

## XI.—THE ORIGINS OF THE ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

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FROM THE BEGINNING TO 1594: THE REFORMATION  
AND THE SCHOOL

“The Grammar School, or ‘hyghe skull’ as it was called in the sixteenth century, founded by Thomas Horsley in Henry VIII’s reign, was conducted in a building in St. Nicholas’ churchyard until refounded as the Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth by the charter of 1600, when it was transferred to the Virgin Mary Hospital”.<sup>1</sup> This quotation, from Mr. Middlebrook’s history of Newcastle, typifies the existing view of the early history of the R.G.S. Stemming ultimately from Henry Bourne’s work, this interpretation was given great weight by A. R. Laws’ monumental history of the school, *Schola Novocastrensis*;<sup>2</sup> and yet there are numerous unsatisfactory features in the conventional account. William Gray, writing in 1649, said of the Virgin Mary Hospital “in which place is made of late, a famous grammar-school, writing school, and houses within the Spittle for the masters. Protos Archididascalos, or the first head schoolmaster was that Reverend Master Robart Fowberry . . .”<sup>3</sup> He clearly thought the school’s foundation was when Fowberry came to take office (though, as we shall see later, there has been considerable confusion among local historians as to when precisely that was); and as almost con-

<sup>1</sup> S. Middlebrook: *Newcastle upon Tyne, its Growth and Achievement*, Newcastle, 1950, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> A. R. Laws: *Schola Novocastrensis*, Newcastle, 1925.

<sup>3</sup> W. Gray: *Chorographia*, London, 1649, p. 25.

temporary evidence this is not to be lightly disregarded. Horsley is first mentioned in connection with the school by Bourne, in 1736: “(the school) was originally founded by Thomas Horsly, who was Mayor of Newcastle, in the Year of our Lord 1525. By his last Will he devised all his Lands in Newcastle, after the Death of him and his Wife, to erect a Grammar-School” which moved to the Hospital after the Charter of Foundation in 1600.<sup>4</sup>

It is clear what Bourne’s evidence for his statement was: he was the first local historian fully to investigate the municipal archives (rather more successfully, indeed, than Brand), and still deposited there is the same document that he must have seen.<sup>5</sup> On its dorso is the inscription: “A Recital of Tho: Horseleys Will whereby he devises all his Lands in Newcastle after the Death of him & his wife for the Endowment of a free school there”, which Bourne seems to have copied virtually word for word. However, the document is not in fact a will; it is one half of a bipartite indenture between the Mayor and Burgesses of Newcastle on the one hand and a mixed group of people, headed by Sir William Heron, on the other. The document is dated 1525.

It is an exceedingly complicated agreement to interpret: Laws does no more than suggest a possible meaning, and no definite interpretation can probably ever be reached. However, the preamble is reasonably specific; it declares that “Thomas Horslay per ultimam voluntatem suam constituerit et declaravit quod omnia exitus (etc.) omnium et singulorum terrarum et tenementorum suorum unde Willielmus Herone miles ac alii diverse persone conjunctim feoffati seisiti existunt infra villam (of Newcastle) ex dono et feoffamento predicti Thome Horslay immediate post obitum ejusdem Thome Horslay (and his wife) perciperentur et levarentur per majorem (etc.) ad usum & proficuum cujusdam idonei presbeteri” who was to keep a school (the constitution of

<sup>4</sup> H. Bourne: *History of Newcastle upon Tyne*, Newcastle, 1736, p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> Printed in J. Brand: *History and Antiquities of . . . Newcastle upon Tyne*, London, 1789, p. 86. Newcastle City Archives (N.C.A.) 8/1/50.

which will be discussed below). Clearly Heron "ac alii" are the same as those who are enumerated later; they hold Horsley's land already ("existunt"), and they hold it "conjunctim". In other words, Horsley set up a trust during his lifetime, possibly to evade certain feudal dues, and to provide for his inheritance if he should die without heirs; this trust after his death was to pay the income from the land to a schoolmaster, instead of to Horsley himself. The income, however, did not go direct to the master; it went first to the Corporation, who must be regarded as the master's employers. All this is contained in the preamble; the actual agreement is that the Corporation should add "in augmentationem sustentacionis capellani" four marks each year to the income which the trustees receive already from the land; the fact that this sum would eventually be returned to the donors each year indicates the whole purpose of these elaborate arrangements. Horsley's trust was to supervise the master's sources of income, and ensure that he received it via the Corporation with the necessary regularity; but the actual administration of the school was left to the people most nearly concerned, the leaders of the Corporation.

This picture of the school according to Horsley's foundation is reasonably clear; and yet it is nothing like the picture which emerges when the school is next mentioned, forty years later. Horsley died in 1544/5;<sup>6</sup> one would not expect drastic changes in constitution in only twenty years of existence. But when the Chamberlains' Accounts begin in November, 1561, we find that the "master of the hygh skull" is being paid 25s. per quarter by the city<sup>7</sup> (a living wage), and, what is more important, there is no income being received from trustees, or indeed from any land for the schoolmaster.<sup>8</sup> Thus far there appear to be considerable disparities between Horsley's school and the 1561 school which, all agree, was to become the R.G.S.; is it possible to find out more of the

<sup>6</sup> See Laws ms H2 (in R.G.S. Library).

<sup>7</sup> N.C.A Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

constitution of this latter school? In this we are fortunate that a collection of documents in the City Archives Office, the records of a court-case involving the Master of the Virgin Mary Hospital and the Mayor and Corporation of Newcastle, throws considerable light on the school which later became the R.G.S. The circumstances of the litigation will be discussed at greater length below; all that needs to be said here is that the Corporation, or one group in it, were suing the Master, Henry Ewbank, for dereliction of duty. He was accused principally of failing to keep the hospital buildings in order, preach twelve sermons each year and maintain "one free scoole with an able and sufficient schoolmaister for the instructinge and bringinge up onely of the freemens children of the said towne in vertuous Learninge . . .",<sup>9</sup> all of which he had undertaken to do in a bond of £100 in 1585, when he entered on the mastership.

Moreover the complainants were able to produce a notary, Thomas Watson, who testified that he had seen an agreement drawn up in 1566/7, when the Corporation granted the right of presentation of the mastership to Ralph Lawson and William Selby, whereby the later agreed that any master they should present "should yearlie after his induction paie xiii li vi s viii d towards the p'paringe and maintainege of an able and sufficient schoolemr . . ."<sup>10</sup> Ewbank did not deny this, and so Watson's testimony would seem to be substantially correct. Thus we have clear and almost contemporary evidence of the existence of a grammar school under the aegis of the Virgin Mary Hospital, only twenty years after Horsley's death and at the same time as the Corporation was paying the wages of the High School Master. Was this, perhaps, merely a convenient fiction, a useful charge with which to attack Ewbank and relieve the Corporation of its legal responsibility? If that was so, Ewbank would presumably have strenuously denied that it was his responsibility to keep a school, citing Horsley's

<sup>9</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/1/51.

<sup>10</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/8/51.

foundation as evidence of the Corporation's duties, and the Hospital's lack of interest in the matter; but in fact his defence turned almost exclusively on the argument that the bond was not binding since it had been drawn up after his induction: his only mention of the school was in a long and comprehensive denial of every part of the complaint. He even admitted that when he arrived in 1585 he found "a poore Schole Maister teaching children in the said hospitall by p'mission, the old Schoolehouse being decaied & not reedified by the said Compl'ts p'decessors . . . (and he had) p'mitted him still so to doe as long as he would but never gave any other allowance to him or any other Schole Maister . . ." <sup>11</sup>

The immediate question raised by this testimony is, what was the old School-house—the name of which suggests an appreciable tradition of education in one place before 1585? In 1614 one Thomas Dockett, yeoman, deposed that for sixteen years, since he had first come to Newcastle, the Corporation, for want of the hospital schoolmaster "have maintained a sufficient and worthy schoolemaister in a place in Newcastle in the Churchyard of St. Nicholas" until the Hospital chapel was fitted up as a school.<sup>12</sup> Thus it is reasonable to suppose that the schoolmaster went to St. Nicholas' Churchyard after he left the hospital, and was there by 1598; but on the evidence of the Chamberlains' Accounts it seems that this school house was in fact his former home. In the third week of February 1563 payment was made "to Bartram Sadler For mending a holl at the highe skull hous Ende"<sup>13</sup> and nine months later John Hawell was paid 2s. "for 6 lode of lyme to the hally-house & skull hous in Saynt Nycolas church".<sup>14</sup> These payments seem to indicate the decay of the school-house, which must presumably have been "reedified" by 1598.

This ties in with a description of the way the school was

<sup>11</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/5/51.

<sup>12</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/8/51.

<sup>13</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

administered in the years immediately preceding, preserved in Francis Burrowes' petition of 1600 (the circumstances of which are discussed below). In the course of his dispute with the Corporation over the mastership of the school Burrowes claimed that ". . . whereof no memory of man ys to the contrary there ys and hath been an anciente Grammar Schole or Schoolhouse of (grammar) scituate and being upon the (north side) of the church (yard) of the parish church of Saint Nicholas . . . usually called and knowen by the name of the (high) school . . . The maio<sup>r</sup> by and with the consent of the comon counsel . . . have . . . used to no<sup>i</sup>te some one fyttē and sufficient man to be a Teacher (and) publike professor and principall scholem<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup>in the said Towne . . . (who) had the interest use and occupation of the (messuage) belongingē to the said place and office and also a competent stipende for his lyvinge & mayntenance assigned by the (Mayor and Common Council) . . ." <sup>15</sup> Leaving aside the legal formula "whereof no memory of man ys to the contrary", we must ask ourselves how far back the arrangement outlined by Burrowes can be presumed to go. He appears not to have been aware of the stay at the hospital; he was not a Newcastle man, but his predecessor Humphrey Gray started work about 1576,<sup>16</sup> and if the school had suffered any great change during his regime Burrowes would no doubt have been told about it. Thus we are probably on safe ground in assuming continuity that far: in assuming that the missing Chamberlains' Accounts between 1576 and about 1590 did in fact contain payments to the master by the corporation. If this is accepted we are faced with a situation where the Corporation persistently claimed that the Hospital should keep a school, and as persistently paid the master's salary—for the space of forty years.

Moreover they not only claimed that the Master of the Hospital should pay for the school, they also alleged that "the same scolehouse was to be repaired and upholden at the

<sup>15</sup> Exchequer Bills and Answers, Northumberland, No. 94, Elizabeth (1600).

<sup>16</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

p.p. costs & charge of the debt".<sup>17</sup> There was no suggestion in the Horsley deed that the Virgin Mary Hospital should have anything to do with the school; but did the Corporation in the twenty years after Horsley's death discover that the revenue from his lands was too small, and look around for alternative sources of income, notably from the Hospital? Such an interpretation would be attractive, were it not for two facts: firstly the complete disappearance of the body of trustees which Horsley set up, and which seems to have been designed as a perpetual corporation (the city's grant was to Heron etc., "heredibus et assignatis sui").<sup>18</sup> Had they survived, there would surely have been some mention of them in local records; moreover it would not have been necessary to have the school refounded in 1600, since Horsley's arrangement unlike those of—say—chantry schools, could have persisted through the Reformation. Their dissolution would have been attended by some sort of litigation, of which there is no record, unless Horsley had simply revoked his will before he died. The second argument against the above interpretation is that the constitution of the school must have suffered a bewildering change.

Horsley's foundation was to be for "instructiōe omnium & singulorum scholarium in villa predicta sive ad villam predictam inhabitantium seu confluentium absque aliquo regardo seu aliquo alio proinde reddendo seu solvendo".<sup>19</sup> The hospital school on the other hand, according to the Ewbank bond, was "for the instructinge and bringing up onely of the freemens children of the said towne . . . without any stipend to be paid by the freemen of the said towne for everie childe there to be taught or any of them but onely six pence in the quarter . . ."<sup>20</sup> Thus Horsley's school would have been a truly public school—open to all people whether they lived in Newcastle or not. The hospital school, on the contrary, was very restricted: nor was it a free school

<sup>17</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/20/51.

<sup>18</sup> Brand: *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/1/51.

financially in the way that Horsley's was planned to be. This change in constitution is inexplicable if some kind of continuity between Horsley's school and the hospital school is suggested: it, and the disappearance of the trustees, can only be explained by assuming that Horsley's school was never really founded.

If the evidence of the Ewbank Manuscripts is accepted as throwing considerable doubt on the supposedly traditional foundation of the school, it is necessary to consider what alternative account of the first fifty years of the school's existence can be constructed. For this, it is necessary to look at the earlier history of the Virgin Mary Hospital.

The hospital was founded for Augustinian canons about 1155 by Aselack de Killinghowe; but right from its foundation there was considerable doubt about who had the right of presentation. Aselack's charter does not specify who should have the right; it was customary for the founder's descendants to exercise patronage, but his family never claimed the right to do so. However, the difficulty was solved at the time of the Scottish occupation in the twelfth century, when Earl Henry granted the hospital to St. Bartholomew's Nunnery, a gift which was confirmed by Henry II in 1166-73.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile the position had been complicated by the grant of Robert Carobe to the burgesses of Newcastle to found a hospital—which was diverted to the Virgin Mary Hospital<sup>22</sup>—and the placing of the Guildhall in the Hospital (see below). Carobe's grant was used in the fourteenth century to demonstrate the Corporation's right of patronage; it seems to have been used thus in the twelfth century, since a dispute over patronage culminated in the Hospital being detached from the Nunnery and placed by Pope Lucius III "sub beati Petri et nostra protectione",<sup>23</sup> a protection which, however, soon lapsed.

Thus it can be seen that the early history of the Hospital

<sup>21</sup> N.C.A. Liber Cartarum, 68/9.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.* 60.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.* 71.

provided plentiful material for dispute once the question of patronage was in dispute again, as it was in the sixteenth century. In 1529 there was a dispute between the Corporation of Newcastle and the Crown over the appointment of a master;<sup>24</sup> after a year of negotiations, the Master presented by the town was forced to exchange his position for a prebend in Norton Collegiate Church originally held by Robert Davell, the royal nominee,<sup>25</sup> while in return the Court of Common Pleas adjudged that the presentation pertained to the town of Newcastle, and not to the king.<sup>26</sup> Having a royal nominee as Master was to prove very useful a few years later, for as some notes say at the end of a rental of James I's reign: ". . . The sayd Hospitall never came in chardge before the Awditor of the Countie of Northumberland, nor ever payd rent to the Kings Receyvor of the sayd Countie . . . The sayd Hospitall and rents are enjoyed by one, that ys presented Mr to it by the Bp of Durham, as though the same had not byn dissoluid or comen to the Crowne which presentacion or guift ys void in lawe . . ." <sup>27</sup> As Røtha Mary Clay pointed out, "those houses (i.e. hospitals) were fairly secure which were already the property of municipal authorities, who indeed received fresh patronage at this time (e.g. at Canterbury, Norwich, Bath);" on the other hand, "few houses of Crown patronage escaped".<sup>28</sup>

Moreover Newcastle received various royal favours for its loyalty during the Pilgrimage of Grace—for instance in 1547 the Merchants' Company received a charter. The hospital was left untouched by the crown for forty years, though it occasionally asserted its right to present to the mastership despite the 1532 decision. At the same time, the hospital was not left completely unaltered, for the extent of

<sup>24</sup> *Registers of Bishops Tunstall and Pilkington*, ed. G. Hinde, Surtees Society Volume 161, 1952, p. 30; Letters & Papers of Henry VIII, IV 5243/28; Pat. p. 2, m. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.* p. 78.

<sup>27</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/27/51.

<sup>28</sup> R. M. Clay: *The Mediaeval Hospitals of England*, Methuen, 1909, pp 235, 232.

Puritanism in Newcastle in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has until recently often been underestimated. Evidence is given below of its unexpected strength and continuity from about 1590 to 1640; and a city that could support John Knox's preaching for two years (1550-2), and even accept him as its proposed bishop, must surely have had a strong Protestant tradition already—its loyalty in 1536 also suggests this. Thus the duties of the Masters were transformed: in the Middle Ages they had included arranging for the Mass of St. Mary to be celebrated in certain chapels and churches in Newcastle and Durham,<sup>29</sup> perhaps even in St. Nicholas' Church itself,<sup>30</sup> and when in 1614 we find that for some time they had included preaching twelve sermons a year in the town,<sup>31</sup> we may reasonably guess that this is part of the transformation a Catholic institution had to undergo to survive in a Protestant community. We can with some justification trace this function back to the Reformation; why not the school which is always mentioned with it in the Ewbank case? In the 1546 return of Colleges and Chantries it was stated that "Robert Davell . . . is not resident upon the same hospital nor is hospitalitie ther kept savyng one preest that kepeth the house and orchards and hath fyve pounds yerely for his stipend . . ."<sup>32</sup> Although Davell was a pluralist and non-resident, he felt obliged to leave someone to perform his duties: perhaps we can see in that "one preest" the first mention of a hospital schoolmaster.

However, whether a hospital school was begun at the Reformation to justify the hospital's continued existence (though such justification was already amply provided by its other charitable duties), or whether one fell into disuse during the early sixteenth century and Horsley saw the necessity to provide some kind of stable institution in the future, it seems that in the 1540's, when Horsley was near to his death, the hospital was suddenly awakened by its threatened dissolu-

<sup>29</sup> F.F. 181/9 (117) in *Newcastle Record Series* Vol. XI p. 42.

<sup>30</sup> *Early Newcastle Deeds*, Surtees Soc. Vol. 137, p. 51 (E.N.D.).

<sup>31</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/20/51.

<sup>32</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

tion and forced to reform itself. Horsley's foundation, just at the point when it was about to come into being, was rendered unnecessary: and the hospital school, refounded or created "in respecte the Revnewe of the said hospitall called the Westspittle is good and the charge thereof not great",<sup>33</sup> as the petition to the Lord Privy Seal (see below) in 1611 said, was able to provide the town's education for some time.

But not for very long: in 1558 Davell, who, we may presume, had been if not zealous then at least conscientious in his management of the hospital, died, and was succeeded by John Raymes, whose career was to see the temporary collapse of the hospital.

Raymes was presented to the Bishop by John Swynborn of Chopwell and his relation John Swynborn of Wylam, to whom the Corporation had sold the advowson for that turn.<sup>34</sup> He was probably a crypto-Catholic, and his appointment is one of the first indications of the growing tendency towards Catholicism of the governing oligarchy. However, as yet it is misleading to talk of the government of the town in the same terms that we must use later: some, even of the most important merchants, must have been Puritans—as is shown by the appointment of the noted reformer John McBray to the vicarage of Newcastle in 1568. Though technically the advowson of the vicarage was in the hands of the see of Carlisle, its very distance and the importance of the office must have made Carlisle consult with the Corporation of Newcastle before appointing to a vacancy (this was certainly the case in the early seventeenth century).

It is likely that Raymes never took up residence at the hospital at all: only four years after his appointment the Mayor and four aldermen were called on by the Vicar to appear before him and answer charges concerning the management of the hospital.<sup>35</sup> The year before, as we have seen, the schoolmaster was being paid by the Corporation—

<sup>33</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/21/51.

<sup>34</sup> E.N.D. p. 7; Hunter MS No. 39 (in Durham Cathedral Library).

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.* p. 7.

which suggests that Raymes was not interested in the finances and duties of the hospital. And, as before, at a time when the management of the foundation was neglected, a dispute over patronage arose again. Once more the Crown tried to establish a claim to the presentation, this time by simply ignoring the previous appointment. On the 19th January 1565, Richard Master, "in medicinis doctor regie maiestatis in aula serviens", in the person of Thomas Carlell, his proctor, was instituted to the mastership "vpm of the last incumbent *or otherwise vacant*".<sup>36</sup> This claim was apparently countered by the Corporation looking up all the records concerning the patronage of the hospital in its archives (a check-list for doing so survived to Brand's day),<sup>37</sup> and it appears to have been successful in holding on to its right. The significance of this squabble is that the right of presentation to the hospital was now tied up with Raymes' holding the mastership: he represented the Corporation's control, and as such could not easily be dismissed. But the Corporation had to pay for its continued possession of the patronage in the upkeep of the grammar school: that was the really essential duty of the hospital, since the absence of sermons could be borne until it was necessary to find a post for a popular preacher, as happened later, and the only hospital building that the Corporation needed was the chapel, where they held the mayoral election—which could survive with the minimum of attention.

Meanwhile we have evidence that one John Gray was master at this date: in 1563 a case was brought before the Commissary of Northumberland, of *Hewbank v. John Atkinson, spurrier*, in which "Mr. Graye scholemaster" is quoted as a witness to the beating of apprentices.<sup>38</sup> That this Gray was the master paid by the Corporation is shown by an entry in 1568: "Item paid to the Mr Graye of the hie

<sup>36</sup> *Registers of Tunstall & Pilkington*, p. 147.

<sup>37</sup> Brand. *op. cit.*, p. 80, n. 1.

<sup>38</sup> A. R. Laws: *The Early Masters of Horsley's School*, *Archæologia Aeliana*, 3rd Series Vol. 21.

schole (sic)''<sup>39</sup> and his Christian name is revealed by the Registers of St. Nicholas: "1584 August 12, John Gray, scolemaister buried".<sup>40</sup> It is likely, considering the date of his death, that he was the John Gray who was a scholar at Queens' College, Cambridge (a college with traditionally northern affiliations) from 1529 to 1531, and who later became Vicar of Foxton.<sup>41</sup> His religious sympathies are not known; the only indication to them is provided by one of his sons who took part in the Rebellion of the Northern Earls.

In this however he may have been influenced by his father's supposed employer: after an incident in 1567, when Raymes was charged before the Bishop with heresy, non-residence and allowing the buildings to fall into decay, the Master defiantly sent a letter from Louvain showing that he was a student there, to answer the charge that he disliked the reformed religion; he finally joined in the Rebellion and was imprisoned for a time in Durham gaol.<sup>42</sup> In 1567 there must have been a very real risk that he would lose his office, for the Corporation took the opportunity to grant the advowson to Ralph Lawson and William Selby, drawing up the agreement that was quoted in the Ewbank case—thereby ensuring that their claim to the patronage was upheld. However, even after his imprisonment Raymes was still not dismissed; Gray's son was less fortunate, for he was forced to flee the country, escaping to Louvain—where, of course, Raymes had been a student. His continued occupation of the mastership, and his persistent neglect must have obliged the Corporation to continue its payments to the schoolmaster; its position was presumably made all the more uncomfortable by the fact that, as Dr. Howell points out, after the appointment of William Whittingham to the deanery of Durham, "the diocese of Durham soon became known as a centre of

<sup>39</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>40</sup> A. R. Laws: *Schola Novocastrensis*, p. 30

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>42</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 589.

extreme Protestantism"<sup>43</sup> and its protection of a known Catholic must have created some difficulties. The Bishop of Durham had indeed drawn the Privy Council's attention in 1564 to "the grete number of scholars borne hereabout, now lieing at Lovan without lycense . . . They be mayntened by the hospitals of the Newcastell and the welthiest of that towne and this shire . . . and be their next cousins".<sup>44</sup>

John Gray appears to have continued as master by himself until November, 1576, when the Accounts read: "Paid to the Mr of the Hygh Scoule and his sonne Humfraye Graye for theire quateridge . . . 50s."<sup>45</sup> This is twice the sum which John Gray had formerly been receiving: clearly, the Corporation took the opportunity of raising the master's wages at a time when, presumably through illness, he needed the assistance of his son (the wage remained at 50s. when Humphrey alone was working). But perhaps some further significance can be read into this sudden increase in salary as soon as Humphrey starts work: as his will shows, he was later friendly with the chief men of the town, and if that was the case in 1576, the Corporation might think that he warranted an increase in salary over his father's—who may, perhaps, have proved an embarrassment by virtue of his other son in 1569, and was thus out of favour. Moreover during Raymes' non-residence, the school, as we have seen, probably moved into the hospital, driven there by the decay of its former buildings. Thus the Corporation was saved the upkeep of two establishments, neither of which was its responsibility, by simply moving the school back into its parent institution.

It would be in the hospital that Humphrey Gray was teaching when, in 1577, Bishop Barnes launched a visitation of Northumberland. The visitation specified which people in each parish were schoolmasters; and if this remarkable document can be trusted, out of only twenty-one school-

<sup>43</sup> R. Howell: *Puritanism in Newcastle before the summoning of the Long Parliament*, A.A. 4, XLI, 1963, p. 135.

<sup>44</sup> H.M.C. Cecil MSS 1024/14; Pt. I p. 311.

<sup>45</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

masters in the county, eleven were in Newcastle. They were the following:

In St. Nicholas' Parish: Umfridus Gray, Thomas Boswell, John Stokoe, Johannes Bowke.

In All Saints' Parish: Thomas Colston, Willielmus Cowpeland, Johannes Lighton, Mr. Johns, Arthurus More.

In St. John's Parish: Anthonius Ellington.

In St. Andrew's Parish: Thomas Wigham, who was one of the parochial clergy but had no licence to teach.<sup>46</sup>

It can be assumed that the report is trustworthy, since each master was presumably licensed and could thus be checked: but it presents us with a remarkable picture. Even though quite a high proportion of the names must be those of petty-schoolmasters, some are probably rival grammar schoolmasters—for instance Cowpeland, who is probably that William Copland who matriculated as a pensioner at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1567. Laws suggests that Boswell (who graduated B.A. from Christ Church in 1544 and M.A. in 1547) was the Usher of the Grammar School: but he is never paid in the Corporation Accounts, and his possession of a Master's degree tells against his holding an inferior position. We can probably assume that "Mr. Johns" is the writing-schoolmaster who was charged in 1606 for teaching in the town's Writing School without a licence<sup>47</sup> (Robert Johns), for although the "Mr" might at an earlier date have implied an M.A., in 1577 it is unlikely to do so. The remainder are at the moment unidentifiable.

But some significance can probably be attributed to the arrangement of names, and it is surely not merely chance that puts Humphrey Gray first among the schoolmasters of the main parish. We are not concerned in this study with ephemeral private schoolmasters: to contemporaries there was one major school, the "hygh skull", and it is at that without a doubt that Humphrey Gray taught. It seems likely

<sup>46</sup> *Injunctions and other Ecclesiastical Proceedings of Bishop Barnes*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Soc. Vol. 22, 1850, pp. 42/3.

<sup>47</sup> *Laws*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

that All Saints', the most populous parish though not the most senior, should have had a grammar school: but it was obviously a private establishment, and there is little doubt that the Royal Grammar School was the successor to the hospital/town school, as will be shown below, and was not even the result of a merger between two schools.

Two years after the visitation, Raymes was finally removed, after being cited before the Consistory Court at Durham in May, 1579.<sup>48</sup> Their claim to the patronage, as well as their desire to secure an education for their children, had made the Corporation perform at least one of his duties for twenty years, and had shielded him from punishment for as long. However, they were still reasonably safe: the agreement of 1567 was still in force, and in October Lawson and Selby presented one Anthony Garforth to the mastership.<sup>49</sup> As had happened in 1565, the Crown decided to disregard the Corporation's actions and proceed as if the hospital had in fact come before the Receiver; thus in December it was granted to John Farneham in fee,<sup>50</sup> just like any other dissolved religious foundation—though what action Farneham took when he discovered he could not enjoy his property is unknown. Garforth, even if he was willing to perform his duties, was not in a position to do so for very long: by June 1580 he was dead, and replaced in that month by Henry Dethick. The Accounts for this period are missing: but it is unlikely that the Corporation was relieved of the task of keeping the school.

Dethick's appointment appears to have gone unchallenged by the Crown; but he too died very soon, even while the Queen was once more asserting her claim to property which should have come to her father thirty-five years earlier. In February 1582 a commission issued from the Exchequer to George Chaworth and others to enquire into concealed lands in Northumberland; they certified on March 20 that

<sup>48</sup> E.N.D. p. 7; Hunter MS No. 42.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.* p. 8; Hunter MS No. 43.

<sup>50</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 81 n.q.

the "priory or Hospital & its lands & rents dedicated to superstitious uses was worthe 5s., & that the same had been and still was concealed from the Queen".<sup>51</sup> The Crown seems now to have dropped its old allegations about the patronage of the hospital, and to be instead concerned with claiming its revenue as concealed at the Reformation: a far surer ground on which to take a stand. Thus as soon as the return came in, the hospital was granted in fee simple to Theophilus Adams and James Woodshaw;<sup>52</sup> but after Dethick's death, the Corporation were still able to appoint a successor, Ralph Patterson.

The position of the school in these manoeuvres is more important than might appear at first sight. By keeping it going, and yet not forgetting to state at every suitable opportunity that it was really the hospital's responsibility, the Corporation demonstrated the utility of the foundation, and that when a suitable Master was appointed it could easily be restored to its former condition. Were the school to have been entirely divorced in theory as well as in fact from the hospital, its potential usefulness would no longer be a possible argument against a Crown which now more than ever seemed ready to treat it as just another dissolved house, unfortunately still "dedicated to superstitious uses". We do not know precisely how the Corporation managed to defy the Crown for so long; but it seems reasonable to suppose that they used arguments such as that outlined above.

In 1614 Ewbank claimed that Patterson had let the hospital decay even further; and even after allowance has been made for Ewbank's natural tendency to exaggerate the extent of the ruin he had tried to repair, it is likely that Patterson was no more interested than most of his predecessors. The Corporation continued with the school: but it was careful in 1585 once more to re-assert that it was really the hospital's responsibility, for it was in that year that Patterson resigned. The circumstances of Ewbank's appointment are

<sup>51</sup> E.N.D. p. 8; Exchequer Special Commissions 2935. (P.R.O.)

<sup>52</sup> Bourne, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

interesting, for they show the growing complexity of the factors governing appointments to the hospital and the school, which were to culminate in the confusion of the Burrowes case (see below). He was persuaded to exchange one of his livings (for he was a great pluralist) with Patterson “unto w<sup>ch</sup> unequall exchange the said then Maior and Burgesses of Newcastle aforesaid and the right hono’able Henrie Earle of Huntingdon then Lord President and Lord Lieuten’nt gen’all of the North p’tē by their instigation did earnestly invyete and stirr upp this defend’ . . .”<sup>53</sup> It is clear that despite the part supposed to have been played by the Corporation it was largely through Huntingdon’s influence that Ewbank came to Newcastle: only the previous year the Lord President had succeeded in having his nominee, John Udall, accepted as a preacher in Newcastle.<sup>54</sup> Huntingdon’s Puritan sympathies are well known; Udall is described by the biographer of the Puritan Ambrose Barnes as “an active Nonconformist (who) when in danger of his life hid himself amongst the good people of Newcastle; he was another Benaiah, a strong, lively man”.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, Richard Holdsworth, who succeeded McBray as Vicar of Newcastle, was Huntingdon’s own chaplain; his son was the famous Puritan of the same name (Professor at Gresham College and Master of Emmanuel College), and it seems likely that the father had some sympathy for Puritanism.

After this, it is something of a surprise to discover that Ewbank later became one of James I’s chaplains and rose gently along the ecclesiastical *cursus honorum*, ending as Sub-Dean of Durham and Canon of Lichfield.<sup>56</sup> To do so in James’ reign argues a considerable measure of orthodoxy; similarly to rise in the church in an area dominated by a Puritan Lord President argues a certain amount of agreement

<sup>53</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/5/51.

<sup>54</sup> On Udall, see Howell, *op. cit.*; on Huntingdon, see C. Cross: *The Puritan Earl*, Macmillan 1966.

<sup>55</sup> *Memoirs of the Life of Ambrose Barnes*, ed. W. H. D. Longstaffe, Surtees Soc. Vol. 50, 1867, p. 127.

<sup>56</sup> Laws, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

with the patron, but of a different kind. It seems as if Ewbank was prepared to change his religious views to gain advancement, finding a position further from Puritanism more congenial to both the national and the local government in the early seventeenth century. However, this does not diminish the importance of this group of Huntingdon's appointments: he was obviously prepared to use his position to further his friends and his beliefs to an extent which has gone unrecognised until recently. He was equally prepared to influence appointments to the school and to the institution on which it was theoretically dependent.

But while the Puritan cause was being advanced by the Crown's representative in Newcastle, the power locally was coming more and more into the hands of the "papists", as their opponents called them, and as indeed some of them were. In 1583 Henry Anderson and William Selby bought from Thomas Sutton the "Grand Lease" of Gateshead and Whickham and their coal-mines. The Bishop of Durham had earlier been persuaded to part with his rights there to the Queen, who transferred them to the Earl of Leicester, by whom they were sold to Sutton; thus Newcastle finally obtained possession of Gateshead, for the supposed period of a hundred years. There appears to have been an agreement that Anderson and Selby should transfer the Lease to the Mayor and Burgesses; but instead they made it over "to private men, of whom some are recusants, and divers others notoriously suspected to be popishly and evil affected".<sup>57</sup> In fact the men who shared the lease were the leading members of the hoastmen's company, who thus achieved an unassailable position in municipal politics by virtue of their economic predominance; it cannot be denied that the group included none of the (admittedly few) Puritan coal-owners, and it is quite possible that this religious exclusiveness was indeed one of the main reasons for the hostility of the "reform group". Certainly religion was to play a large part in municipal dis-

<sup>57</sup> R. Welford: *History of Newcastle and Gateshead*, London, 1887, Vol. III, p. 117.

putes until the Civil War. Possibly some coal-owners were frightened of a strong Calvinist movement in the town: many of their workers, as Dr. Howell has shown, were Scots (their number assessed in 1637/8 as 5,000), and Calvinists—the border country had for some time been the principal recruiting-ground for pit workers.<sup>58</sup> It was probably because of this strong lower-class Scottish group that the various companies had anti-Scottish regulations, as well as because of the traditional hostility to Scotland.

The Grammar School entered this period of domination by the Lords of Coal quite strong: it seems to have moved back to St. Nicholas' Churchyard at any rate by 1594, and in October 1591 its first usher was appointed—one John Morra or Murray, at a rate of £3 6s. 8d. p.a.<sup>59</sup> Humphrey Gray was fortunate in that he was a friend of the rising coal-merchants: it is perhaps because of that that they were prepared to expand the staff of the school. If Gray had been succeeded by one as popular as he, the school might have prospered even more; as it was after a tenuous existence for fifty years, when its disappearance was frequently threatened, its future life as a settled institution was to be equally risky. Itself the result of a religious crisis, it was to feel the full force of successive upheavals; the result of an act of political expediency, it was to be fully involved in successive political crises.

#### 1594 TO 1623: THE FOUNDATION OF THE R.G.S.

Humphrey Gray was buried in St. Nicholas' Church on July 8th, 1594.<sup>60</sup> In his will, apart from bequests to his family, he leaves books and other property to the following: William Riddle, William Simpson, Roland Tempest, Ralph Carr, William Jackson, Thomas Carr and his "dear friend"

<sup>58</sup> Howell, *op. cit.*

<sup>59</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>60</sup> Laws, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

William Jenison. All were members of the Grand Lessee Party, and only two were not actually hoastmen: they were Jackson, installed as Town Clerk by the Grand Lessees, and Ralph Carr, their solicitor. Moreover two were regarded as papists by Burghley's agent in Newcastle, Henry Sander-son: "we have pregnant presumptions that when (Jenison) was sheriff, by his means, and help of Thomas Carr, the hand of Lambton, the seminary priest, was cut off from that quarter that was set up, and carried away".<sup>61</sup> Gray's son was to become a notary: their family monopoly was broken, and the Corporation had to look around for a suitable replacement.

Thus the political and religious views of the leaders of the Corporation in 1594 become of great importance; and they must be set in a context of municipal discontent. In 1597 Robert Dudley wrote to Burghley: ". . . Mr. Anderson, seeming to bewail the waste of the town treasure, and the making George Farnaby alderman and mayor out of time, by persons, some of whom have been imprisoned for disaffection to religion and the state, and the great wrong done to the town by the grand leases, with privity of Mr. Holdsworth & Mr. Bamford, preachers in the town, persuaded many of us and other free burgesses to join him to seek reformation of these abuses. Ralph Jenison and Mr. Anderson fell from the cause, and both have since been made mayors . . ." <sup>62</sup> Farnaby was elected mayor in 1591; Anderson in 1594: thus one can probably date Anderson's leadership of the "reform party" as being between these two dates. Holdsworth was, of course, the Puritan Vicar; Bamford was a Puritan preacher who does not, however, appear to have held a regular post in any of the churches though from 1590 to 1595 he was paid a stipend by the Corporation. Their association with Anderson in his campaign demonstrates its strong connection with the religious differences in the town: we find in the period 1591-5 that most of the Puritans were

<sup>61</sup> Welford, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>62</sup> Cal. S.P.D. Eliz. vol. cclxiii no. 72.

members of the Anderson group, which contained very few if any crypto-Catholics: Anderson himself appears to have been orthodox religiously even after he "fell from the cause".

In 1593 the reform group achieved its greatest success with the election of Lionel Maddison as Mayor, though they had to accept William Jenison as Sheriff. Maddison was a prominent coal-owner, and even a sharer in the Grand Lease; but he was persistently associated with reform, and his son was the leading Puritan merchant before the Civil War. As Gray died before Michaelmas, 1594, Maddison was still the Mayor; and as Francis Burrowes later said, "Madison being the (Mayor) . . . did nomynate this yo<sup>r</sup> orato<sup>r</sup> as a fitte and sufficient man to have the (office of schoolmaster which) was signified by the said Lyonell Maddison" to the Bishop of Durham.<sup>63</sup> If this petition was all the evidence we had as to the circumstances of his appointment, we should still be entitled to guess that Burrowes was a Puritan, placed in office by a sympathiser; but in Sanderson's account of the reform group in 1597 he is mentioned as follows: "(7) Mr. Boroughes, placed schoolmaster by Mr. Maddison at the commendation of the late archbishop of York, the late lord president, the bishop of Durham, and the preachers of the town . . ." <sup>64</sup> Clearly, Huntingdon had been involved again in appointments to religious posts in Newcastle, this time in conjunction with Matthew Hutton, the Bishop of Durham, and the Puritan religious leaders in the town—the "preachers". Hutton was certainly tolerant towards Puritanism in his diocese: he would probably be interested in the appointment of the Newcastle schoolmaster, and had worked closely with Huntingdon while Dean of York.

Thus we have Burrowes, probably a Puritan, being appointed in the last year when the reformers had any real

<sup>63</sup> P.R.O. Exchequer Bills & Answers, Northumberland, No. 94, Eliz. (1600); Laws MS H7.

<sup>64</sup> H.M.C. Lansdowne MSS 81 fol. 41.

power for some time to come. The importance of the school is well shown by Huntingdon's interest: as a piece of patronage, it seems now to have been equal almost to the hospital mastership. It is ironical that Humphrey Gray's work in building up the school (suggested, as we have seen, by the appointment of an usher), should have encouraged the Puritan faction to secure control over the institution; this is how it must have seemed to the Grand Lessees, and it must have been an added reason for ejecting Burrowes. More important, however, was that by 1595 all the main religious posts in the town were held by Puritans or supporters of Huntingdon—equally obnoxious to the oligarchy, since the Council of the North worked continuously both to extirpate papistry and lessen the power of the Hoastmen. Thus it was obvious that in the oligarchic reaction, which began moderately in 1595 with Anderson becoming mayor, there would be an attempt to remove at least some of the reform party's adherents. Naturally enough, the attack was directed first against the one with the shortest stay in office, Burrowes. As Sanderson said, he "was by Mr. Anderson in his mayoralty discharged; no other cause, in truth, can be imagined but that he is thought to be a favourite of Mr. Maddison, and reformation of the town desired".<sup>65</sup>

Burrowes was replaced in July, 1595, by Cuthbert Ogle (for whom the Corporation in that month bought three stalls in St. Nicholas').<sup>66</sup> From November he was being paid regularly, at a stipend of £5 per quarter—twice what Burrowes had received. The payments to him end in the first week of May, 1599; but meanwhile, the Accounts record the payment to Burrowes each quarter of a stipend, which varied in amount but was usually £2 10s., the wage he should have received. This state of affairs is explained both by his later petition to the Exchequer (which is, however, badly damaged), and by Sanderson's letter in 1597. Apparently "his right was such, and the rather furthered by your lord-

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

ship's (i.e. Burghley's) letters, that he was restored by the council at York";<sup>67</sup> in other words, the Council of the North intervened on behalf of their protege, and used the power of the central government to ensure that Burrowes remained in office. But they could not prevent the Corporation from running a rival school, which presumably the Bishop of Durham in 1595, Toby Matthew (Hutton having been translated to York), was prepared to licence.

For two years Burrowes continued to teach in the old St. Nicholas' Churchyard buildings, while Ogle presumably conducted his school for the oligarchy's children somewhere else. Meanwhile the reform party petitioned the crown and embarked on a court-case at York, before the Council, where they could be sure of support. At the same time the Privy Council launched its own enquiry, with Burghley using his agent in Newcastle, Sanderson, to obtain a list of the leaders of the opposition. This list, as we have seen, included Burrowes; the others were Lionel Maddison, Robert Dudley, "soundly affected to the state, and without all suspicion of any affection to popery" who was himself a coal-owner, Adrian Hedworth, "a man of great obscurity", Edward Lewen, "zealous in religion", who was of the older generation of merchants, and his brother Christopher—"the late lord president thought so well of him, as, at his last being at Newcastle, set him down in his note of remembrance to put him in the commission of peace". The last two were Robert Eden—"his hindrance by his second sheriffwick will not be considered, notwithstanding the lord president wrote earnestly in his behalf"—and John Chater, "servant to the late earl of Huntingdon".<sup>68</sup> However, despite the number of adherents of the Council of the North among the opposition, the Privy Council recommended that the case be removed to the Assizes, ostensibly in order that Newcastle's Recorder could attend.<sup>69</sup> Burrowes suffered by this,

<sup>67</sup> H.M.C. Lansdowne MSS 81 fol. 41.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 512/3.

for, as Sanderson said, "there being hope conveyed that the town's causes should be removed from York, he is again lately discharged without any cause alleged".

Confirmation of this is in the Accounts, where payments to him are discontinued from February 1597 to May 1598. Clearly, the Corporation recognised that it was primarily the Council's support that kept Burrowes in his position, and was encouraged by its recent tactical success over the opposition to displace him once more. However, it was to discover that the central government was prepared to back it only a certain way: apparently, though it is difficult to make sense of the petition in its present condition, Burrowes applied to Burghley for assistance, and was restored at his former salary. So matters rested for a year: disputes continued, and the oligarchy had by no means a clear ascendancy over the reformers. In April 1599, indeed, the Corporation commenced payments to a Puritan preacher, William Pearson, who in May married Richard Holdsworth's daughter. Pearson is described by Dr. Howell as "in many ways the first significant Puritan lecturer in town";<sup>70</sup> he held the post of afternoon lecturer at St. Nicholas', and since he is the only such additional preacher there before 1612, it is reasonable to conclude that he was the clergyman mentioned in the Ewbank case who was appointed to perform the tasks neglected by the Master of the Hospital.<sup>71</sup> For the Corporation at this time to appoint such a preacher and pay his salary shows the extent to which the opposition could dictate its policies on all but the most important issues. Unable to secure the real victory—the transfer of the Grand Lease—they were yet able to win many minor engagements, even, as we shall see, after the Great Charter of 1600. The picture of a monolithic and impregnable papist oligarchy must be altered to one of a group forever harassed and forced to engage in disputes over every step it takes, unwilling to use

<sup>70</sup> Howell, *op. cit.*

<sup>71</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/20/51.

its reserve powers, its economic hegemony and influence with the Court (though not always with the Council of the North), except in a crisis.

But the rulers still wished to dictate the City's patronage, though they must have realised that the opposition would be hostile, particularly in religious appointments. In 1599 Ogle died or otherwise disappeared: he is paid for one week only in May, and Burrowes is not paid at all. In August Ogle was paid "his qrtridge due at St Ellinmas last past and unpaide—com: by Mr Maier to (be) paid"; but by the last quarter of the year he had finally gone, and Burrowes was being paid as he had been earlier.<sup>72</sup> It happened that in the Michaelmas of 1599 Jenison had been elected: one of the leaders of the oligarchy, as we have seen, and religiously suspect. On December 20 he took steps to ensure that Burrowes was removed once more, this time successfully: he by indenture granted to Ogle's successor, one William Allanson, "unum mesuagium cum pertinentibus communiter vocatum the hye schoole alias the Grammar schoole of the towne of Newcastle upon Tyne scituatum & existens in parochia Sancti Nicholai" for the term of five years.<sup>73</sup> Apparently Allanson "thereupon first sett a locke upon the said scholehouse door to disturbe yo<sup>r</sup> orators (i.e. Burrowes) quiet possession",<sup>74</sup> and we certainly find in the Corporation Accounts for February 1599 "Paid to James Gibson locke smithe for making a hesp an stappell for the schoole house door 10d."<sup>75</sup>

Burrowes however claimed that the school-house had been granted to him for life (as indeed it probably had—hence his being left in possession of it during Ogle's mastership), and chose to throw Allanson out by force. On January 25, 1600 Allanson claimed damages in a suit of ejectment before the Barons of the Exchequer (the usual body

<sup>72</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>73</sup> P.R.O. Exchequer Plea Roll no. 415 m. 41: Pleas taken at Westminster Hilary Term 42 Eliz.; Laws MS H7.

<sup>74</sup> P.R.O. Exchequer Bills & Answers, North., No. 94, Eliz.; Laws MS H7.

<sup>75</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

to hear pleas of ejectment), amounting in all to 20 marks.<sup>76</sup> The day appointed for the case to be heard was April 9, and so it is some time between the two dates that Burrowes petitioned the Exchequer for an injunction restraining Allanson from occupying the school-house until the court had decided on the case. In April the two parties appeared at the Exchequer for their case to be heard, but Burrowes suffered a defeat when it was ruled that the Sheriff of Newcastle should "hold an inquiry to discover the views of the parish of St. Nicholas" (i.e. hold a jury trial) on June 2.<sup>77</sup>

This ruling was a clear victory for Jenison and the oligarchy: on their home ground they stood a good chance of winning the case. Moreover they were able to delay the hearing until the next term, on October 6; this meant that, as they were not paying Burrowes any more, his capacity to continue with the litigation was reduced. The jury decided that "Francis Burrowes is guilty of the trespass and ejection . . . and that William Allanson is quit",<sup>78</sup> but assessed the damages altogether, including charges, at £6 18s. 10d. This verdict was probably influenced by the fact that Allanson was the oligarchy's candidate: no body of jurors could risk defying the Corporation in a matter whose details must have been known to everyone. As far as we can tell now, Burrowes had a case; but it is possible that he would have lost wherever the trial was held.

However, Burrowes, despite his loss of income, seems to have continued with the case: in the fifth week of October, 1600, the Accounts include the following: "Paide to Francis Burrowes gentelman who taught in the hie schoole of this towne as schoolm<sup>r</sup> att the desire of the reight honourable the lord Purve lorde vicepresident and the rest of the Counsell att York for pacesieing of all suitts & quarrells between him the saide Mr Burrowes on the one p'tie & the Maior and Burgeses of this towne on the other p'tie & for the relinquishing

<sup>76</sup> P.R.O. Exchequer Plea Roll no. 415 m. 41; Laws MS H7.

<sup>77</sup> P.R.O. Exchequer Plea Roll no. 416 m. 2: Pleas taken at Westminster Easter Term 42 Eliz.; Laws MSS H7.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*

& surrender of the saide schools commanded by Mr Maior to paie his brethren & the common Counsell the some of £50".<sup>79</sup> Obviously Burrowes had petitioned his former friends, the Council of the North, and persuaded them not to reverse the jury's judgement, which was not really in their power, but to force the Corporation to pay adequate compensation for loss of income. £50 at Burrowes' previous salary would last five years—the length of time for which Allanson was to be Master. Thus it is evident that Burrowes finally relinquished the school, and handed the school-house over to the oligarchy's nominee. The whole incident reveals the strengths and the weaknesses of the "Lords of Coal's" position, and also the importance of the school to them, that they should be prepared to go to such expense. Week after week throughout 1600 the Accounts record the sums paid out in legal fees on this particular case: and yet control over the school meant only one or at the most two posts to be used for patronage. A more important reason for the oligarchy's concern must have been their religious conservatism: the Newcastle school could be used to teach their children without fear of Puritan influence over them.

While the law-suit was still being conducted, we find the first mention of the usher at this time. In William Riddell's will he left an angel to "Mr. Allansonne, the precher, and Mr. Cooke, the scoolemaister".<sup>80</sup> We know from the later Accounts that Cook was the usher; the will implies that he had, not unnaturally, been acting as master during the litigation. The fact that they are mentioned at all in Riddell's will, for the testator was notorious for his papist inclinations, suggests that they were definitely not Puritans. Thus we are to assume that the school was conducted by Allanson and his usher on "high" Anglican (though not, presumably, catholic) lines until Allanson's death in December, 1602; Cooke had meanwhile left, in August, 1601, to be replaced by

<sup>79</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>80</sup> *Wills and Inventories from the Registry at Durham. Pt. III*, ed. J. C. Hodgson, Surtees Society Vol. 112, 1906, p. 177.

one Thomas Oxley. He secured various preferments in the Church during James I's reign, which argues a measure of orthodoxy; but he left the school for his first clerical appointment in March, 1602,<sup>81</sup> and the name of his successor is not recorded as there is an hiatus in the Accounts between October 1601 and October 1606.

During Allanson's term of office the Hoastmen decided to consolidate their position even further. We have seen how, contrary to the generally accepted belief, the Hoastmen were still able to suffer reverses in municipal politics even when their economic supremacy was at its height. Perhaps it is because of this that they decided to regularise their domination and ensure its continuance through a royal charter; however, there has been considerable divergence of views over the exact significance of the Great Charter of 1600. Professor Hearnshaw saw it as "a reorganisation of the Hoastmen's Company under the control of the mayor and corporation",<sup>82</sup> while Mr. Middlebrook thinks that "it gave the Company of Hostmen a monopolistic control not only of the municipal government but also of the economic life of Tyne-side".<sup>83</sup> The different points of view are, of course, two sides of the same coin: the Hoastmen were put under the nominal control of the Corporation, and the Grand Lease was at last handed over to it in the following year; but the constitution of the town was so arranged that the officers in the year 1600 could virtually nominate their successors; and among those officers there was a large majority for the Hoastmen. But the importance of the Charter for the history of the school is that among its clauses is one establishing a "Libera Schola Grammaticalis Regine Elizabethæ in Novo Castro super Tinam"<sup>84</sup> (i.e. Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Newcastle, *not* the Royal Grammar School—which title is a later and unwarranted invention).

The strangest feature about the clause setting up a school,

<sup>81</sup> Laws, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>82</sup> F. J. C. Hearnshaw: *Newcastle upon Tyne*, 1929, p. 90.

<sup>83</sup> Middlebrook, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>84</sup> For the text of the clause, see Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 88, n.r.

perhaps, has never been commented on: the fact that it should be in the 1600 Charter at all. No other example has ever been quoted, if indeed one exists, of a school established in a municipal charter which was not the re-constitution of a pre-Reformation *guild* school; all the other "royal" (Edward VI or Elizabeth) foundations were established by separate letters patent. Clearly, control of the Newcastle school at this time was regarded as being of great importance in municipal affairs—so great, indeed, as to warrant its inclusion in a charter alongside the constitution of the town itself, and the establishment of its most important company. Moreover, there are some other remarkable features in the school clause, which deserve closer attention than they have hitherto been given.

Firstly, the charter laid it down that "erigatur et in perpetuum sit una libera schola grammaticalis" in Newcastle; in other words, the new school was to have a monopoly of grammar education in the town. This provision effectively disposed of competition such as Burrowes had presented at one time. Secondly, the former vague constitution of the school was changed; it was no longer a master and usher paid from time to time by either the hospital or the Corporation, with no security; instead the school was to consist "de uno magistro & scholaribus in eadem instruendis" who were empowered to act as a full corporation, and hold land or other property, in fee-simple or for terms of years, which was not to exceed a value of £40 per annum. This latter provision is usual in Elizabethan school charters (for instance Q.E.G.S. Penrith)<sup>85</sup>; of more importance is that the charter does not actually specify the source of revenue, nor give the school any endowment. Again, comparison with contemporary foundations is instructive: where they were refoundations of chantry schools, for instance Sherborne, Penrith, Morpeth,<sup>86</sup> their lands are specified; in one of the few cases where

<sup>85</sup> J. Jackson: *Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Penrith*, Penrith 1963, p. 11.

<sup>86</sup> For Penrith, see above; for Sherborne, see A. F. Leach: *Educational Charters*, C.U.P. 1911, p. 485-7, and for Morpeth see G. Kennedy: *Morpeth Grammar School*, Newcastle, 1951, p. 19.

there was a completely new foundation, King Edward's School, Birmingham, the charter also contains full details of the land with which the school was endowed.<sup>87</sup> This most unusual omission in the Newcastle charter again suggests that the school had never been properly endowed. As a necessary part of the provision that it could hold land, it was granted power to have a common seal; which has never been made.

Thirdly, the charter decreed that a majority of the mayor and burgesses, including the mayor, or the Common Council or a majority on the Council, were to have the right of appointing a suitable master and "hypodidasculus" (i.e. usher) who were, most importantly, to hold office "durante bene placito majoris" and his fellows. In this provision we see the direct result of the Burrowes dispute: henceforth no master could appeal against wrongful dismissal. In this provision, also, we see the whole point of the school's inclusion in a municipal charter; henceforth the school was to be one of the props of the merchant oligarchy. Boys would progress from the Hoastmen's school to the Hoastmen's company to the Hoastmen's city council without ever being connected with an institution that their fathers could not control. All the charitable bodies that the Council had some chance of controlling at the beginning of the seventeenth century were included either in the Great Charter or the two charters of 1611 which refounded the three hospitals (St. Mary the Virgin's, St. Mary Magdalene's and St. Thomas' Chapel on Tyne Bridge); the way in which the Corporation penetrated into the life of all such institutions at this time is very striking. One of the few remaining ways in which this penetration is still symbolised is the annual visit of the Lord Mayor to the School after his election; though the election was held in the Hospital, there seems no good reason why the newly-elected Mayor should be concerned to address the School but that, as we have seen, it was of considerable political importance to him and his colleagues. (His interest,

<sup>87</sup> T. W. Hutton: *King Edward's School, Birmingham*, Oxford, 1962, p. 8.

incidentally, appears to have been reciprocated by the pupils, who held the mock election shown in Davies' well-known lithograph; the way in which the school was bound up with municipal politics could scarcely be better shown than by this picture.)

But to bring the school firmly under the Corporation's wing did not remove the possibility of argument over it as different groups struggled on the Council, nor did the Charter do more than provide the general legal form of the school. Unfortunately, there is some doubt over the precise dating of the statutes discovered since Laws wrote, significantly enough in the City Archives Office. They exist only in an eighteenth-century copy, but they "belong to the last two decades of the sixteenth century in tone",<sup>88</sup> and may be assumed to have been drawn up shortly after the 1600 Charter. They certainly fit in with the Corporation's policy at that time: they prescribe that each year "Nine able persons shall be chosen to be Visitors of the said Grammar School. These Visitors shall have power to make constitutions orders and by laws for the directing ordering and government of the Master Ushers and Schollars who are admonished to obey and execute the same as they tender the favour of this Corporation and otherwise at their peril". This provision clearly takes account of the possibility of further argument; it is difficult to see what else a yearly nomination of Visitors could be for. If one group gained a success in the elections at Michaelmas, it could appoint its own supporters as Visitors "on the Monday next after the feast of the Epiphany". Moreover the statutes end characteristically "it is required and expected that every Schollar . . . shall forever hereafter in all his publick sermons pray for the welfare and good Estate of the Mayor and Burgesses of this Corporation as for their special benefits whom God preserve".

The fact that the two sides on the Council were more

<sup>88</sup> T. H. Rowland: *The Curriculum of the Royal Grammar School*, Durham Research Review, No. 3, 1952, p. 35. For the text itself, see this article or N.C.A. 8/2/50

evenly balanced than has often been thought is further suggested by the opposition's success in late 1603. By a new provision of December 21, the fourteen by-trades (that is, the lesser guilds, traditionally those which supported the opposition to the oligarchy) were given participation in the municipal elections;<sup>89</sup> we should expect, seeing this resurgence, to find some change in the school, and it is interesting that at about this time Burrowes reappears as Headmaster. Unfortunately, the Accounts for this period are missing, and so the precise date cannot be fixed; Allanson was buried in December 1602,<sup>90</sup> but the first mention of Burrowes again is 1606.<sup>91</sup> However, it is reasonably clear that he returned about the time of the opposition's recovery, for it is almost inconceivable that the oligarchy would have considered reappointing the man who as much as anyone was hostile to their policies; Burrowes' reappointment must therefore be seen as a victory for the opposition.

Shortly after his appointment, a new issue developed between the two parties which was to involve the school and, eventually, establish it as it was to remain until 1844. We have seen how the Corporation was constantly afraid of royal action against the hospitals; in 1611 it was finally decided to use the town's influence at court to secure a refoundation of them. Thus far both parties could be agreed; however, divergence came over the detail of the refoundation. On March 28 1611 it was declared that "Whereas divers and sundry business of importance concerning the general state of this corporation, especially the establishing and settling of the foundations of the several hospitals . . . are to be performed and effected at London (a committee would be set up) whose acts and doings therein we do and will, by this our present order, approve and ratify, to be as effectual as if the same were done by us all".<sup>92</sup> The committee consisted

<sup>89</sup> Welford, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.* p. 425.

<sup>91</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>92</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 648.

of twenty members and, judging by those whose political affiliations can be detected, was evenly balanced between oligarchy and opposition.

But the oligarchy had the additional advantage of Ewbank's support, for he was now a King's Chaplain with considerable influence at court. Fearing, as they later said, that Ewbank would somehow secure the mastership for life in the new charter, the opposition must have persuaded the committee to send the following petition to the Lord Privy Seal: "Mr Ewbancke himself & some other of his p'decessors in respecte the Revnewe of the said hospitall called the West-spittle is good and the charge thereof not great have agreed eyther to fynde a Scholemaster for teachinge the youth of the towne or else to allowe a yearlie stipend of (2) 3 li 6s 8d p. annum for that or some other godlie use in the towne . . . They now humblie praye that by yo' ho<sup>ble</sup> meanes p'vision may be made in the new foundation of the same hospitall for contynuance of the same or the like uses. They further humblie beseech yo' ho<sup>ble</sup> favoure for the like new foundation of two other like hospitalls . . . And if it might soe seeme good unto yo' Lo<sup>r</sup> they desire that the foundaçon thereof may be a master and usher att the nominaçon of the maio<sup>r</sup> and rest of the Comon Counsell . . . for the better instructinge of the youth of that towne".<sup>93</sup> The purpose of this petition is reasonably clear: they wished to remove Ewbank's influence by removing his office, and at the same time provide a much larger income for Burrowes. Its great interest lies in the fact that it was the first time that the amalgamation of the Hospital and its old appendage the school was officially considered. We may with some justification regard this policy as part of the opposition programme, as the later conduct of the Ewbank case shows; and later in the century, it is only when what Dr. Howell calls the "inner ring" was securely in power that the two offices of Master of School and Master of Hospital were separated.

However, the petition failed to produce the desired effect;

<sup>93</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/21/51.

but the opposition did not lose completely—as always, the government tried to preserve a balance. While Ewbank was confirmed as Master of the Virgin Mary Hospital (though not for life), the two establishments of St. Mary Magdalene's and St. Thomas' were united and the Mastership given to Robert Jenison.<sup>94</sup> He was later to be the well-known Puritan Vicar of Newcastle; the Mastership was the first ecclesiastical post in Newcastle he secured of any importance. That useful office had been secured for a Puritan; and in the following year the opposition embarked on a fresh attack on Ewbank to unseat him, this time by a court-action. The attack was led by a Puritan member of the Council, Cuthbert Bewick, who conceived the idea of suing Ewbank for not keeping to the bond which had been drawn up in 1585. As William Jackson said giving evidence in 1614, Bewick “did offer in public assembly of the then Common Counsell in or about Jullii 1612 to put that bond in suit and to beare all charges of suit in case he did not recover the same against the def<sup>t</sup>”,<sup>95</sup> if he did, then the charges were to be borne by the Corporation. That the case was in origin political is well shown by Ewbank's reply, in which he said that the Bill of Complaint was “rather followed by the turbulent instigacon of the solicitors hereof (i.e. Bewick) and the consent of the meaner sort of the Burgesses there then p'secuted either by the good lykinge or opprobacon of the best & principall Burgesses . . . unto whom the deserts of this defendant towards the same in many respects are well known and approved of”.<sup>96</sup>

Ewbank's words were borne out when the case finally came to court, in September 1614. The witnesses on his behalf were an impressive collection, including William Jackson, the Grand Lessees' Town Clerk, John Stobbet, a member of the Merchants' Company, Henry Chapman, a former Grand Lessee and Mayor, James Clavering, another former Mayor, William Warmouth, who was to be Mayor

<sup>94</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, pp. 588, 430.

<sup>95</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/24/51.

<sup>96</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/5/51.

next year, and two of the brethren of the Hospital itself.<sup>97</sup> The opposition could find as hostile witnesses only one man who was of mayoral status (Francis Burrell, Mayor 1615/6), and three less important merchants.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, the Council of the North decided in the opposition's favour: even at this date, it still seems to have been more afraid than the Court of an over-powerful Corporation in Newcastle. Ewbank resigned in 1615, and the question of his successor came before the Council. Presumably the opposition had mounted their attack on Ewbank in order to use his office as a convenient piece of patronage; and it could best be used as a sinecure for the Master of the school. Already while Ewbank was still Master the chapel had been fitted up as the school (Ralph Carr said in 1614 that money had been spent on doing so over the previous two years);<sup>99</sup> the obvious culmination of both the building programme and the court-case was the amalgamation of the two institutions. The opposition had failed to do so legally; they could still secure it in practice by uniting the two Masterships in one person.

While the hearing was being conducted, Burrowes either died or resigned. Laws for some reason said that he disappeared in 1607, and was replaced in that year by Robert Fowberry, previously Headmaster of Hull Grammar School;<sup>100</sup> but as Mr. Lawson has shown in his history of that school, as late as May 1613 Fowberry was still at Hull, and was trying to persuade St. John's College Cambridge to appoint him to Pocklington School.<sup>101</sup> Not until four months later was he appointed to the Newcastle School and at the same time to the Mastership of the Hospital. Bourne, citing the Milbank Manuscript, says that "when Mr. *Burras* gave over the *Free-School* in St. *Nicholas* Churchyard, the Mayor and 24 more sent for Mr. *Fowberry* to *Hull*, and he came

<sup>97</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/11,24/51.

<sup>98</sup> N.C.A. G-CB/8/51.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Laws, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>101</sup> J. Lawson: *A Town Grammar School through Six Centuries*, O.U.P., 1963, p. 69.

and first taught in the *Writing-School*, until the *Chapel* of *St. Mary's Hospital* was made into a *School-house*”,<sup>102</sup> as it was over the two years 1613 and 1614 that the Chapel was converted into a school, and as it would not be finished until Fowberry had been in Newcastle for some time, he naturally taught in the old school (later the *Writing School*). Judging by entries in the *Accounts* for 1606/7, the old school building had once more been giving trouble: one Browne was paid the huge sum of £13 12s. for his work on it in March 1607.<sup>103</sup> It is presumably because of this that the decision was taken to move the school back to the *Hospital*, as well as because it would facilitate the amalgamation of the two institutions.

In Fowberry's will of 1623, he left bequests to the Vicar of Newcastle (who appears to have had little obvious commitment to either extreme) and to Lionel Maddison, the son of Burrowes' patron, who was a definite Calvinist but was nevertheless knighted by Charles I.<sup>104</sup> This would seem to indicate that he won the confidence of the moderates in municipal politics, and there is a certain amount of evidence that he was trusted by the more extreme. There is still an edition of Suidas in the school library, bearing the inscription “Ex dono Thomae Liddle Armigeri, ad usum scholae Neopurgensis apud Anglos Boreales. Jun. 12. 1620”; Sir Thomas Liddle was a notorious crypto-Catholic, whose wife was actually imprisoned for recusancy:<sup>105</sup> that he and Maddison (who also gave a book to the school in 1633) could both support the same schoolmaster is an indication of how skilful Fowberry was at holding the balance between the two factions.

But it is also an indication of something else. The Puritan recovery at the beginning of the seventeenth century was beginning to lose its momentum; as the Laudian revival got under way, Arminians, in Newcastle at least, received the

<sup>102</sup> Bourne, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>103</sup> N.C.A. Chamberlains' Accounts.

<sup>104</sup> Middlebrook, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>105</sup> *ibid.* p. 71.

important offices formerly held by Puritans or *politiques*. A man with such pronounced views as Burrowes was no longer acceptable; as the last incident which affected the constitution of the school began, the change in politics is already visible. If Newcastle, as Mr. Middlebrook claims,<sup>106</sup> really was a royalist "stronghold" during the Civil War, then it was of quite recent creation—as, indeed, Dr. Howell has conclusively shown.

There seems to have been under Laud a definite attempt to centralise education and establish royal control over schools;<sup>107</sup> in 1633 a certain Mr. Nicols even wrote to Windbank recommending that the King take into his hands the management of all charities, including schools, continue their work and pocket the surplus revenue.<sup>108</sup> But before Charles' accession there is evidence from Newcastle that the Crown was taking an interest in appointing to schools. On May 18 1623 there was a letter from the King to the Corporation of Newcastle "to admitt Mr. Conniers into the place of Schoolem<sup>r</sup> there now void by death".<sup>109</sup> The account of what happened at the meeting of the Council on June 10 is contained in a letter from Sir George Selby, the Mayor, to Sir Edward Conway, a Privy Councillor: "According to your letter to me and The rest of our Aldermen I made them all acquainted with itt, in the behalfe of Mr. Conyers for The Scholmaster of Newcastell, and Red your letter openly unto them all, And presently I Called a Common Councell Takeing every mans voice which I Sende you hereinclosed, nott doubting butt your letter with divers other privye Councellers letters should not be denyed Butt yt Toke nott that effects I looked for". The Council divided on the expected lines: out of a total of twenty-six, the eighteen who voted against Conyers were Puritans, or had connections with the opposition, or were less extreme than the crypto-Catholics

<sup>106</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 72-4.

<sup>107</sup> An unpublished essay by Mr. J. G. A. Pocock on education in the Diocese of Durham.

<sup>108</sup> Hutton, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>109</sup> P.R.O. S.P.D. James I Vol. 214, p. 44.

and avowed royalists. The seven who voted for him included Selby, Sir Thomas and Sir Peter Riddell, and William Jackson the younger: the largest coal-owners. The one abstention was Sir Henry Anderson, who, though a Puritan sympathiser, nevertheless adhered to the King in the Civil War.<sup>110</sup>

Thus even at this date the oligarchy could be defied by the opposition, and with the oligarchy the Crown; but it is significant that it was only on an issue such as this, where municipal independence was threatened, that a coalition could be formed to outvote the "inner ring". The coalition included many, such as Henry Chapman, James Clavering and William Jackson, who had been witnesses on behalf of Ewbank, and who were connected with the old Grand Lessees. The new generation of coal-owners, such as the Riddells, seem to have been less eager than their predecessors to safeguard municipal rights, and even a coalition could not stop them for long. Perhaps they were wiser than the old rulers; at a time of royal resurgence, even the most powerful city had to give way to a certain extent: an unbending independence might incur harsh sanctions. The next indication of the way the argument over the school went is contained in two scraps of evidence, slight but interesting.

The first is that in July a question apparently arose over whether the Hospital was presentative or donative (i.e. whether the patrons had to present their candidate to the Bishop for induction into the Mastership, or whether he could be placed in the office without reference to the ordinary). The issue was referred to the Attorney-General, who answered: "if the patrons should attempt to make it donative, the bishop of the diocese, after six months passed without presentation, may collate by lapse, for a church once presentative cannot, without act of parliament, or after dissolution thereof, become donative".<sup>111</sup> The second is that in the Register of Bishop Neile is the following entry: "Edward

<sup>110</sup> *ibid.* Vol. 146 No. 57.

<sup>111</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, pp. 83/4 (citing "Grey's MSS").

Wigham, A.M. was instituted to the mastership of this hospital, August 30th, 1623, on the presentation of the King, to whom, through lapse of time, that right had reverted for this turn".<sup>112</sup> Presumably the whole point of the question settled by the Attorney-General was that the patrons of the Hospital, the Corporation, *had* attempted to make a donation of it; and their motives for doing so are not hard to guess. Neile later received preferment to Winchester, which suggests he enjoyed royal favour; the opposition in early 1623 was able to win a vote over the successor to Fowberry as Hospital Master (that post, after all, provided most of the master's income, and was vital to Fowberry's successor in the school), but it could not be sure that the Bishop would collate him. So it attempted to bypass the Bishop; but their opponents referred the question to the Attorney-General, who not unnaturally decided against the opposition.

The affair must have rested like this for a month, with the oligarchy unable to win a majority for their candidate (presumably Wigham in succession to Conyers), and the opposition unable to have their candidate (who he might have been is unknown) collated by the Bishop. The fact that the school mastership seems to have been dependent on appointment to the Hospital is significant, and shows how far the union of the two institutions had gone. In August the Crown and the oligarchy seem to have claimed that because of the delay over appointing Fowberry's successor the right to do so had reverted to the Crown for that turn. On what they based their claim is unknown; the 1611 Charter says nothing about such a reversion. However, the Bishop was satisfied, and proceeded to induct Wigham into the Mastership of the Hospital; at the same time he became Master of the School.

After this incident, the question of the patronage of the Hospital never arose again. The opposition had learned that Crown and oligarchy together could successfully override a majority on the Council; if the town was not to lose the

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*, p. 83 (citing "Register of Bishop Neile, p. 57")

patronage completely they had to agree to what the oligarchy wanted. Occasionally this meant a separation of School and Hospital Masterships, as when Francis Gray was Master of the Hospital and Thomas Gibson and Amor Oxley were Masters of the School; but in the Interregnum, when the opposition came into its own, the two Masterships were once more firmly united. By giving way in the 1630's, the opposition preserved municipal control over the school for its own use in the 1640's: and its leaders must have been aware of this possibility.

After the events of this period, those connected with the school recognise the integral connection of the school and Hospital. In 1671 Richard Garthwaite was appointed to both masterships, as the Common Council Book says, "for and by reason that the said hospital anciently and formerly was annexed to the said schoole and accounted as part and parcel thereof",<sup>113</sup> and in a petition of 1787 the scholars of the school refer to themselves as "a Body Corporate together with the Master of the Hospital of the Blessed St. Mary the Virgin in Westgate".<sup>114</sup> As we have seen, this connection was no new thing; throughout its known history, the Royal Grammar School has been associated with the Hospital (an association which has not ended even today). As in the nineteenth century, so in the sixteenth century, there was a proposal to found a new school, unconnected with the Hospital; on neither occasion did the proposal come to anything. But the school was formed not only by its association with its parent institution; it was formed by the exigencies of contemporary politics. The desire to use an old institution to suit new situations was uppermost in the minds of those who founded the R.G.S., as it was to remain until the nineteenth century; at no point was there a clear break, at no point can one say that the school was "founded". By tracing the school through eighty years of political change, one can see how and why it took the form it did, and one can see that no

<sup>113</sup> N.C.A. Common Council Book.

<sup>114</sup> N.C.A. Petitions to Common Council 1786-7, No. 3.

picture of a beneficent founder or a disinterested Corporation fits in any way the true complexities of its history.

#### ADDENDUM

The question of where the Guildhall of Newcastle was before Roger Thornton built the present building on the Sandhill is one which has hitherto received little attention; and yet it throws much light on why the city was interested in the Virgin Mary Hospital. It has often been assumed either that it was on the same site as the later hall or that there was no such building: but in a deed of about 1300 a booth is mentioned between "botham hospitalis occident'" and "venellam versus Aulam-Ghyld".<sup>115</sup> This demonstrates that there was a Guildhall before Thornton's, but it also suggests that it was not on the Sandhill, for there was no lane running towards the hall there. There is some more evidence of the existence of a guildhall at that date in the Feet of Fines. In 1304 the Master of the Virgin Mary Hospital agreed to find a "third chaplain from among the brethren, in addition to the number of brethren there formerly, to celebrate the Mass of St. Mary in the "chapel of St. Mary of Gildhalle" on Wednesday and Saturday each week".<sup>116</sup>

If a guildhall existed about 1300, it is strange that the famous St. Valentine's Day guild meeting of 1342 should have taken place at the Virgin Mary Hospital; unless the guildhall was in fact in the hospital. This suggestion receives confirmation from the 1345 Charter to the town, which laid down that the Mayor was to be elected in the town's Guildhall;<sup>117</sup> and yet it is well known that the Mayor was in fact always elected in the Hospital, in a large room south of the chancel. If the guildhall of the fourteenth century was in the

<sup>115</sup> Brand, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>116</sup> F.F. 181/9 (117) in *Newcastle Record Series* Vol. XI, p. 42.

<sup>117</sup> Brand Vol. II p. 162.

Hospital, it would explain much of the town's interest in controlling it, and it would also make it understandable that any school for the town should be found in the Hospital, which already contained one of the essential municipal institutions.

