



OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM

Information drawn from:

The Walsingham Story through 900 years Arthur Bond 1988

Shrines of Our Lady in England and Wales H M Gillett 1957

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham JC Dickinson 1956

Walsingham Guide story and pictures Claude Fisher 1939

Pietas Mariana Britannica Edmund Waterton 1897

Catholic Tablet online archives

Various websites

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Walsingham – the history

Richeldis de Faverches was a Saxon noblewoman, married to the Lord of Walsingham Parva. At the death of her husband she was left a young widow with a son, Geoffrey. She had a deep faith in God and a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She had a reputation for good works in care and generosity to those around her. Her life of prayer and good works was rewarded when she had a series of visions. (1061) It is believed these visions occurred in the Manor House which stood beyond the Dackhouse bridge on rising ground, now wooded where she lived. Our Lady led Richeldis 'in spirit' to Nazareth to show her the place where the Archangel Gabriel had greeted her. Our Lady directed Richeldis to take measurements so she could build a replica of the house at Nazareth in Walsingham. Our Lady told her *'in this spot the people will celebrate the Annunciation, the root of mankind's gracious redemption; they will find help for their needs'*. Three times Richeldis experienced this vision and request. This confirmed her desire to have the house built but the location was unclear to her and the carpenters. Richeldis spent the night in prayer once more. Her supplications were answered immediately and miraculously. Our Lady herself had angels complete the construction on the site, and in the manner she wanted!

Geoffrey de Faverches granted to Edwy his clerk, the chapel which his mother Richeldis had seen come to fruition from her visions. Edwy, through his estate was required to institute or bring in a religious order, and the priory was served by regular canons of St Augustine. The priory passed into their hands somewhere between 1146 and 1174.

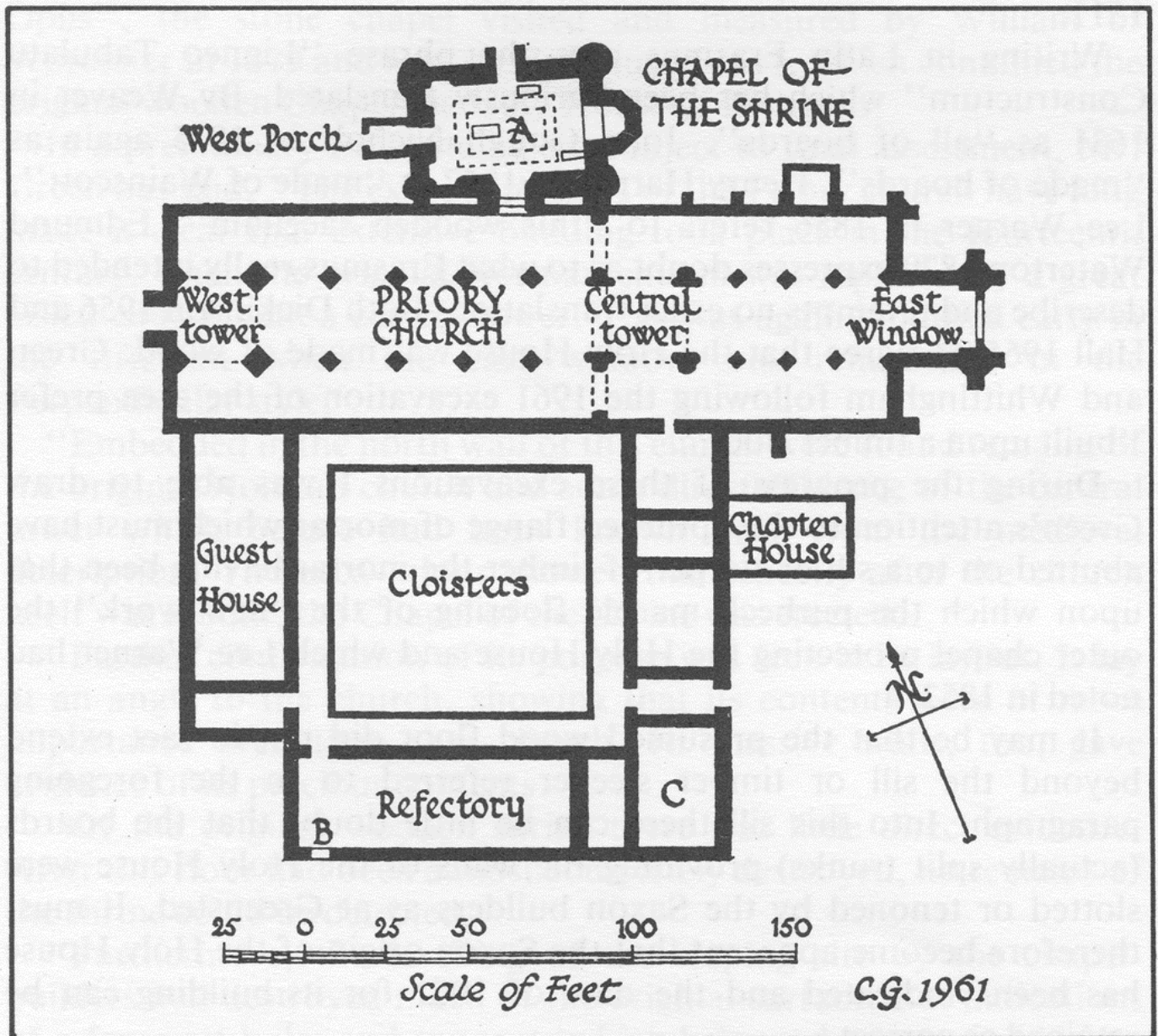
By the fourteenth century so many pilgrims were visiting the 'Holy House' that the priory was enlarged and the wooden house was encased in a larger stone chapel- described by William of Worcester as the 'Novum Opus'. Erasmus writing in 1511, describes the priory church as being 136 paces long, the Lady chapel (Novum Opus) was detached and on the north side. This chapel was sixteen yards long and ten wide. Inside it was the real and original wooden chapel, seven yards and thirty inches long. In this was the famous statue of Our Lady of Walsingham. The light in the shrine was entirely from the candles ever burning there. Erasmus states 'A most graceful fragrance meets the nostrils; nay when you look in you would say it was the mansion of the Saints, so much does it glitter on all sides with jewels, gold and silver'. This visit was not genuine but rather satirical.

The original wooden chapel, the Holy House, is consistent with a wooden church that remains to this day at Greensted Juxta-Ongar in Essex. Apart from its size, conforming almost exactly to the building described by Erasmus.



Interior shots of Greensted church





WALSINGHAM AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY

- A. The Wooden Shrine resting on its raised platform. Below it a stone lined tomb probably of Sir Bartholomew Burghersh, K.G. (see his will Test. Vet. p.77 and Dugdale Baronage vol. II. p.36) on the north and south-east sides of this platform were two stone coffins, all three were exposed in 1961.
- B. Buttery-hatch.
- C. Warming Room (?).

In the village a Franciscan Friary was founded by Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Clare, in 1347. There was serious opposition from the Augustinian Canons who feared the friars would 'divert' the pilgrims and so lessen the Priory's income from Mass stipends, burial fees pilgrim gifts and the like. They petitioned both the countess and Edward III but were over-ruled. To this day only a small part of the chancel wall survives from the Friary Church but the finest domestic ruins in Norfolk remain here at Walsingham, including the Chapter House, the Friars' Cloister, the Preaching Cloister, the Kitchen, and a huge Guest House that provided accommodation for poor and sick pilgrims.

It is recorded that in the 15C many of the inns in the village were burnt down as a reprisal by pilgrims for the exorbitant charges being levied.

As a result of its subsequent success in attracting pilgrims, the priory became the largest house of the order in Norfolk and, at the time of its dissolution, the tenth richest in England and Wales. Its endowments included gifts from regal and noble pilgrims in the form of lands, rents and churches. Differing from other shrines to Our Lady it was not simply her image that was venerated here but 'The holy House' itself. During the following centuries many eminent men and women, kings and queens came on pilgrimage and many benefices and offerings were made to the shrine. Among the monarchs who went on pilgrimage to Walsingham were; Henry III in 1241, Edward I in 1280 and again in 1296, Edward II in 1315, Edward III in 1361, David Bruce in 1364, Henry VI in 1455, Edward IV in 1469, Henry VII in 1487 and 1505, Henry VIII with Catherine of Aragon in 1510. Edward I, who was a frequent visitor, died here, and both Henry VII and Henry VIII were donors, as was Cardinal Wolsey, who in 1528 granted the priory of Fitcham to Walsingham; in return, the Prior promised to have mass celebrated for Wolsey daily.

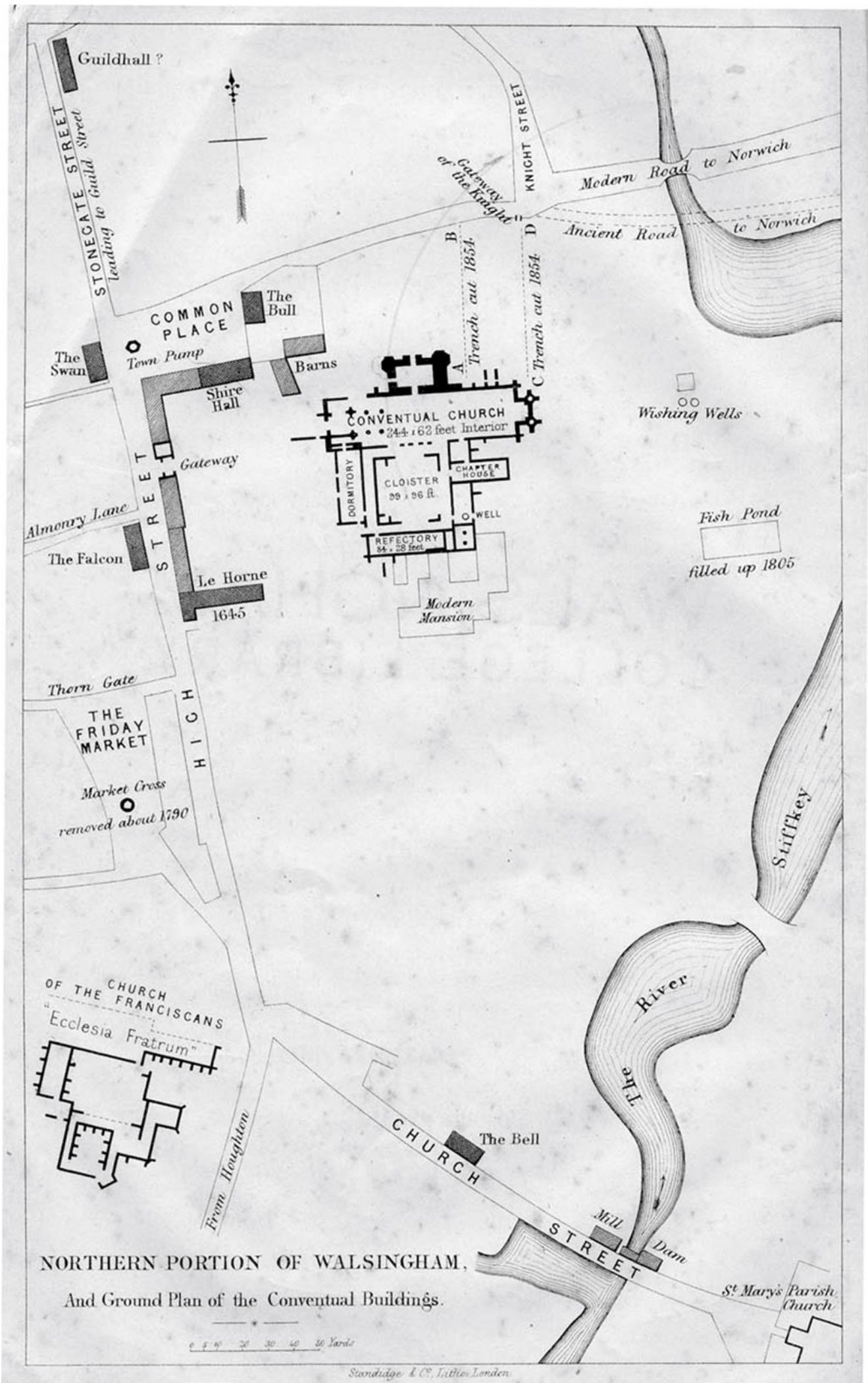
This close relationship did not, however, save the priory from suppression, a process that was mired in accusations of participation in conspiracy against the suppression of the monasteries, resulting in the execution of the accused conspirators, including the Sub-Prior, Nicholas Mileham on 30 May 1537. Eleven men in total were executed as a result. The sub-prior was charged with conspiring to rebel against the suppression of the lesser monasteries, and on flimsy evidence was convicted of high treason and hanged outside the priory walls.

Prior Vowell, however, was compliant, and ultimately rewarded with a pension of £100, having surrendered the priory to the commissioners in August of 1538. The number of canons at the time of the Dissolution was 22, the numbers having remained fairly consistent since 1377, when 20 were recorded.

This suppression of the priory was under the supervision of Sir Roger Townshend, a local landowner. Walsingham was famous and its fall symbolic of the desolation falling upon the land. John Hussey wrote to Lord Lisle in 1538: "July 18th: This day our late Lady of Walsingham was brought to Lambeth where was both my Lord Chancellor and my Lord Privy Seal, with many virtuous prelates, but there was offered neither oblation nor candle : what shall become of her is not determined." Two chroniclers, Hall and Speed, suggest that the actual burning of the statue did not take place until September that year.

The buildings were looted and largely destroyed, but the memory of it was less easy to eradicate. Sir Roger wrote to Cromwell in 1564 that a woman of nearby Wells (now called Wells-Next-The-Sea) had declared that a miracle had been done by the statue after it had been carried away to London. He had the woman put in the stocks on market day to be abused by the village folk but concluded "I cannot perceive but the said image is not yet out of the sum of their heads."

Immediately after its dissolution the site was acquired by Thomas Sidney, master of the hospital of Little Walsingham, for the sum of £90. In the mid-C17 it was held by the Earl of Leicester, who sold it in 1650, and in 1666 it was sold on to John Warner, Bishop of Rochester. His family owned it in 1720 when the mansion was built, incorporating elements of the monastic buildings, and they would also have been responsible for the substantial rebuilding in 1806. In 1922 the estate was bought by Sir Eustace Gurney. The park seems to have undergone several phases of redesign, including, in the early C19, excavation to widen the River Stiffkey in order to create a serpentine lake to the north-east of the house.



NORTHERN PORTION OF WALSINGHAM,
And Ground Plan of the Conventual Buildings.

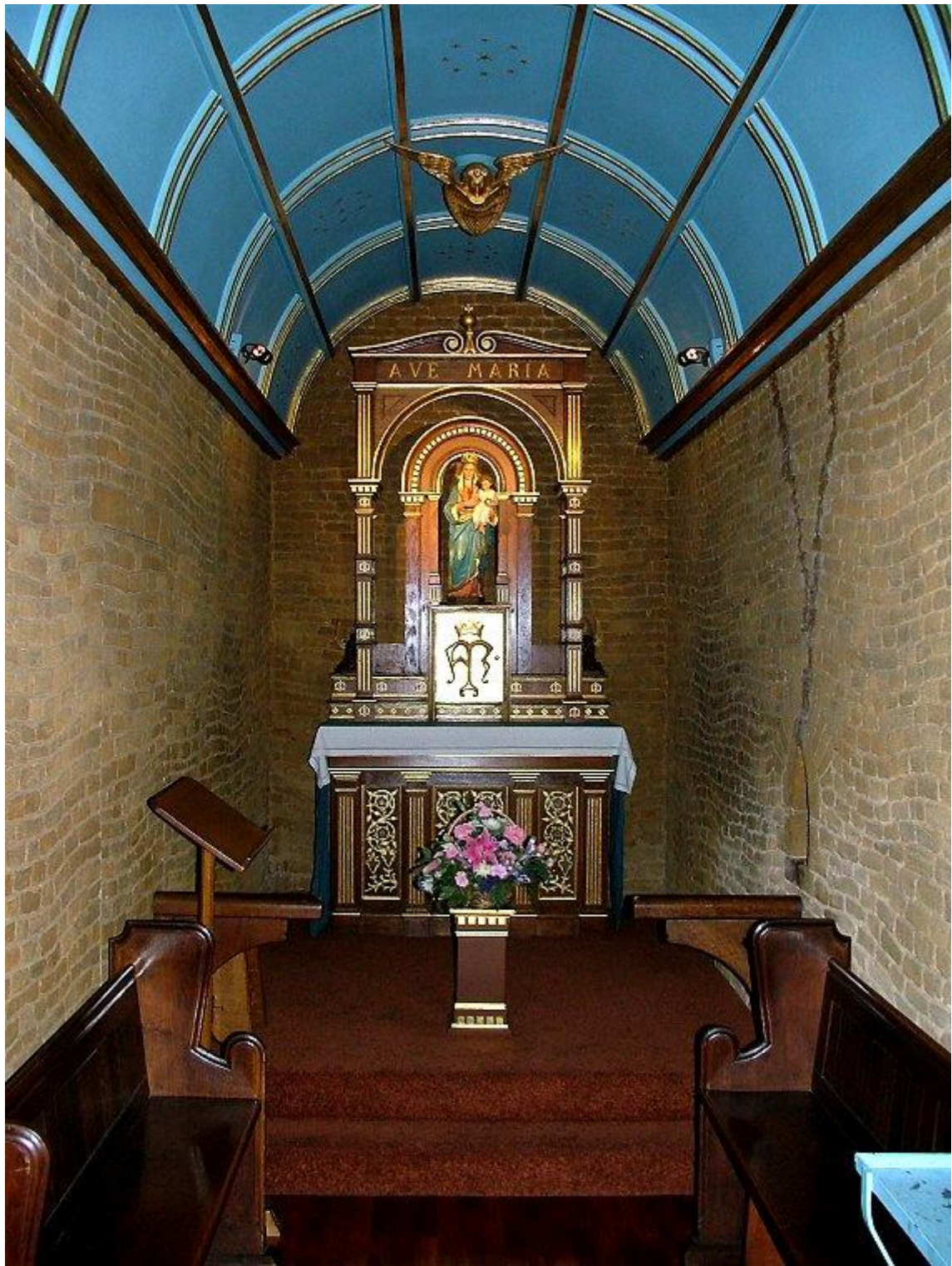
0 10 20 30 40 50 Yards

Smeath & Co., Litho. London

From the dissolution to present time

Catholic families continued to live and practice the faith in the Norfolk area after the suppression. The parish of Kings Lynn grew up from being the third oldest Catholic Mission in Norfolk dating back to 1778 – with Walsingham being part of the parish. On 6th August 1897 the present church in Kings Lynn was opened. The resident priest was Father Wigglesworth. At that time Walsingham, twenty five miles away, was very remote from the Catholic revival with only one Catholic resident. So the decision was made for a chapel in honour of Our Lady of Walsingham in his new church, Our Lady of the Annunciation. Pope Leo XIII took a personal interest in the project and generously designed and donated the statue for the shrine. It was carved at Oberammergau after the model of an ancient painting of Our Lady in the roman Basilica of S. Maria in Cosmedin, once the titular church of Canterbury's last Catholic Archbishop, Cardinal Pole.

The statue arrived from London on August 19th 1897 having been blessed by the Pope on 6th February, and was collected from the station. It was carried on a bier in procession for the enthronement and on the way a visit was made to Our Lady of the Mount (an intact pilgrimage chapel on the Walsingham Way built in 1485) and thence to the new church. A presentation of two candlesticks which the donor believed to have come from the ancient Walsingham Priory, and the hanging of fifteen lamps in honour of the Mysteries of the Rosary enhanced the setting. For this was the first place of public veneration for devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham since 1538. So from this date until August 19th 1934 it was accepted that the official centre for devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham was the shrine at Kings Lynn. So it belongs to Kings Lynn the glory of the return of devotions to Our Lady of Walsingham.



Chapel in honour of Our Lady of Walsingham in the Kings Lynn Catholic Church of the Annunciation as it is today.

On the following day, 20th August 1897, the first public pilgrimage to Walsingham since the Reformation took place. This was led by Father Philip Fletcher and Father George Wrigglesworth. There was a procession from Walsingham railway station to the Slipper Chapel where prayers were offered and visits were made to the Priory Ruins. A letter written by Father Philip Fletcher some years later is noteworthy

“I do not think there would be difficulty in restoring the shrine to Walsingham Eventually. The reason why Kings Lynn was chosen some years ago was that there was a resident priest and congregation there, who could keep up the devotion and guard the shrine. This has been done most faithfully. Fifteen lamps have been kept burning and Rosary and Litany said daily at the shrine, and I think the weekday Mass. Nothing of this kind was possible when Fr Wrigglesworth and I began the restoration...We must keep to Kings Lynn for the present but may hope and pray to see Walsingham restored when a mission can be established there...”



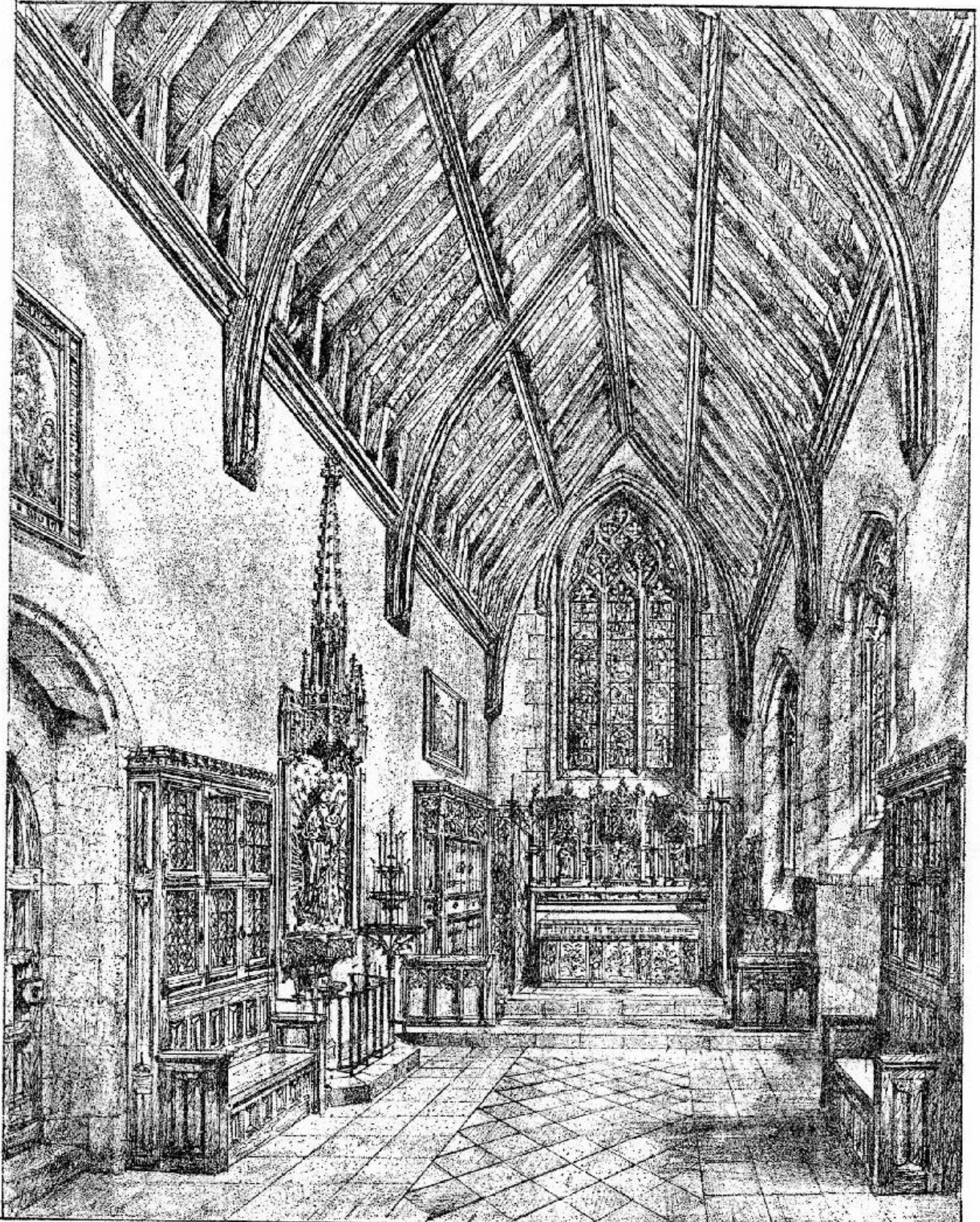
The slipper chapel in the lost years

In 1894, Charlotte Boyd bought the Slipper Chapel. Renowned as the last chapel en route to Our Lady's shrine which was known as the Holy Mile where often time pilgrims would venture forth unshod. Also known as Chapel of Saint Catherine of Alexandria and built in 1340.

Originally an Anglican, Miss Boyd converted to Catholicism after visiting the Marian shrines of Europe. In 1897 a thorough restoration was set in hand for the chapel, having been previously used as a cow byre and then for residential use. Miss Boyd died in 1906 before the true purpose of the chapel was reinstated.

By 1934, acutely aware of the flourishing Anglican buildings and devotions to Our Lady inspired by the work of Father Hope Patten in Walsingham - the Catholic Church responded. The hopes of restoration were realised. The Bishop of Northampton, Bishop Youens supported by Cardinal Bourne and assisted by the Abbot and community of Downside were ready to enthrone a newly created statue of Our Lady of Walsingham designed by Professor E W Tristram and donated by Miss Hilda Cary. This first post-reformation Mass said in the Slipper Chapel on August 16 1934 came nearly 400 years after the national apostasy. The new statue was enthroned and on the 19th August Cardinal Bourne led a pilgrimage of 19,000 people and declared the Slipper Chapel the Roman Catholic National Shrine of Our Lady. Bishop Youens formed a Guild of Our Lady of Walsingham and the prayer adopted, ironically was that recorded by Erasmus.

'O alone of all women, Mother and Virgin, Mother most happy, Virgin most pure, now we, impure as we are, come to see thee who art all pure; we salute thee; we venerate thee; as how we may with our humble offerings. May thy Son grant us that, imitating thy most holy manners, we may also, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, deserve spiritually to conceive the Lord Jesus in our inmost soul, and once conceived, never to lose Him. Amen.'



From the Catholic Tablet of the date shown

The pilgrims to Walsingham to-morrow will not find the little chapel of St. Catherine, at Houghton-le-Dale, wearing in all respects the aspect shown in the drawing reproduced above. That picture was made many years ago, after the purchase of the chapel by Miss Boyd, and shows the interior restoration desired by the heart of that generous convert. As the last wayside chapel on the pilgrims' journey to Walsingham, and the suitable spot, therefore, at which Our Lady's clients left their slippers or sandals before walking barefoot to the shrine, the building at Houghton-le-Dale became in name " the Slipper Chapel " to all and sundry. It stands about a mile from the site of the Holy House, on the Houghton road; and to-morrow it is to be the focus of a demonstration of faith and devotion the like of which has not been seen for centuries past in those parts. " At long last," the Bishop of Northampton has written, " we have been given the opportunity of restoring devotion to Our Blessed Lady in the very neighbour-hood where for hundreds of years her shrine stood as the centre of England's devotion to her. This chapel has been restored, and is now being made beautiful and devotional, as it must have been in the days when England gloried in the title of Dowry of Mary."

We give more reports from the Catholic Tablet of the day:-

THE PROCESSION.

Although the departure of the Blessed Sacrament (under a canopy carried by the Bishop of Northampton) was a deeply impressive sight, witnessed by only a few of the laity, I must abandon description of it and devote myself to the Procession in its entirety, as seen by thousands of the faithful, from the lowland. Nearly half an hour after the tail left the Chapel, the head arrived at a gate, high on that long green slope on the farther side of the Stiffkey which has already been mentioned. What followed was one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen in any land.

In church, unless it be a very great church, processions are slimmed to two files walking abreast. At Houghton, the processionists, on entering the field, seemed to deploy on a wide front. In church, the onward march over a perfectly level flooring of wood or marble is stiff. At Houghton, where the slope in' the meadow is rough ground, the marchers, without losing formation, took a serpentine path, and their undulant movement was flexible and all alive. In church, the almost static draperies maintain their prim folds. At Houghton, a kindly breeze ruffled

the thin white dresses as it ruffles ripe corn, and it lovingly spread out the veils upon the warm air. In church, the light remains fixed and hard. At Houghton, no two moments of illumination were the same; because Sunday was a hide-and-seek day of sun and cloud.

If I may ungallantly say so, it is possible that some of the young girls who were the first to appear through the gate would have been "ordinary" to behold, separately and at close quarters. But, as they stepped daintily down the slope over the tussocks of rough herbage, their slender young limbs and virginal white raiment made them look like a bevy of princesses and high-born damsels stepping straight out of the pages of romance. They came nearer; and their movement was like that of proud young thoroughbred horses. And after white girls came blue girls, their veilings more statuesque, more Biblical. But I must not turn into a catalogue this loveliest of processions. Those who walked in it will never know how it appeared to those who could only look on and rejoice. But one thing I must put on record. The thousands of the faithful who marched with Our Lady's banners as the bodyguard of Corpus Christi had something about their bearing such as I had never seen before. It is no mere literary fancy to say that their reverent feet seemed to be consciously pacing-out and attentively marking possession of new acres for "Walsingham's holy ground."

Of course, the Religious Orders of women as well as of men were represented in the defile. Among them were Austin Canons, displaying Continuity with the Austin Canons who tended and served Walsingham Priory in its glorious days. The secular clergy were in surprising force considering the exigencies of their own parochial work on Sundays and the remoteness of Houghton-le-Dale. Members of a Confraternity, in robes of Florentine cut, made, with the Canons, a brave show. When the Sacred Host appeared, under Its canopy, it was a memorable and consoling sight to see the crowds go down as one man upon their knees. All of last Sunday's Five Thousand have been fed with that Bread of Life which is His flesh who "had compassion on the multitude" and the same thought must have come to all as, *cernui*, they knelt in Mary's new-hallowed meadow. *Erat autem fenum multum in loco*: "There was much grass in that place."

THE CARDINAL.

Yielding to prudent advice, His Eminence, Cardinal Bourne who had had a tiring morning in Norwich, did not attempt to walk in the long procession from the Chapel to the field-altar. He followed in his car. And this is a good moment for telling the Catholics of England how much they owe to Mgr. Canon Coote. It is he who very quietly, and always efficiently, prepares the ways of our beloved Leader and protects him from risks and fatigues. Instead of walking as he would have loved to do with his brother clergy, Mgr. Coote sat tight at the wheel of the car until he had taken it all the long way to the gate, and had even piloted it over the rough grass. When His Eminence left the car and, with his trainbearer, made the last stage on foot, he did so in near view of a strange Grand Stand. The Houghton vicarage garden looks down upon the meadow; and on Sunday it was furnished with rows of chairs whose occupants appeared to treat our doings with respect and even with admiration.

FATHER VERNON JOHNSON.

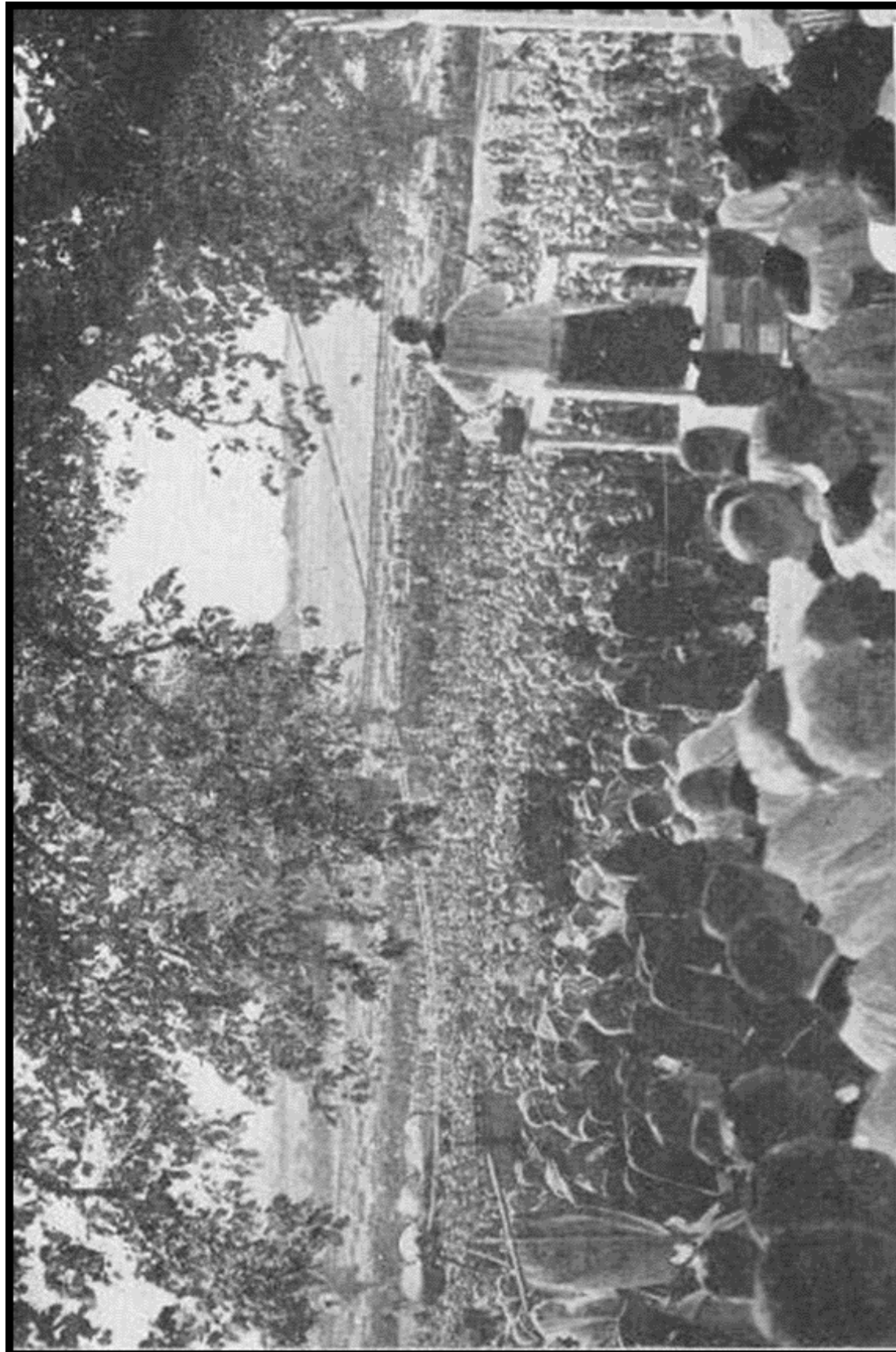
It is fitting that a pilgrim should suffer privations, and that in enduring them he should not murmur. If somebody had snatched away my luncheon last Sunday from under my very mouth, I would not have repined; but the final privation had a sharper edge. With the inexorable time-table for our master, hundreds of us had to scurry away from the meadow before Benediction and before Father Vernon Johnson had half finished his sermon. We heard enough of the preacher's ringing sentences to know that he was clearly proclaiming sound Mariology, and that he was explaining to the Protestant sightseers and to the Catholic multitude alike that we honour Mary because it was God's will to send us His Son through her, and through no other gate. In every other denomination, cried Father Vernon, Our Lord's divinity can be denied; but in the Catholic Church the Incarnation is an inviolable article of faith which carries with it the obligation to " call her blessed " who was the Mother of God.

In 1935 the first resident Catholic priest for 400 years was Father Bruno Scott James. The Bishop acquired a house in the Friday market place and within in it dedicated a chapel to St Aelred. Many more pilgrimages were to follow culminating in 1938 in the national pilgrimage of Catholic Youth, more than 20,000 attending. That same year Bishop Youens re-consecrated the Slipper Chapel and the additional chapel of the Holy Ghost that had been constructed.



Pilgrims at Walsingham Station





FIRST NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM

in 1934, Father Vernon Johnson preaching



1938

1. Pilgrims at the holy well. 2. Cardinal Hinsley lighting the beacon on the Conduit House. 3. Cardinal Hinsley lays a posy of Lilies on the site of the original shrine.

In this year alone 50,000 Catholics came on pilgrimage to this shrine. May it come true that "When England goes back to Walsingham, Our Lady will come back to England".

During the war years Walsingham was a restricted zone and closed to visitors, but many service men and women showed interest in the Shrine. On May 17th 1945, the American Forces organised the first Mass in the Priory grounds since the Reformation.

In the post second world war period, Penance was called for, and demonstrated on the road to Walsingham. Aply described in the Catholic Tablet:-

CARDINAL GRIFFIN, Archbishop of Westminster, is consecrating England and Wales to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in the slipper chapel at Walsingham this Friday, July 16th, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Eight or ten thousand pilgrims are expected as we write, most of them coming under arrangements made by the Union of Catholic Mothers.

On the previous evening, Thursday, fourteen crosses are arriving at Walsingham, having been carried by parties of men of all ages from 18 to 64 and from every walk of English life from starting-points scattered through the country— Westminster, Canterbury, East Grinstead, Basingstoke, Oxford, Malmesbury, Stourbridge, Birmingham, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Wrexham, Birkenhead, Glossop, Leeds and Middlesbrough. Between 10 p.m. and 11.15 on Thursday the crosses reach the Slipper Chapel at five-minute intervals, the arrival of each being signalled by the firing of a rocket, and at 11.15 representatives from each of the groups which have carried them meet in the Slipper Chapel to sing the Te Deum. Vigil is being kept all night, and at dawn next morning the fourteen crosses are to be taken in sequence to the Slipper Chapel, where those who have carried them will assist at the seven successive Masses and receive Holy Communion. Solemn Pontifical High Mass will be offered in the adjoining Meadow at 11.30 by the Bishop of Northampton, and sung antiphonally by the choir and congregation of foot-pilgrims and day-pilgrims.

After the Mass the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham is to be brought in procession to the meadow, where at 1.15 the solemn processions to the abbey grounds will assemble. Day pilgrims will line "the holy mile," and the statues of Our Lady of Walsingham and Our Lady of Boulogne, the latter brought by a party of French Students, together with others sent by various English parishes, will proceed to the abbey grounds, followed by the fourteen crosses. When all have entered the abbey grounds, and after the procession of the Blessed Sacrament has been formed at St. Aelred's chapel, Cardinal Griffin will deliver an address and, after the blessing of the statues, will make the act of consecration of England

and Wales to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, on behalf of the Hierarchy, the clergy and faithful, of England and Wales. Pontifical benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will follow, given by the Bishop of Northampton ; the recessional hymn will be sung as the Sacrament is returned to St. Aelred's chapel ; and the day's proceedings will come to their close.

His Eminence preaches on Matt. 17, xx, "But there is no way of casting out such spirits as this except by prayer and fasting" :— " For the last fourteen days, through the towns and villages of this land, along highways and through country roads, you have been approaching this shrine, bearing with you a cross as the emblem of Christ's triumph over the world and the materialistic conditions in which we live. Some of you have come from Canterbury, from the scene of many pilgrimages in the past. Other have come from Westminster Cathedral, travelling from the great metropolis to this little village in Norfolk. Others again have come on foot well over two hundred miles from Wales and from the West. More still from the Peaks and the industrial centres of the North. All have been converging on this spot for the solemn act which shortly will be performed. From all sides we have learned of the enthusiasm with which these little bands have been greeted. We have read of those wonderful scenes where you have set up your cross, recited the rosary and where the word of God has been preached. Fourteen days, travelling on foot, is in truth a pilgrimage. But not merely that; it is an act of penance and prayer. I know that it is with this in mind that you have given up your short and well-earned holidays to perform this act of devotion. I congratulate you and thank you for what you have done. Your pilgrimage has been a source of inspiration to thousands, Catholic and non-Catholic, many of whom would have wished to make the journey with you and all of whom have been very much with you in spirit.

"But pilgrimages, for all their outward show of devotion to the mother of God, are but the symbols of that ever-living love with which our daily lives must be filled. We have to carry that same spirit of prayer and penance into our ordinary daily lives, into the affairs of each day, no matter what their outward importance. Prayer, then, and penance is the answer to the materialism with which we are surrounded today."



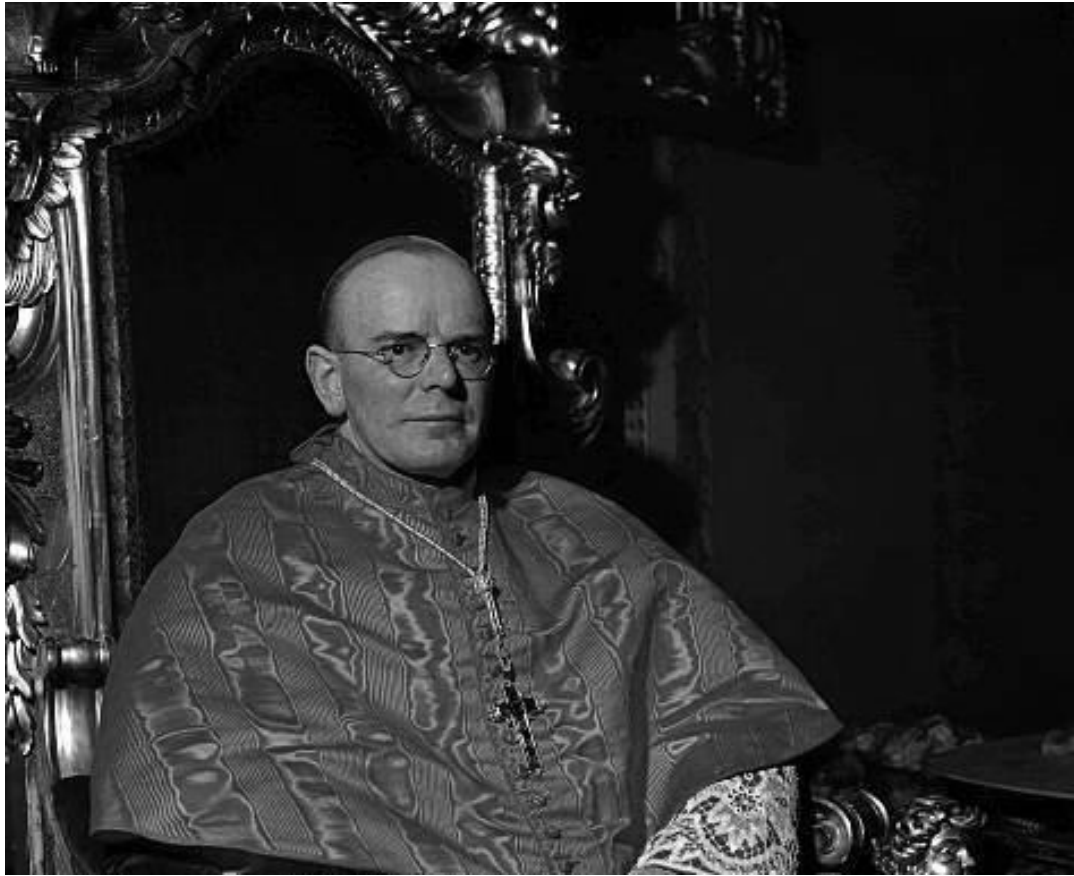
1948 carrying the crosses

In the Marian Year of 1954, in virtue of a Papal Brief Our Lady of Walsingham was solemnly crowned by Archbishop O'Hara, Apostolic Delegate to Great Britain on a newly presented statue, as we see it today. Moments after the coronation ceremony, two white doves descended on the lap of the image, which was considered miraculous by devotees. The ceremony was accompanied by both British and American pilots who sponsored the security for the event, and devotees who processed barefoot in the "Holy Mile" leading into the shrine.

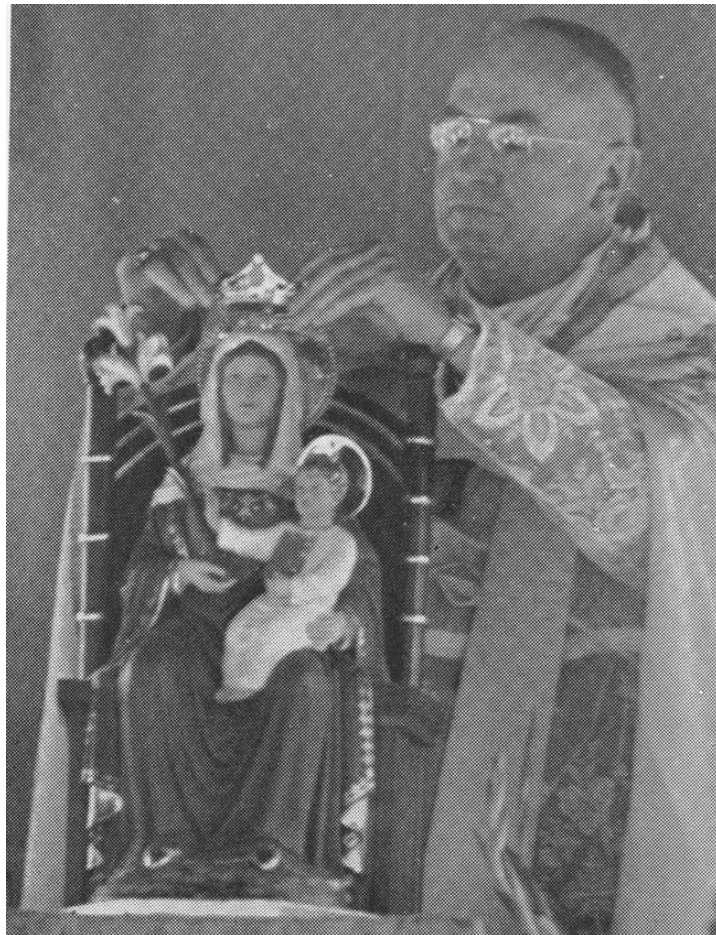


The doves resting on Our Lady from Pathé news footage

©British Pathé



Cardinal Griffin



Crowning of the new statue of Our Lady in 1954

Most recent

On 22 May 1982, the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham was taken to Pope John Paul II at the Wembley Mass and given a place of honour during his British visit. In 2000, a new Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham was approved by the hierarchy, to be celebrated in England and Wales on the 24 September.

Pope Francis raised the sanctuary to the status of a minor basilica on 27 December 2015, along with the Catholic shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham via a pontifical decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

PRAYER

TO OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM.

Holy Mary, Mother of God and ever Virgin! I choose thee to-day for my Queen, my Patroness, and my Advocate. I make a firm and sincere resolution never to forsake thee, never to say or do anything displeasing to thee, or to suffer my heart to dishonour thee any more. I offer thee myself; receive me, dear Mother, into thy service, and assist me in all my undertakings, and above all do not desert me at the hour of my death. Amen.

Pilgrim's Prayer when Absent from the Shrine.

Most holy Virgin! I prostrate myself in spirit before thy Shrine at Walsingham, that Sanctuary hallowed by thy visits, favours and many miracles. I unite myself with all those who have ever sought thee, and do now seek thee, in that Holy House and join my prayers with theirs. But especially I unite my intentions with the intentions of the Priests who offer the Holy Sacrifice upon thy Altar there. I offer thee my love and devotion, asking thee to remember for all eternity that I am numbered among the pilgrims who have sought thy intercession in the Sanctuary of thy choice. I renew the promises and intentions I made when it was my privilege to salute thee at thy Shrine in the Vale of the Stifkey.

Dear Mother, Our Lady of Walsingham, pray for me.

Saxon crown and throne denote Mary's Queenship and the date of the founding of the Shrine 1061

Three-fold lily-sceptre of virginity/ sovereignty

Seven rings for the sacraments

Mary points to Christ

Seat of Wisdom

Toadstone which is the East Anglian symbol of evil (cf. Gen. 3:15)

Arch denotes rainbow, sign of the covenant between God and every living creature (cf. Gen. 9:12f)

Pillars of the House of God, the Church

Christ extends his arm in a double gesture of blessing and protection of his mother

Christ, the Word made Flesh, holds the Gospels

