Appeal in 1984. He established links with Ascot Priory. He maintained the tradition of Canon Hood by his membership of several influential Catholic societies, familiar names, The Society for the Maintenance of the Faith, the Anglo-Catholic Ordination Candidates' Fund. He also re-established an international role for the House particularly in the United States of America. That the House is open today, that Fr Jonathan Baker, the present Principal had something to inherit, was in large measure due to Fr Ursell.

The House today is in good heart as it enters its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, a quadesquicentenary. A new agreement has been negotiated with the University and the College which has redefined the institutional arrangements on a much more equitable basis so that both House and College may flourish. Student and guest rooms have been refurbished and made en suite, the public rooms have been decorated and suitably furnished. New heating and lighting systems have been installed. The library had to be closed for just over a year and the whole of the archive had to be removed from the site while major conversion work was undertaken. Apart from that the work of the House went on. There was no disruption to the worship of the House although the Chapel was full of scaffolding and bubble wrap for one Long Vacation. There remains work to be done. And we continue to

explore ways and means where we can make the House more accessible and develop our work both in Oxford and beyond. We are proud of the contribution made to the life of the House by its Welsh Principals and would look to establish links in the Principality. And at the heart of all that we do, the scholarship and the pastoral care, the politics and the call to the holiness of living, the piety and the sacred learning, the hospitality and the humour, the proclamation and the living of the Catholic sacramental life in season and out of season, is the celebration of the Mass, the making present the Body and Blood of Christ under sacramental signs. Dr Pusey's last words, murmured over and over again as he lay dying were, "The Body of Christ. The Body of Christ."<sup>9</sup> It was the heart of the matter for him and remains so for us in the House dedicated to his memory.

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<sup>9</sup> J. G. Lockhart, *Charles Lindley Viscount Halifax : Part One 1939 – 1885* p. 242. Elsewhere Pusey's last words are reported as "My Lord and My God."