

ST. MARY'S, NEWPORT

1840 :: 1940



A BRIEF HISTORY

by

J. H. CANNING, J.P., K.S.G., O.B.E.

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FOREWORD.

VERY few words from me are needed to present and recommend to you this little book. The name of the author is quite sufficient in itself to establish the accuracy and attractive nature of this essay in a chapter of Catholic history and development that should be a matter of the deepest interest to the parishioners of St. Mary's, to the catholics of Newport in general, and, indeed, to a far wider circle of friends, catholic and otherwise.

The Centenary of the opening and consecration of this our present church is an occasion to which for some time past we have been looking forward with pleasurable anticipation. We had hoped too to see it marked by the completion of certain improvements, not of a spectacular nature, because there is no room or need for such, but none the less, notable and useful. War conditions necessitates the postponement of most of these. Still an event of such happy importance must not be allowed to pass unnoticed even in the midst of a war absorbing almost all our interest and activities.

This booklet is designed to prevent this and I recommend it to you in the sure hope that it will stimulate interest in your church and its not unnotable history; that also it will help to increase your affection for that house of God from which have been dispensed to you, your parents, grandparents, and even great grandparents the mysteries of God, for one hundred years.

At this stage of the Catholic Revival in the land of ours a hundred years of continual Catholic progress such have been witnessed in the Parish of St. Mary's and town of Newport which gave its name to the re-established diocese, is not an unimportant contribution to that revival. May it continue to grow with vigour and success.

In conclusion I beg to offer my sincerest thanks to the author of this work who carried out his researches and the compilation of this little work, a labour of love, in circumstances of peculiar difficulty.

May God bless him and all of us.

JOHN COLBERT.

THE year 1940 is a memorable one in the Catholic history of Newport, for it marks the centenary of the consecration and opening of St. Mary's Church. Such an occasion affords a suitable opportunity for recalling the history of the building and perpetuating the memory of the devoted clergy who have served God at its altars. Many changes have taken place during that period. The year 1840 stood nearly halfway between Catholic Emancipation and the restoration of the Hierarchy. The throne of Peter was occupied by Gregory XVI and the States of the Church were still in existence. Six Pontiffs have since succeeded him. For nearly sixty years of this period successive Popes have endured the loss of their temporal independence which has since been restored. When St. Mary's Church was opened it was under the jurisdiction of the first and only Vicar Apostolic of Wales. As a result of subsequent changes it is now in the Archbishopric of Cardiff, after having successively figured as a constituent parish of the Bishopric of Newport and Menevia and the Bishopric of Newport.

Queen Victoria had recently ascended the throne of Great Britain, and, long as was her memorable reign, four other monarchs have since succeeded her. The political horizon of the period was stormy and Newport itself had just passed through the peril and turmoil of the Chartist riots. Nor was the religious world tranquil, for a young man, John Henry Newman, then vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, was raising the banner of the Tractarian movement which shook the Church of England to its foundations and, though he little then dreamed it, was to end in his receiving a Cardinal's hat.

If a present-day Newportonian could be set down in the streets of his native town as they existed in 1840 he would scarcely recognise them. There were thatched houses in High Street, in which thoroughfare the Cattle Markets of those days were held, so that vehicles and pedestrians had to thread their way as best they could through cattle, sheep and pigs. The east side of the river was almost open country and there was scarcely a house between Cardiff Road and Pllgwenlly. There was no railway and no dock. Even the limited coach service was so badly arranged that the up coach to London left before the arrival of the down coach so that letters could not be answered until the following day. The town was in the early stages of its phenomenal development and its population was about 10,000, including some 2,000 Catholics.

In the more secluded parts of Monmouthshire the Faith remained alive during the whole of the penal days but there is no record during that period of a resident priest at Newport. Blessed David Lewis, who died for the Faith at Usk, was arrested at Llantarnam in November, 1678 and it may be conjectured that he visited Newport occasionally, although there is no evidence in favour of such an inference. In 1675, Compton, the Anglican bishop of London, reported that there were only two Papists in Newport and, although this is undoubtedly an underestimate, it is clear that Catholicism was at a very low ebb. In 1778, when the first Catholic Relief Bill was passed things were a little better, for twenty Catholics took the oath of allegiance prescribed by the Act. It must, however, be remembered that many of these lived in the country around Newport and were not residents in the town.

Dr. Dominic Cavalli, Rector of St. Mary's from 1849 to 1892, took pains in the year 1869 to collect from the oldest members of the congregation full particulars of the origin of the Newport Mission and has left a written record of the result of his investigation. His principal authorities were Mr. Philip Williams, of Crindau, Mr. William Jones, formerly of Newport but then resident at Pyle and a Mr. Edwards. The record states that, in the year 1809, the Rt. Rev. Bernardine Peter Collingridge, O.S.F., Bishop of Thespia and Vicar Apostolic of the Western District, sent to Newport Fr. William Barnes who said Mass in the upper room of a two storied house on the corner of High Street and Market Street, on the left hand side as one proceeds from High Street to Dock Street. The original house was demolished in 1880. The first congregation consisted of Mrs. Pye, occupier of the house, Dr. James Hawkins, Philip Williams, of Crindau and Jerry Driscoll and his wife. This small gathering, however, comprised the three national elements which have so largely contributed to the restoration of Catholicism in Newport. The old Welsh Catholics were represented by Philip Williams whose mother was the grand-niece of the famous Bishop Prichard, Vicar Apostolic of the Western District from 1713 to 1750 who resided at Perthir, near Monmouth. Two of Philip's sons were Monsignori Edward and James Williams, successively Presidents of Prior Park College. His grandson was the late Mr. Alfred Williams, J.P., who was for so many years a respected member of St. Mary's congregation. Dr. James Hawkins was a member of an English Catholic family, while Jerry Driscoll was an advance guard of that great host of

Irish Catholics, poor in everything but faith, who were compelled by economic stress to seek their living in this country and have done so much to re-establish and consolidate Catholicism in Newport.

Fr. Barnes took a house at Caerleon, but left before the end of the year. He was followed by Fr. John Charles Haly who served Newport fortnightly for about three years and resided at Usk. In 1812 a small chapel was built on the site now occupied by St. Mary's. Mr. John Jones, of Llanarth, generously gave the land, the stone for the building and £500 as an endowment. The timber for the roof was the gift of Dr. Montonnier Hawkins, of Usk. The chapel was opened in November, 1812. "There was no High Mass, Mr. Haly gave a good sermon. The chapel was crowded and everyone was much pleased." Fr. Haly continued to serve Newport from Usk and was succeeded by Fr. Edward Ignatius Richards, O.S.F., who came every fortnight. About 1822 Mr. Jones, of Llanarth built a house adjoining the chapel. A further strip of land was necessary for this and Sir Charles Morgan, hearing that the house was for a priest, generously gave the land at a nominal rent for 99 years. Mr. William Jones, of Clytha, made an annual contribution to the support of the Mission from 1824. Fr. Richards was succeeded by Fr. David Morton who was in turn followed by Fr. John Burke.

In 1827 there was a suggestion that Fr. John Williams might serve Newport from Chepstow, but it was found that the cost of a horse and other expenses as well as his weak health made such a proposition impracticable. Fr. Burke who had become attached to

his flock at Newport then offered to give up Usk and come to Newport. This offer was accepted and the actual existence of Newport as a separate and independent mission dates from 29th August, 1828. For a short time Fr. Robert Peter Gates was at Newport until Fr. Burke was ready to leave Usk. After a brief incumbency Fr. Burke went to America and was succeeded by Fr. Patrick Portal whose devoted work in South Wales undoubtedly shortened his life. Just before he came to Newport he was simultaneously serving Cardiff, Merthyr and Pontypool. He died before his fortieth year at Llanarth Street, Newport, on 10th December, 1835 and was buried at Trenchard Street, Bristol. Fr. W. F. Bevan then took charge of the mission for a short time until the arrival of Fr. Edward Metcalfe in 1836. He was a Yorkshireman and was born in 1792. In 1811 he was professed at Ampleforth taking the religious name of Placid and was ordained priest in 1816. Bishop Baines enlisted his assistance in the foundation of Prior Park College in 1830 and he was subsequently released from his religious vows and became a secular priest. In 1831 he became chaplain to Sir Edward Mostyn, Bart., at Talacre in Flintshire and, while there, he translated into Welsh the "Garden of the Soul" and several other religious works for the use of his congregation.

Newport was increasing at a phenomenal rate. Since the building of the little chapel on Stow Hill the population had risen from some 2,500 to nearly four times that number and the number of Catholics was about 1,800. It was necessary, therefore, to consider the provision of a larger church. In March, 1837 Fr. Metcalfe asked Mr. J. J. Scoles, of London to

prepare plans for a Church and Schools. At this time the only school for Catholics was held in the old barn, still standing, opposite St. Woollos Church and Mass was said here during the building of St. Mary's. In March, 1839 the old chapel was demolished and work was commenced on the new church. The builder was Mr. Lawrence, of Monmouth. The work proceeded rapidly and the only check upon it was when the Chartists passed down Stow Hill and, according to tradition, ordered the builders to throw up their work and join them. The height and width of the church as originally designed were reduced in order to keep the cost within £2,500. The *Merlin*, at that time the only local newspaper, announced in its issue of 11th July, 1840, that the consecration of the church might take place about the middle of the following month. It was evidently hoped that, as the church was to be dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption, it might be opened on that feast. On the 3rd October it was definitely announced that the Church would be consecrated and opened on the 11th and 12th November. In the same issue there appears a description of the three stained glass windows over the high altar which were "the munificent gift of Mrs. William Jones, of Clytha."

The *Merlin* of 7th November, 1840 publishes a programme of the opening from which it will be seen that no pains were spared by Fr. Metcalfe to make the occasion a memorable one by securing the attendance of several prelates and the services of some of the finest musicians and vocalists in the country.

The programme is as follows:—

DEDICATION OF ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, NEWPORT,
MONMOUTHSHIRE.

"On Wednesday, 11th and Thursday, 12th November, 1840. Principal Vocal Performers: Mrs. T. Millar (Bath), Mrs. Searle (formerly Miss Novello), Miss Whitnall (of Liverpool), Miss Dolby, Messrs. Thomas Millar (Bath), J. A. Novello, and W. C. Manners. Assisted by an efficient chorus. Mr. Vincent Novello will preside at the new organ which will be opened on this occasion. The whole of the musical arrangements will be under the direction of Mr. J. A. Novello. *November 11th.* The morning service will begin at 11 a.m. 'Come let us adore.' Pontifical High Mass sung by the Right Rev. Dr. Collier, Vicar Apostolic of Mauritius.

<i>Kyrie</i>	...	...	...	...	Mozart No. 13.
<i>Gloria</i>	...	...	...	...	Haydn No. 3.
Sermon by Right Rev. Dr. Brown, Vicar Apostolic of Wales.					
<i>Credo</i>	...	...	...	...	Mozart 12.
Offertory (Mrs. Searle)	...	<i>Veritas mea</i>	...	...	Gulielmi.
<i>Sanctus</i> and <i>Benedictus</i>	...	...	...	...	Beethoven.
Elevation (Miss Dolby)	...	<i>O Salutaris Hostia</i>	...	...	Cherubini.
<i>Agnus Dei</i> and <i>Dona</i>	...	...	...	...	Mozart No. 1.
<i>Domine</i>	...	...	...	...	Mozart.
Evening Service at 6.0 p.m. Solemn Vespers.					
Tones and <i>Iste Confessor</i>	...	...	...	...	Gregorian.
<i>Magnificat</i>	...	...	...	...	Danby.
Salve Regina	...	...	...	...	V. Novello.
Sermon by Right Rev. Dr. Wiseman."					

A Sacred Concert followed:—

<i>Ave Maria</i>	...	Mrs. Searle	...	Cherubini.
<i>Veni Sancte Spiritus</i>	...	Miss Dolby	...	Newkomm.
<i>Laudate</i>	...	Mrs. Millar and Chorus	...	Zingarelli.
<i>Alma Virgo</i>	...	Mrs. Millar	...	Himmel.
<i>Te Deum</i>	...	Mrs. Searle	...	Romberg."

On the following day:—

"November 12th. 'Come let us adore.'

<i>Kyrie</i>	...	Miss Whitnall	...	Haydn No. 3.
<i>Gloria</i>	...	Mrs. Millar	...	Haydn No. 4.
Sermon by Right Rev. Dr. Briggs, Yorkshire.				
<i>Credo</i>	...	Miss Whitnall and Mrs. Millar	...	Haydn No. 1.
Offertory <i>Veritas mea</i>	...	Mrs. Searle	...	Gulielmi.
<i>Sanctus</i> and <i>Benedictus</i>	...	Mrs. Searle	...	Mozart's Requiem
Elevation <i>O Salutaris</i>	...	Mrs. Millar	...	Himmel.
<i>Agnus Dei</i>	...	Mr. J. A. Novello	...	Haydn No. 5.
<i>Dona Nobis</i>	...	Miss Whitnall	...	Haydn No. 16.
<i>Domine</i>	...	Mrs. Searle	...	V. Novello.

Tickets at each service 5/- and 2/6. A few select places 7/-.
 Tickets to be had at Messrs. Clapperton, Evans, Olivers', Reid's and Loder's, Booksellers, Newport."

In a further preliminary press notice it was announced that "A fine organ by Walker has arrived. Its tone and compass in the hands of Novello will be a treat in giving effect to the fine old masters at the coming festival. The evening service of Vespers, seldom heard in England, will be given in true Gregorian Chant."

On 11th November Bishop Collier sang Pontifical High Mass in the presence of a congregation of eight hundred including representatives of many leading Catholic families. The report goes on to record the presence of "very many leading individuals in the Protestant religion and respectable dissenters." A well merited tribute is then paid to Fr. Metcalfe in which it was set forth that the Church had been built with money raised from public subscription "by the indefatigable exertions and untiring zeal of a pious and amiable missionary, the Rev. Edward Metcalfe, of whom in the character of pastor and neighbour, the public of Newport, of all denominations, speak in terms of either attachment or respect." It may be added that among the most generous contributors were the families of Llanarth and Clytha, while a number of Protestants had given monetary assistance. Last, but not least, a special tribute was paid to the poorer members of the congregation—"And it would be an injustice to those who are poor in purse, but rich in faith—the Irish working classes—to omit stating that their pence given with warm hearts, were weekly added to the subscription list during the progress of the goodly work."

The report then goes on to say that the Church is in the purest style of 13th century Gothic and that the

interior recalls the Lady Chapel of Salisbury Cathedral. The edifice is cruciform and the front is modelled on St. Mary's, Stamford. The original design included a spire, but this has never been added. As a matter of interest, it may be pointed out that, on the epistle side of the sanctuary is a window given by the congregation in memory of Fr. Metcalfe whose patron, St. Edward, is represented therein. At his feet kneels Fr. Metcalfe offering to God a model of St. Mary's Church with a spire as originally designed.

The *Merlin* is enthusiastic in its praise of the musical programme. It refers to Vincent Novello, late Organist of the Portuguese Embassy Chapel, as "the Nestor of Organists" and also mentions his son, J. Albert Novello and his daughter, Mrs. Searle. We learn that Miss Dolby was "late of the Academy of Music" and that a Miss Sullivan came from Cheltenham, while reference is also made to "a distinguished amateur from Clifton." According to the critic the altos in the choir were lacking in volume but, otherwise, the music left little to be desired.

Unfortunately, neither Dr. Wiseman nor Dr. Briggs was able to attend, but three bishops, Dr. Griffiths of the London district, Dr. Collier and Dr. T. J. Brown, O.S.B., Vicar Apostolic of Wales, were present. In addition, no fewer than twenty-eight priests were in attendance in the Sanctuary. The sermon at the High Mass on the 11th was preached on Ecclesiasticus XXXVI, 7, by Dr. Brown who had just been consecrated Vicar Apostolic of Wales on the preceding 28th October at Bath and this was the first important function of his long episcopate. It may be added that

Dr. Brown resided for some years at St. Mary's Presbytery, after which he removed to Chepstow. His mother is buried in Newport Cemetery.

On Thursday the 12th Mass was sung by Fr. P. O'Farrell, of Bristol and Fr. McDonnell, O.S.F., of Birmingham, preached a very eloquent sermon on Luke XIX, 7.9.10.

Fr. Metcalfe remained at Newport until 1843 when he was removed to the less arduous Trenchard Street mission in Bristol. Thence he was transferred to Leeds, where he died of typhus fever 28th May, 1847, at the age of fifty-six. This most infectious and deadly disease, now almost unheard of, then raged in the crowded and insanitary dwellings of our industrial towns and took heavy toll of devoted priests in the work of visiting their sick parishioners. Towards the close of the year 1841 Fr. John (Bernardine) Davison, O.S.F., a native of Catterick, Yorkshire, came to Newport to assist Fr. Metcalfe. He proved a most zealous coadjutor and, as the contemporary record in the *Merlin* informs us, "might be seen at all hours visiting the cheerless homes of the desolate poor, plumbing the depths of human wretchedness, administering food to the famishing, or teaching the best of lessons—how to die."! Fr. Davison gave his life for his flock, dying of typhus fever on 1st February, 1842. He lies buried in front of the gate of the sanctuary in St. Mary's Church.

Fr. Metcalfe, in addition to his pastoral labours, took a prominent part in local affairs. He was very active in securing relief for the unemployed of the town and was a member of the committee which drew

up the rules for the newly founded Newport Dispensary which has grown into the Royal Gwent Hospital. It may be added that the first surgeon of this institution was a Catholic, Dr. Robert Woollett.

Fr. Metcalfe was succeeded by Dr. Baldaconi, who began the building of the schools at the back of the church, a work which had been planned by his predecessor. A great change, however, was at hand. Repeated requests had been made by Dr. Brown to the saintly founder of the Fathers of Charity, Fr. Antonio Rosmini, that members of that Order should take over the charge of the Newport mission. Dr. Brown's wish was finally acceded to and, in June 1847, Frs. Peter Hutton and Fr. Signini came to St. Mary's, of which parish the Fathers of Charity have since taken charge. Within two months Fr. Signini was stricken down with fever and invalided, while Fr. Hutton's health broke down shortly after. On 9th July 1847, Fr. Dominic Cavalli came to assist and Fr. Rinolfi became Rector. In August of the same year St. Mary's School with accommodation for 130 boys and 120 girls was opened. The boys were taught by Bro. S. Spencer and the girls by three Sisters of Providence, which order settled at Newport in March 1848. Mrs. Herbert, of Clytha, furnished a house for the sisters. In July, 1849, Fr. Dominic Cavalli became rector of Newport, a position he was to hold for forty-three years. There must be some still living who remember his saintly and ascetic features, his piety, his devotion to duty and his gentle and kindly nature. The commencement of his rectorship was marked by an outbreak of cholera during which he repeatedly risked his life by his unselfish and undaunted

service to the sick. On no less than three occasions during his long life was he on the brink of death from fever, and on the last occasion, in 1870, the whole of Newport rejoiced at the news of his recovery. He was assisted from 1849 to 1856, by Fr. Hopkins, while from 1851 to 1862, Fr. Corley looked after the country districts, including Blackwood, which were then served from Newport. It would be impossible to give a full record of the many and devoted priests who have, from time to time, assisted the rectors of St. Mary's and it is only possible to mention a few who, for various reasons, are especially worthy of notice.

One, who was not a priest, came in 1851 and, until 1884, exercised an immense influence over the boys of the parish. This was Bro. George Clarkson, known with mingled awe and affection as "Brother George," to hosts of youngsters, who probably did not know his surname, but lived to bless his influence over their lives. He was the master of St. Mary's School and, though a strict disciplinarian, secured and retained the affection of his pupils. In 1857 came Fr. Richardson who was to see more than one term of service at Newport. He was a zealous temperance advocate and founded an association known as "The Holy War" which found a place in its ranks alike for the total abstainer as for the moderate drinker. In 1857 also, the Infants' School with Convent attached, which is now St. Mary's Institute, was built at a cost of over £1,000.

In 1861 Fr. Louis Nedelec came and remained for a year. He was a Breton and intensely interested in the history of the old Welsh Church. His learned and comprehensive book, *Cambria Sacra*, published in 1879,

remains as a monument to his erudition and research. In 1862, Frs. John and Michael Bailey, two brothers, came to St. Mary's. John was of a quiet and studious nature and his expert skill as an architect was of great advantage to his brother in the building of St. Michael's in later days. Michael was, essentially, a man of action, to whom obstacles were merely an incentive to increased energy. His zeal for the spread and promotion of the Church was specially manifested in his lifelong devotion to the cause of Catholic Education. It is no exaggeration to say that he spared no effort, physical or mental, in this cause and his work upon the School Board and the Board of Guardians was of immense and lasting service to the Catholics of Newport.

The church tower as originally built had no parapet or pinnacles. These were added in 1869 and, five years later, as a result of the efforts of Fr. Richardson, the present peal of eight bells was placed in the tower. The Angelus was rung for the first time on St. Mary's bells on Lady Day, 25th March, 1874. About this time the original Rood Screen, which stood around the sanctuary, was erected in commemoration of the silver sacerdotal jubilee of Fr. Cavalli. The screen is now used to divide the Lady Chapel and St. Patrick's Chapel from the nave of the church. The Rood Beam has been retained in its original position in front of the chancel, but at a greater height than formerly.

Meanwhile, Newport was growing rapidly and its Catholic population had increased in 1871 to 4,350, more than double the figure at which it stood when St. Mary's was built. The boundaries of the town were

extending and more and more Catholics were living at considerable distances from the church. Although this record deals with the history of St. Mary's, it would not be possible to give a true picture without referring very briefly to the developments which now began and which all drew their origin from the Mother Church. In 1870, three cottages were purchased in High Street, Pillgwenlly and, in these humble premises, began the devoted labours of Fr. Michael Bailey which resulted, in 1887, in the opening of St. Michael's Church. One cottage was fitted up as a school chapel and the other two were opened as a school on 1st September 1871. In 1874, Mr. J. A. Herbert, of Llanarth, gave a site for a school in Cross Street, now known as Emlyn Street. Holy Cross School was opened on 5th April, 1875 and, until 1877, Mass was said there on Sundays. This was the origin of the splendidly arranged modern school, designed by Mr. Cyril Bates, which has recently been completed. When Fr. Cavalli died, in 1892, there were 3,800 Catholics at St. Mary's, 1,800 at St. Michael's and there were 1,000 children in the Catholic Schools. In 1896 St. Joseph's Infant School was opened at Maindee, which has since developed into the populous parish of St. Patrick's. In 1898 the old schools at the back of St. Mary's were condemned and they were replaced in 1900 by the fine schools on Queen's Hill built at a cost of over £6,000. The sacrifices made by Newport Catholics for the vital cause of Catholic education may be estimated by the fact that, between 1880 and 1900 they spent no less than £30,000 on their schools. When Fr. Bailey died in 1904 he had the satisfaction of knowing that his untiring energy and devotion had borne good fruit

and that the educational birthright of the Catholic children of the future had been amply safeguarded. No reference to Catholic education in Newport would be just, or complete, without a tribute to the nuns who have worked so assiduously and so long in our local schools. In 1873 the Sisters of Providence left Newport and their place was taken by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, of Annecy. They established the Convent on Stow Hill and have now, for nearly seventy years, laboured in the schools and among the poor, winning the love and esteem of all.

Shortly before Fr. Bailey's death Fr. Daniel Hickey came to preach a mission at St. Mary's, at the close of which, he drew the attention of the congregation to the inadequate and uncomfortable accommodation for the clergy in the old presbytery. As a result of his appeal a fund was opened and the foundation stone of the present presbytery, designed by the late Mr. F. R. Bates, was laid by Bishop Hedley on 12th June, 1905.

For many years Fr. Bailey was assisted by Fr. Alfred C. Knight who built the church at Bassaleg and, after leaving Newport, founded the mission at Caerphilly. He established a Catholic Guild for the men of the parish which was a forerunner of the C.Y.M.S. In addition to these activities he was an assiduous student of the Catholic history of the district and wrote a life of the Blessed David Lewis, S.J. He, as well as Fr. Edmund Butcher, who was here at about the same period, will be held in affectionate remembrance by the older members of the congregation.

Fr. Daniel Hickey became rector of St. Mary's in 1904 and, under his wise direction and the untiring

efforts of the clergy of the three parishes, outstanding progress was made in the work of consolidation and devolution necessitated by the changes which were taking place.

Nearly seventy years had now elapsed since the building of St. Mary's Church and, owing to the calls of Catholic education upon the resources of the congregation, little had been done in the way of improving and beautifying the building internally. Fr. Hickey now undertook this work with his accustomed zeal and energy. In 1913 a new and beautiful Lady Altar replaced the original altar which was the gift, in 1845, of the officers and men of the 37th Regiment, literally a Catholic regiment, then stationed at Newport. The new altar is a memorial to the late Alderman D. A. Vaughan. In the same year the old pulpit was replaced by the present one. In 1921 the new stone panelling in the Sanctuary with painted decorations in the panels was added and, at the same time, the new sacristy corridor was built. In the following year the Sanctuary was re-modelled and the present Communion rail and flooring installed. At the same time the present St. Patrick's Altar, the War Memorial Tablet and the new organ were placed in the Church in memory of the men of the congregation who had given their lives in the Great War of 1914-18. All this beautiful work was designed by the late Mr. F. R. Bates.

In 1926, after a rectorship extending over twenty-two years, Fr. Hickey was appointed to the important position of Provincial of the Order of Charity and, to the regret of St. Mary's congregation, this necessi-

tated his leaving Newport. Their regret was shared by the entire town, for the retiring Rector had rendered valuable service on many local committees, while his wisdom, wit and eloquence had made him a welcome speaker at public functions.

Fr. Hickey was succeeded by his predecessor in the provincialship, Fr. W. Trevor Hughes, who, as a member of a well-known Monmouth family renewed his local associations with the district by his appointment. He was a man of humble and unassuming piety, devoted to his parochial duties and possessed of a fund of deep learning which his habitual modesty concealed from the superficial observer. Deeply versed in the lore of his native county, he was a mine of information upon the history of Monmouthshire in penal times. Owing to declining health Fr. Hughes relinquished the rectorship in 1936 but, unfortunately, did not long survive his retirement. He was succeeded by the present rector, Fr. John Colbert who, by his zeal and devotion to his pastoral duties and by the part he is taking in the public business of the town is fully maintaining the high and inspiring traditions of his predecessors.

Before concluding this brief sketch it may be of interest to give a short account of the stained-glass windows in the church. On entering St. Mary's the first coloured window on the left, or north side of the church, is one representing St. Anne, given by the congregation in memory of Sister Mary Antonia, of the Sisters of Providence, at one time head-mistress of the girls' school. The next window, on which is

depicted St. Thomas the Apostle, was presented by Dr. Robert Francis Woollett in memory of his brother, Thomas Woollett, of Usk, who was lost at sea in 1840. The St. Joseph window in the Lady Chapel is a memorial to Mr. Joseph Beaumont, Agent to the Llanarth Estate, the gift of his son, William. Joseph Beaumont is buried near the Confessional in the Lady Chapel. The adjoining window was presented by Mrs. Hawkins in memory of her husband Dr. James Hawkins. Under the figure of St. James in this window is a representation of the worthy doctor engaged in his professional duties. On the north side of the sanctuary is the window of St. John the Evangelist, presented by Mr. John Arthur Herbert, of Llanarth, whose arms impaled with those of his wife are at the base. The three light windows over the high altar is a beautiful representation of the Assumption of our Lady and replaces the original windows of the Assumption, St. David and St. Woollos which are now placed on the south side of the church between St. Patrick's Chapel and the baptistry. On the south side of the sanctuary is the St. Edward window, previously referred to, given by the congregation as a memorial to Fr. Edward Metcalfe. The Mater Dolorosa and St. Margaret windows in St. Patrick's Chapel were presented by Mrs. Hawkins. In the baptistry is a window representing the baptism of Our Lord, the gift of the members of the congregation who were baptised in the church.

As the first hundred years of St. Mary's near their close the clouds of war hang heavy over our country and, more than ever, our beloved Master and Redeemer

who, over the whole of this period, has taken up his abode among us under the sacramental veil offers refuge, hope and consolation to the anxious, the distressed and the bereaved. Let us trust that St. Mary's second century may open under happier auspices and usher in an era of just and enduring peace.