

### III

## 100 YEARS OF A LOST CAUSE: NONJURING PRINCIPLES IN NEWCASTLE FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE DEATH OF PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART

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EARLY IN 1689, when the time came to celebrate the consummation of the “Glorious Revolution” with the proclamation of the Prince of Orange as King William III, the “happy delivery of Church and Nation from Popery and arbitrary Power” appeared to be celebrated with as much enthusiasm in the North-East as in any other part of the country. The Newcastle mob who cast the new equestrian statue of King James II from the Sandhill into the Tyne seemed to have felt no more scruple about their action than did the Corporation, which, soon afterwards, quietly salvaged its outmoded gesture of loyalty for scrap, while, for the clergy, Bishop Crewe offered the example of a close episcopal counterpart to the legendary Vicar of Bray. There were problems, however. Despite evocative visions of the overthrow of superstition and tyranny, it was undeniable that the settlement which followed the flight of James II was grounded upon assumptions utterly alien to the great traditions of previous government, in which the dual orders in Church and State were seen alike as reflections of the eternal sovereignty of God. Notions of inalienable original rights, or of monarchy as a contractual system, had no place in such a scheme, and memories of excesses, during the Civil War and Interregnum, heightened suspicion of change. The imposition, in 1689–90, of Oaths of Allegiance to William III, precipitated a major crisis among all men whose consciences forbade them to “resist the Lord’s Anointed” while King James II yet lived. Some took the Oaths only after prolonged misgiving, while others, adhering more strictly to the doctrine of indefeasible hereditary succession, accepted the varying degrees of ostracism associated with the public profession of Jacobitism. The clergy were affected with particular severity, and an indication of this may be had from the fact that over four hundred of their number accepted the final sanctions of deprivation and impoverishment rather than take the Oaths. Among these were William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, seven diocesan bishops, and many members of cathedral and collegiate societies, whose influence far outweighed their numerical strength.

The initial impact of the nonjuring schism in the North-East was not perceptibly large. Denis Granville, Dean of Durham, went into exile at St. Germain, where his efforts to sustain the liason between the Stuart Court and its English clerical adherents continued until his death in 1703. A handful of lesser clergy also forfeited preferment, among them John Cock, Lecturer of St. Nicholas’, Newcastle, from 1675–9, who lost

the Rectory of Gateshead, and Ralph Grey, curate of All Saints' in Newcastle, of whom it is recorded that he "went into France and changed his religion".<sup>1</sup> From an overall view of nonjuring deprivations,<sup>2</sup> though, it appears that the proportion of North-Eastern ejections was actually rather below that for the country as a whole, a fact which might create an impression that regional acceptance of the Revolution Settlement was relatively easy. Other evidence, however, gives a different picture.

The importance of dynastic loyalty is familiar to all who are acquainted with the progress of the Tory and Jacobite causes during this period, and the inheritance of the region in this respect was powerful. In 1696, logical pursuit of rigid principles led Sir John Fenwick, formerly of Wallington, to execution for his part in a conspiracy against the life of William III, and evidence of less dramatic adherence to the same cause is widespread. Whether diocesan allegiances reflected altogether those earlier ones of the great Royalist Dean and Bishop, John Cosin, is not entirely clear, but on the civic side there seems good reason to suppose that Newcastle's Civil War loyalties, as once epitomized by her Mayor, John Marley, persisted with very substantial vigour. By 1715, certainly, the Jacobitism of the town had become notorious, being linked in particular with the very questionable allegiance of the Blackett family, the Fenwicks' successors at Wallington, another dynasty inextricably devoted to the old cause. The historian of the 1715 Rising, Robert Patten, Curate of Allendale, records that when the Jacobite forces first entered the county, "... it was reported among them that *Sir William Blackett* would joyn them. If all that was said of this Gentleman's conduct was true, they were not in the wrong to have some Dependance upon his Assistance".<sup>3</sup> This reputation did not diminish, for when Blackett became a mayoral candidate in 1718, the Revd. John Thomlinson recorded in his diary that "... General Wills ... threatened to send a regiment of soldiers to quarter upon them if they did [elect Blackett], but he gott a letter from the Secretary of State, signifying their opinion of his loyalty ...".<sup>4</sup> Sympathies of this kind were clearly widespread. On 29th May 1716, Restoration Day, Col. George Liddell observed in a letter to William Cotesworth that Jacobite sympathizers in the "rogueish town" had been conspicuous, walking freely abroad with their "oak branches".<sup>5</sup> On 14th March 1718, the same correspondent noted, "... the Toryes and Non-Jurors are very insolent, and the Rebels meet and caball frequently, and brag of their having been in the Rebellion".<sup>6</sup>

The formation around this time of a distinct congregation of nonjurors in Newcastle may be seen as part of a nationwide reaction against the imposition in 1716 of new Oaths which required explicit abjuration of Stuart claims in addition to the affirmation of allegiance to the *de facto* monarch. The timing, however, is interesting: the nonjuring congregations in London, for example, dated from *c.* 1690, and the Newcastle date would appear to indicate that some considerable degree of protection had been afforded to tender consciences in the North-East during the previous quarter-century. Indeed, North-Eastern experiences make it clear that statistics of deprivations alone have been a very inadequate measure of the general response of the clergy to the Revolution Settlement. For one thing, decisions to comply in 1690 were not always straightforward. John March, a former Vice-Principal of St. Edmund Hall in Oxford, and Vicar of St. Nicholas' from 1679 until his death in 1692, enjoyed a clear pre-

eminence among the Newcastle clergy of his day. Investigation, however, reveals not only that he was very late in subscribing to the Oaths, but also that he did so eventually only after long and notable resistance. When he had preached the annual Sermon for the anniversary of King Charles' martyrdom at St. Nicholas' on 30th January 1689, less than two months after the flight of James II, his theme had been that "whosoever meddled with the King's forts, castles and militia", was "guilty of damnation". In similar vein, shortly after, when required to officiate at a General thanksgiving "for the great Deliverance of the Country by the Prince of Orange", he had caused to be read instead the *Homily against Rebellion*.<sup>7</sup> Only in July 1690 does a minute of Common-Council record the ultimatum with which, eventually, he complied: "Mr. March, Vicar—Ordered that Mr. Maior acquaint him his salary will be stopped unless he pray for K. William and Q. Mary by name . . .".

If the case of St. Nicolas' was most prestigious, events at St. Andrews, where, likewise, there was no actual deprivation, were, perhaps, even more suggestive of serious misgivings with the "glory" of the Revolution. Even so late as 1693, the Vicar, William Richards, appointed in 1688 by the same Corporation that had been responsible for the Sandhill statue, is described as "resident in Newcastle, a *nonjuror*", and there is no evidence that his position altered until death terminated his incumbency in 1705. Such a survival, though very unusual, would not be without parallel,<sup>8</sup> but it does appear to betoken some powerful protection. In this context, the known involvement in the parish of two families of staunch Tory record appears very suggestive. Sir William Blackett, of the Wallington family, established a charity-school in the parish by his will of 1705; and investigation of events around the time of the Revolution itself would appear to indicate involvement by a second family of impeccable Tory pedigree, the Musgraves, baronets of Edenhall in Cumberland, whose attachment to the Stuart cause began during the Civil War, and persisted for nearly a century. John Leigh, appointed Vicar of St. Andrew's on 2nd December 1687, served in Newcastle only briefly before removing to be Vicar of Edenhall, from which benefice he was ejected as a nonjuror in 1690. In a reverse direction, a Leonard Musgrave is named in the Churchwardens' Accounts as "Surveyor for the high-ways of Jesmond" in 1692, and a Richard Musgrave was Curate in 1702. Although the latter does not appear to have belonged to the Edenhall baronet's immediate family—the register of his College, St. John's in Cambridge, records his Yorkshire extraction—the name and position hint strongly at some relationship. A Johnian education, moreover, may be considered as a further corroboration of probable Tory sympathy, and reflects a point of considerable significance for the region as a whole, since associations between that College and the diocese of Durham remain strong to this day.

The importance of this inherited St. John's tradition is hard to overestimate in a late seventeenth-century context. Staunchly Royalist since the days of Strafford, the College's pronounced High Churchmanship was reflected after the Restoration by the successive holders of the Mastership, among them Bishop Gunning of Ely, and Dr. Gower, Master in 1693, whose defiance of a mandamus obliging the society to subscribe to the Oath of Allegiance confirmed the College's reputation as the most notorious centre of nonjuring sympathy in either University. Both before and after the

Revolution, a very high proportion of North-Eastern clergy were the product of a St. John's education, and several secured stipend and conscience in 1690 by falling back upon their fellowships there. Of these, one example was Thomas Baker, the celebrated antiquary and historian of the College, who lived on in Cambridge, unmolested, until his death in 1740. For other Johnians, however, the cost of comparable allegiance was higher. The Rev. William Paul, arrested after the Battle of Preston in company with John Hall, a magistrate of Otterburn, has a firm place in the history of Northumberland during the 1715 Rising, although he held no benefice in the county. While both were unfortunate, as Church of England men, to share the fate of the Earl of Derwentwater, their speeches on the scaffold reflect beliefs which probably differed only in imprudence of expression from those more widely held by the many other North-Eastern sympathizers with the same cause. The message of both was identical, condensing convictions which were to sustain others in the nonjuring cause until the end of the century. "I die a Son, tho' a very unworthy one, of the Church of *England*: but would not have you think, that I am a Member of the Schismatic Church, whose Bishops set themselves up in Opposition to the Orthodox Fathers, who were unlawfully and invalidly deprived by the Prince of *Orange* . . . I die a dutiful and faithful Member of the Nonjuring Church, which has kept itself free from Rebellion and Schism, and has preserved and maintained true Orthodox Principles, both as to Church and State . . .".<sup>9</sup> [PAUL]

Although the fate of the Rising and the imposition of the Oath of Abjuration do not appear to have diminished Newcastle's general reputation for Tory sympathy and High Church practice,<sup>10</sup> they seem to have marked the end of the period in which scrupulous nonjurors felt able to remain in a position of ambiguous conformity within the public system. The emergence of the distinct nonjuring congregation can be dated with fair accuracy to late in 1716 or early in the following year, and its first minister, Abraham Yapp, an old member of St. John's College, was, in strict terms, a "non-abjurator", who had retained his preferment in the public Church until 10th October 1716, at which time he was precentor and minor-canon of Durham.<sup>11</sup> Whether he ever resided in Newcastle is not known: certainly, at the end of his life, he was living in Durham, where he is buried. The first years of the congregation were not free from persecution. A letter of General Wills to Secretary Stanhope, written from Newcastle on the evening of Sunday, 14th April 1717, reported measures taken to promote loyalty, including the raiding that morning of the nonjurors' meeting, held at the house of William Hanby, a prominent surgeon, after which Yapp and nineteen of his male congregation had been taken into custody, although "severall women . . . were let go".<sup>12</sup> None of those arrested on this occasion appear to have been men of first importance in the town, although it is clear that widespread local sympathy for their position posed considerable practical problems. A later letter from Wills expressed anxiety in the absence of clear instructions from the central government as to how to proceed with the case: ". . . The Parson (is) the most Notorious Jacobite in this Country (who), if speedy care is not taken to punish him will debauch most of the People". Moreover, Wills feared, ". . . the Magistrates of this Town being of the same Oppinion . . . they will all go unpunished, which will be an encouragement to that faction".<sup>13</sup> The

prisoners were delivered eventually into the custody of the mayor, and bound over to appear at the next assizes. Verdict and penalty are alike unknown, but the survival of the congregation would seem to imply that they were not severe.

The next ten years of the congregation's history are without documentation, although the fact that they begin with the Tory mayoralty of Sir William Blackett in 1718, and end with Newcastle being claimed to have the largest nonjuring community in England,<sup>14</sup> would seem to indicate that the repressive measures of 1717 were singularly lacking in success. It is unfortunate that more cannot be known about the extent of the tacit support given to the congregation by influential figures, for the slight hints that survive are fascinating—the fact, for instance, that William Hanby on at least one occasion<sup>15</sup> had access to the postal franking facilities of Nicholas Fenwick, Tory M.P. for Newcastle from 1727–47. Since other Tory politicians<sup>16</sup> were known to pursue their principles to a full and logical extent in Church as well as State, and supported nonjuring chaplains, the extension of similar protection and assistance in Newcastle must be seen as perfectly possible. It also seems likely that it was during the period 1718–28 that the congregation began to use the premises in the Iron Market—a continuation of the Groat Market beyond the east end of Denton Chare, opposite St. Nicholas' church—to which both Brand and Mackenzie allude.<sup>17</sup> Nothing is known of the precise structure of this chapel, but it seems likely that it would have resembled the semi-clandestine upper-room arrangement, with permanent plate and furnishings, favoured by the London nonjurors and by the Scottish episcopalians of the period. Of the kind of service performed, however, more evidence survives, and the experience of Newcastle provides in many ways a perfect view in microcosm of nonjuring liturgical experience. Given the importance of the nonjuring effort towards maintaining the liturgical emphases of Anglican scholarship in an age not otherwise noted for its concern with these themes, the Newcastle experiences are of very singular interest.

The imposition of a new Abjuration Oath in 1716 not only precipitated a substantial influx of conforming high-churchmen into the nonjuring fold, but also coincided with the eruption of a liturgical controversy which was to divide the nonjuring communion for the rest of its history. Until this time, nonjurors had officiated in their own assemblies in strict accordance with the Book of Common Prayer, regarding their differences with the Establishment as primarily a matter of dynastic allegiance. It was to be expected, however, that a body which contained many of the most advanced churchmen of the day should begin, sooner or later, to give expression to its instinctive sense of the discrepancies existing between the traditions of catholic Christianity, and the politic moderation of the established liturgy. It is peculiarly striking that this breach in the nonjuring communion, caused by the final rejection of an erastian liturgy, should occur in 1717, the year in which the Convocation of the Established Church was silenced—as it then seemed, for ever—for attempting to repudiate the blatant erastianism of Bishop Hoadly of Bangor's notorious Court-Sermon on *The Nature of the Kingdom of Christ*. Within the nonjuring communion, the great importance of 1717 was that it brought to a head the issue of the four Usages, held by the advanced party to be necessary if the English Communion-Office were to be restored to conformity with primitive practice. These were the Mixture, preferably public, of water with wine in the

Cup; the restoration of an Invocation for the descent of the Holy Ghost during the consecration of the elements; a Prayer of Oblation, to be said before the communion of the people to emphasize the sacrificial aspect of the eucharist; and the practice of Prayers for the Dead, effectively repudiated by the established liturgy. In 1718, accordingly, the "Usager" party published their own New Communion Office, while the "non-Usager" nonjurors continued in the use of the Prayer Book.

From their earliest days, exact uniformity of liturgical practice was unknown among North-Eastern nonjurors, although it would appear that early differences were not serious, and that an easy relationship was established between Yapp, whose attitude appears to have been that of a moderate Usager, and his fellow nonjurors to North and South. The former category was represented by a Scotsman, John Clarke, resident in Newcastle in 1725 with letters of orders from Bishop Fullerton, who "often officiated for Mr. Yapp, when he was in the Country".<sup>18</sup> The second group consisted of a nucleus of nonjuring clergy in County Durham, all, like Yapp, non-abjurors: Timothy Mawman, deprived Rector of Elton, Stockton, later a nonjuring Bishop, and Rowland Burdon of Castle Eden, deprived Curate of Eaglescliffe and first-generation representative of a family nonjuring tradition which was to survive to the end of the movement's history. In the matter of Usages, Mawman's practice appears to have corresponded with Yapp's own: and while Burdon's alignment appears to have been towards the "non-Usager" party of Bishop Nathaniel Spinckes, a letter of 1727 of Mawman to Thomas Brett; the leading "Usager" bishop, makes it clear that there was little in his practice to disturb North-Eastern harmony: "... [Mr. Burdon] ... has declared for ye Necessity of ye 4 Things, but thinks Three of them imply'd in ye X<sup>ch</sup> of England Liturgie, & is indulged by Mr. Spinckes in ye Use of ye Mixture ... In am told he uses a Private Invocation and Oblation in ye Consecration Prayer, and believes in ye H. Eucharist a Sacrifice for ye Living and ye Dead ...".<sup>19</sup> It is clear that Burdon was more inclined to compromise than were his nominal superiors, Bishops Doughty, Gandy and Spinckes, who had written from London in August 1726 to reproach Yapp for his "... unkind freedoms in altering the Liturgy of our Church in the most solemn office of religion".<sup>20</sup> There is no indication that this reproach had any effect, although it later became evident that it did reflect the preferences of a section of the congregation at Newcastle.

During 1728 Yapp fell ill, and by the early Autumn it was evident that there was no hope of his recovering. The question of a replacement became a matter of urgency, and it is at this stage that the affairs of the Newcastle congregation begin to feature frequently in the correspondence of Thomas Brett, Primus of the Usager Line until his death in 1743. This remarkable sequence of papers, now kept in the Bodleian Library, contains much unique information on nonjuring affairs in general, and is particularly valuable as a source for North-Eastern developments. From it emerges the fact that while Mawman was prepared to do duty in Newcastle until Yapp's replacement could be appointed, he was clearly reluctant to undertake the charge on a full-time basis.<sup>21</sup> The appointment required some delicacy: apart from the question of Usages, there was the problem of reconciling the congregation's desire for a "Person of Character" with the low order of the available stipend, which could be no more than £25-£30 p.a. while

Yapp lived, though expected to rise to over £40 after his death. It was generally agreed, however, that John Clarke, now dwelling in poverty with his family in London, would not have been a proper candidate, since apart from the familiar terms on which he had existed with regard to the Newcastle congregation, there was a hint of scandal attached to the circumstances in which he had left the conforming Church before going to Scotland to seek full Orders. Another nomination was, in fact, in mind, suggested by Mawman, and immediately concurred with by Thomas Wagstaffe, a Usager priest, later English chaplain to the Court in exile at Rome, to whom Mawman wrote first, and by Brett himself, to whom Wagstaffe communicated the idea. The only question in this case was whether the candidate would be prepared to accept.

John Griffin, born at Towcester, Northamptonshire, in 1681, and educated at Merton College in Oxford, had held the combined benefices of Sarsden with Churchill in North Oxfordshire for twelve years until his deprivation as a non-abjurer in 1716. Since then, he had continued to reside in the parish under the protection of the patron, Sir John Walter, formerly a clerk controller of the Green Cloth to Queen Anne, a Tory whose prospects at Court had ended with the advent of the Hanoverian dynasty. A capable scholar, Griffin had been consecrated a Bishop on the Usagers' side in 1722 by Jeremy Collier, then Primus, by Thomas Brett, and by the Scottish Bishop Archibald Campbell, and his signature—"Johannes Anglo-Britanniae Episcopus"—appears on documents sent on behalf of the "catholic remnant of the British churches" to Arsenius, Metropolitan of Thebais and the Ecclesiastical Synod of Russia in July 1724.<sup>22</sup> By 1727/8, however, his retirement at Sarsden had become so isolated as to prompt him to write to Brett to enquire whether it might be permissible, although in defiance of the rubric, to celebrate the eucharist without any other to communicate with him.<sup>23</sup> This request, though refused, gives a valuable insight into the workings, by no means unrepresentative, of an academic High Church mind when enabled by detachment from pastoral duty to concentrate on the logical development of theories of the excellence of primitive tradition. These Griffin derived immediately from the small but significant group of churchmen, by no means all nonjurors, who drew their inspiration from the eucharistic exposition of John Johnson, conforming Vicar of Cranbrook in Kent, whose treatise on *The Unbloody Sacrifice*, published in 1714, represents a belated apogee of Caroline sacramental thought, and points the way to the tradition which provided the link (too scarcely acknowledged) with the Tractarian High Churchmanship of the following century. Griffin's own position was set out in his anonymously-published contribution to the debate on the Usages; *The Common Christian instructed in some Necessary Points of Religion*, printed in London in 1722. This, essentially, is no more than a rehearsal of familiar Usager arguments, contending that "there can never be any true Union among Christians but upon Catholick Principles and in Catholick practices, that is, such wherein all Christians were originally united".<sup>24</sup> Like all others of Johnson's school, Griffin attached great significance to the so-called *Apostolical Constitutions*, or "Clementine" liturgy,<sup>25</sup> and his "veneration" for Johnson was openly declared.<sup>26</sup> In common with many conforming High Churchmen, he professed a decided preference for the 1549 first Prayer Book of King Edward VI over any subsequent Established liturgy, and declared

that he had "... cause ... to think that the *Holy Ghost* did not assist at the *Review* as he did at the *compiling* of the first Reform'd liturgy".<sup>27</sup> However, since his situation, suspected private income, and episcopal rank seemed to make him peculiarly eligible to take charge of a congregation now estimated to number 150, it was decided to invite him to consider the Newcastle appointment. "Verily" wrote Mawman to Brett, in October 1728, "... I believe ... he w<sup>d</sup> find it, upon trial, the most Eligible place in y<sup>e</sup> Kingdome".<sup>28</sup>

Griffin's initial response was discouraging. A semi-invalid, he was deterred by the prospect of a long removal and Northern winters. The rumours of his possessing private funds were, he claimed, without foundation, and four anxious weeks passed before his final acceptance was made known. Meanwhile, Mawman, left with the delicate task of managing the interregnum in Newcastle, had been greatly perplexed by the early indications that Griffin would decline, and had succeeded only with difficulty in reassuring the congregation that they were not to get Clarke after all. In an interesting aside<sup>29</sup> to Brett at this stage, he confessed his private hope that the substitute in such an event might be "Mr. Deacon", the ultra-Jacobite doyen of Manchester nonjurors, whose *Compleat Collection of Devotions*, published in 1734, represents the ultimate expression of nonjuring liturgical experiment. Griffin's eventual letter of acceptance to Brett, dated from Sarsden on 11th October 1728, is worth quoting at some length, since it reveals as much about the congregation that he was going to serve, as it does about the man who was to become the first Church of England bishop in Newcastle<sup>30</sup>:

"Dear Brother,

It is enough. I am determin'd, with the Help of God, to go to Newcastle. Assist me with your Prayers ...

... there are two visible Discouragements in the Way, the one relating to them, the other to my self. As to the former, by all I could observe from the Letters I have seen from thence, they are not cordially attach'd to us, but in their Hearts are on the other side of y<sup>e</sup> Question; their submitting to y<sup>e</sup> Usages being merely the Effect of personal Regard for Mr. Yapp. And if he, who had so much Interest in them, could hardly keep them together, what better success may I, who am a perfect Stranger to them, expect? And then, as to Myself, you know I am a very small Shell of Mortality, of mean Appearance, of a Temper inclined to Melancholy, & very little conversant in worldly affairs ...

... I intend to be there in a Month or thereabouts ... I think the Stage-Coach is the most expeditious, tho' most chargeable ...

J. ✠. Griffin."

Upon arriving in Newcastle at the end of November, many of his misgiving were allayed. The congregation—"the most numerous assembly I have yet seen", as he reported to Brett,<sup>31</sup> appeared united in sympathy with the Usages, and had rejected representations recently made by two leaders of the opposite faction, Henry Doughty of London, a non-Usager bishop since 1726, and George Smith of Burnhall, near Durham, the celebrated editor of the historical works of Bede, lately consecrated in 1728. Griffin was provided with "convenient lodgings in a very civil family" with William Hanby, the surgeon noticed earlier, and, shortly after the time of Yapp's death



in December 1728, he had succeeded in establishing a routine of worship which appeared to be generally acceptable. The congregation not having been used to frequent sermons, he adopted Yapp's practice of preaching no more than once in three weeks. Even more than in Yapp's time, worship centred around the celebration of the eucharist, which Griffin brought to weekly frequency, a move which was rewarded with the very satisfactory average of thirty communicants, and "y<sup>e</sup> Number is likely to Increase".<sup>32</sup> At this stage, it would appear that the manner of celebration was that used by Yapp, with an explicitly mixed chalice, and the omission of the words "*militant here in Earth*", in the Prayer for the Church. In this tradition, however, Oblation and Invocation were held to be implicit in the Prayer Book rite, and it is clear that, although accustomed to celebrate by the full 1718 rite, Griffin was content for the present to concede his preferences for the cause of unity. With the rumour of George Smith's advancement to the episcopate, Griffin anticipated "... some Disturbance ... from that Quarter", and justified his present liturgical moderation on the grounds that "... too much care cannot be used to keep y<sup>e</sup> People quietly together ...".<sup>33</sup>

1729, nevertheless, was to prove a year of vital liturgical activity, with implications that were to have national significance for the nonjuring cause. Griffin's contribution began quietly: weekly sermons during Lent accompanied the addition to the Newcastle liturgy at the beginning of March of the Clementine Prayer after the Words of Institution, a use which Mawman adopted at Stockton, after initial hesitation, at the beginning of April. The response of the Newcastle congregation does not appear to have been unfavourable, and the tone of incipient misgiving which enters the letters to Brett at this time is caused by Griffin's financial worries. Newcastle, he complained, was "... a very dear Place to live in ... I am not sensible that I am extravagant in any Thing, unless it be in throwing a little Money away more than needs in a few Books".<sup>34</sup> It appears to have been at this stage that he began to confirm a resolution to leave the North as soon as the congregation might be provided with their own priest, and of this there was prospect. On 2nd March 1729, William Fothergill, teacher of a private school in Newcastle, was admitted to the diaconate with a view to entering full Orders before Christmas.<sup>35</sup>

With the prospect of a settled succession, neither anxieties about money, nor growing misgivings about the principles and loyalty of his congregation, were able to divert Griffin's attention from his prime liturgical interests. Through July and August his main concern was with the role of confirmation, and the possibility of admitting newly-baptised children to the communion, according to practices which survived in the Greek Church. Might a priest administer chrism, and was this to be seen as a concomitant of Baptism, or of Confirmation? "I should be very willing to know how it was managed by y<sup>e</sup> Ancients ..." he wrote to Brett "... for I am so satisfied of y<sup>e</sup> Lawfullness of it, as that I dare not refuse it to any Infant whose Parents shall at any time desire it ...".<sup>36</sup> This question anticipated usages incorporated into Deacon's liturgy of 1734, but before it was resolved, Griffin's liturgical energies had been channelled into a scheme of wider importance. Relations between the two nonjuring parties had not been entirely devoid of charity since the breach of 1717, and on a visit with Mawman to Burnhall in July 1729 Griffin had encountered a civil reception from

the non-Usager bishop George Smith. On 2nd September, Smith visited Newcastle with John Blackburne, another non-Usager bishop, and in the course of a full day's discussion, they laid before Griffin the "Proposals for an Accommodation". This, a development of major importance, being "the first that had come from that Side of the Question",<sup>37</sup> was to provide the basis for the later attempted reunion, or concordat, between English nonjurors.

Initial prospects for a union were encouraging, and Griffin's letter to Brett, dispatched immediately after the meeting, was written in a tone of cautious optimism. The scheme as provisionally arranged was remarkable for the extent to which Griffin appeared ready to compromise on the four vexed points in the cause of union. In return for the granting of a mixed cup—which, if Rowland Burdon's case be considered as representative, many "non-Usager" clergy employed already—Griffin was prepared to agree, provisionally, to a scheme in which parties would be able to interpret the other points as they preferred. Prayer for the dead was to be implied in the mention in the Oblatory Prayer of "all thy whole Church", and the words "militant here in Earth" could accordingly, be allowed to stand. On Invocation, it was hoped that a "Synodical Declaration" "... rightly worded" might be sufficient to satisfy all parties that this was what the existing words of the Consecration-Prayer designed: "Hear us, O merciful Father ... and grant that we receiving ...". The question of Oblation remained the only major problem: the non-Usager party not being prepared to dispense with the Prayer-Book order, which obstructed notions of a material sacrifice in the Eucharist by placing this prayer *after* the communion. "I wish you c<sup>d</sup> contrive to manage the Point of y<sup>e</sup> Oblation to y<sup>e</sup> Satisfaction of both Sides", Griffin wrote to Brett: "... I think they offer'd to make a Declaration with regard to y<sup>e</sup> Oblation, in y<sup>e</sup> same Manner as to y<sup>e</sup> Benediction [i.e. Invocation] but I could not make any answer to that ...".<sup>38</sup>

The North-Eastern proposals immediately became the focal point of national nonjuring attention, Brett signalling his support for negotiations by a conciliatory exchange of letters with George Smith.<sup>39</sup> In mid-October, Griffin spent a week in discussion at Burnhall, and reported favourable progress. Although "not entirely satisfied with y<sup>e</sup> Oblation-Prayer being used in y<sup>e</sup> Post-Communion ..." his attitude remained co-operative: "If y<sup>e</sup> Sacrifice be but sufficiently provided for by y<sup>e</sup> present Argument, I shall be content".<sup>40</sup> By November, however, prospects had begun to assume a less encouraging aspect, as the dissidence inseparable from any scheme of church union began to manifest itself. Resistance was particularly strong among the Usagers, with Deacon, Wagstaffe and Laurence campaigning with influence and vehemence against any compromise. The arguments of Wagstaffe in particular, against the proposed agreement on Oblation and Invocation, severely unsettled the conscience of Griffin, who wrote unavailingly to Brett, who was pursuing negotiations with undiminished energy. The advancing conviction that "the Church of England no where teaches y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> sacramental elements are y<sup>e</sup> Body & Blood of Christ, but plainly teaches & confesses the contrary", agitated Griffin, who followed Johnson of Cranbrook in the belief that, in order to be worth anything, the Eucharist had to be a sacrifice: "... to represent before God, here on Earth, that Unbloody Offering which Christ y<sup>e</sup> High Priest represents unto him continually in heaven, and to be a Rite of

Prayer and Sacerdotal Intercession in y<sup>e</sup> Name of Christ, and in Union with and in Virtue of y<sup>e</sup> Intercession which y<sup>e</sup> great High Priest makes above". Increasingly, the only course appeared "to be left alone, and to pass y<sup>e</sup> Rest of my Days in retirement, where it shall please God to dispose of me".<sup>41</sup>

The conscientious reasons behind Griffin's decision to retire were corroborated by forceful private considerations. The approach of another Northern winter posed real danger to a frail constitution, while personal relations with Hanby, in whose house he had continued to lodge, were approaching breakdown. Fothergill's reluctance to enter priest's orders—understandable in view of the threat this might pose to his licence as a schoolmaster—brought affairs to a crisis. From the ensuing debate, Griffin emerges with no small credit. Importuned to stay, he felt unable to comply, and events were to testify only too soon to the strength of the argument of ill-health on which he based his decision. Instead, he proposed the return of John Clarke, but in this, as in all else, he encountered the resistance of a faction led by Hanby, whose alleged dislike of the Usages is hard to see as other than a pretext for the assertion of that self-importance not infrequently found amongst lay churchmen. Just as Griffin's episcopal rank had counted in his favour at his first coming into Newcastle, so the objections to Clarke appeared to terminate in that one of "his being a Poor Man".<sup>42</sup> Through the impasse of the ensuing winter, Griffin, who had removed his lodgings, continued his ministry, and it is clear that matters as a whole continued to go well; relations with all but the Hanby faction remaining eminently cordial. In spite of Griffin's own reservations, proposals for union continued to move towards conclusion, with Mawman assuming the leading North-Eastern conciliatory role, and in late January Griffin again spent a week at Burnhall, "an extraordinary Refreshment & Pleasure to me . . . Mr. G. Smith is a very kind friend & Neighbour".<sup>43</sup>

In ecclesiastical negotiation as elsewhere, it is ironic that measures designed for the best should often have the opposite effect. In essence, the chronicle of confusion which brought the Newcastle nonjurors to schism in 1730–31 was the product of genuine misunderstandings. In June 1730, Griffin visited Thomas Deacon in Manchester, where he communicated the young children of the family in accordance with "Catholic Practice". He never returned to Newcastle. Brett, and many in the congregation, upbraided him with desertion, a charge which the subsequent emergence in Newcastle of a distinct and uncompromising faction in Griffin's interest would appear to support. However, Griffin's own plea may not be invalid, that, sensing widespread enthusiasm for the Concordat—with which he could not in conscience agree—the arrival of news of its impending conclusion during his stay with Deacon, effectively obliged him to go forward to Oxfordshire, "judging that my retiring was y<sup>e</sup> only way to prevent Divisions at Newcastle".<sup>44</sup> Both sides of the case may contain just arguments. Following his ill-treatment by the Hanby faction, a miscalculation by Griffin of the strength of his support in Newcastle would be understandable. On the other hand, as far as can be ascertained, enthusiasm for the concordat was widespread. Problems, however, derived from the vagueness and variety of the popular conception of the nature of proposals for unity, and of the degree of support which they actually had from the leaders of either party. For this, fault must attach both to Smith—who in letters to

Brett of September 1730 was already seeking to abandon his concession of public mixture—and to Brett himself, whose isolation in rural Kent, and generally ambivalent attitude to the proposals, exasperated his fellow-clergy,<sup>45</sup> and bewildered the Newcastle laity, many of whom appear to have complied with Smith's takeover in Newcastle in Autumn 1730 purely on the assumption that Brett and he were now officially in communion.<sup>46</sup>

Once the true nature of the response to the concordat had been made known, Griffin's concern for the unity of the Newcastle congregation vanished, and in a letter of 14th September to George Brown, a leader of the Usager faction, he offered them a new liturgy, and the ministry of Richard Lowthian, an ex-St. John's, Cambridge, nonjuring priest, evidently known in Newcastle, who had been ordained by Bishop Spinckes in 1722.<sup>47</sup> For the present, however, the only ministry in Newcastle continued to be that of the Durham clergy, Smith, Burdon, Mawman and Rowe, who officiated in rotation according to Smith's interpretation of the concordat. Meanwhile, the separatists, led by Brown, and by George Bullman, a goldsmith in the Side and clearly a man of some substance, gathered strength, claiming that many "of Mr. Smith's Communion believed the Essentiality of the Contraverted Points" as well as they did themselves, and conformed only for present want of a "due & catholic" minister. By December, however, Lowthian's ministry had begun, and a note from Bullman to Roger Laurence, the ultra-usager Bishop, gives a valuable indication of total nonjuring numbers in Newcastle at this time: "... our Communicants, who refuse Mr. Smith, are Mr. Lowthian, Presbyter, & 30 persons more, men & women, with the children of 7 families of them, & they who follow Mr. Smith are Mr. Fothergill, a Deacon, & 25 men & women with y<sup>e</sup> children of 7 families of them". Bullman's note finishes, significantly, for rumours of Brett's own misgivings respecting the concordate were rife: "... some of w<sup>ch</sup> adults are expecting what your answer will be ...".<sup>48</sup>

Others beside the laity were perplexed at Brett's ambivalence, and in a letter to Fothergill, written during his temporary drawing-back from the concordat in January 1731, he increased confusion by sympathizing publicly with those who had joined Lowthian's faction.<sup>49</sup> Bullman was confident that this gesture would readily lead Fothergill and Mawman to reunite against Smith, and it is clear from the tone of a note of the latter's to Brett that the possibility was more than imaginary. In language of quite exceptional ferocity, Smith attacked Griffin and Lowthian, along with Campbell, Laurence, and Deacon, for being "... as dangerous Schismatics as y<sup>e</sup> Papist 'emselves ... contend[ing] as strenuously as any Papist of 'em all, y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Ch. of E. is not only not a part of y<sup>e</sup> Catholick Church, but y<sup>t</sup> she has had no Eucharist at all ever since y<sup>e</sup> Reformation: w<sup>ch</sup> under y<sup>e</sup> pretence of setting up *Primitive Christianity* is y<sup>e</sup> readiest & smoothest way to lead y<sup>t</sup> deluded admirers to y<sup>e</sup> embracing of y<sup>e</sup> Romish Religion ...".<sup>50</sup> Griffin and his followers would have disputed the conclusion vigorously, but not the representation. They had passed beyond considering themselves members of the Church of England.<sup>51</sup>

Through the winter of 1731 matters remained in division, though it is clear that Lowthian's followers were actually in a majority, resenting the way in which they were kept from "Mr. Griffin's Chapple" by the other faction, to whom Smith and Rowe

continued to minister. In May, Bullman recorded the receipt of "46 New Offices" sent by Griffin, according to which their congregation had "several times" communicated. The triumph of the Usagers in Newcastle was short lived, however. In June, Brett resumed formal negotiations in London with the nonjurors of the concordat, evoking a solemn Protest<sup>52</sup> from Griffin, who almost simultaneously renounced Lowthian as "an independent Presbyter" and advised Brown no longer to communicate with him, but to receive the ministry of John Clarke instead. This letter,<sup>53</sup> as usual signed "J. ✱ . Griffin" was to be one of its writer's last. The state of his health had been critical for some time, and on 18th June he had informed Brett that the "... Ill Humour, as you called y<sup>e</sup> Distemper which seized me in y<sup>e</sup> North, continues upon me still, & I doubt will not leave me till it brings me to my Grave".<sup>54</sup> In July 1731 a letter from the Oxford antiquary Thomas Hearne to Richard Rawlinson, the nonjuring Bishop, notes one of Griffin's last public ventures "... more than two months since, in Mr. Richard Clement's shop in Oxford. He was quite drowned with dropsy, was in a very weak condition, and I easily saw he could not conquer it, & he knew it full well himself".<sup>55</sup> He died at Sarsden on 8th July 1731, aged 51, and was buried in the chancel of the old church at Churchill, leaving the administration of his estate, slender apart from a bequest to Thomas Deacon of £150, to the conforming incumbent, Nathaniel Sturges, his successor in the benefices, and later a Canon of Lichfield. A drawing of Griffin's episcopal seal was taken after his death, and is preserved in the Bodleian Library.<sup>56</sup>

For North-Eastern affairs, his death was timely: with Brett once more committed to reconciliation, Griffin's stand for principle could lead only to oblivion. Smith's note on the fate of "that poor Gentleman"<sup>57</sup> reflects this recognition, but also conveys an appreciation of the integrity of a respected brother-bishop. It was a more gracious response than that of the crude anonymous hand, token of the powerful feelings that nonjuring issues were still capable of arousing in the 1730s, which sought to tamper with his epitaph. Originally, on the plain monumental slab which covers his tomb to this day, Griffin was designated "vir probus, pius et eruditus". The chisel of an unknown critic has deleted the first adjective, so that it now can be deciphered only with difficulty. However, even so hostile a hand leaves the remaining qualities unchallenged: perhaps not an unfair tribute to the principles, though obscure, of Newcastle's first Bishop.

With the death of John Griffin, and the repudiation of Richard Lowthian, the credit of the party hostile to the concordat received a great blow. Letters of Smith to Brett show that a continuing division remained a source of anxiety for some two years, with a Newcastle faction following George Bullman into the uncompromising fold of Roger Laurence, whose *Indispensable Obligation of Ministering Expressly the Great Necessaries of Public Worship in the Christian Church*, of 1732, had been "cry'd up as unanswerable".<sup>58</sup> It seems likely that this party gained some of their initial confidence from Thomas Brett, whose vacillating attitude towards the concordate was once again exasperating Smith.<sup>59</sup> The emergence of Brett into the field against Laurence, however, appears finally to have resolved the matter, and a note from Smith of June 1733 acknowledges thirty copies of this work. "Ten go to Scotland, 16 to Newcastle ... the other 4 are for Mr. Burdon, Mr. Mawman, Mr. Rowe and myself ...".<sup>60</sup> No more is

heard of Bullman or Lowthian, although the possibility that the latter may have continued a Usager ministry is implied by a curious advertisement in the *Newcastle Journal* for the week 7th–14th September 1754. The significantly-named Antony Fothergill, whose age, 68, could make him a brother of the nonjuring clergyman (who had married in 1714) testifies to the virtues of sea-water as a remedy for many disorders, and refers the sceptical to “the Rev. Mr. Lowthian of your Town” for verification. There is no record of a conforming clergyman of this name in Newcastle at this time, and the likelihood that this refers to the nonjuror is increased by the fact that Thomas Deacon, and many other clergy of the later Usager succession, also supported themselves by practising in medicine.

Ascendancy, however, clearly lay now with the party of William Fothergill, who had received priest’s Orders, though still a schoolmaster, from Bishop Smith on 25th July 1731.<sup>61</sup> By 1733 it would seem that Smith’s episcopal oversight was generally accepted, and his party appears to have been strengthened by association with that section of the Scotch Church which had responded favourably to the concordat—a “Mr. Hewet”, present in Newcastle in 1732 and 1735 was an episcopal clergyman who had been licenced to officiate in the diocese of Carlisle in 1709, and who, in old age, continued in receipt of Scottish episcopal charity until at least 1760.<sup>62</sup> In 1733 this association brought tangible advantage, with Fothergill and Rowe sharing with Scottish clergy in the distribution of £400 left by a Mrs. Pyncourt,<sup>63</sup> and not the least point of interest about this charity concerned the fact that its main administrator was later the subject of a warrant for treason.<sup>64</sup> The Newcastle congregation clearly escaped association with such odium, however, for in the same year, 1736, Visitation-returns compiled by Bishop Chandler of Durham reveal official knowledge of, but implicit acquiescence in, the presence in St. John’s parish, of “1 Nonjur. meeting” which “Mr. Fothergill teaches”.<sup>65</sup> The same survey calculates the size of the congregation—three families from St. John’s parish and five from St. Nicholas—but this is certainly an underestimate. It seems likely, nevertheless, that shrinking attendances—Hanby died in 1738, for example—combined with intuitive tact to preserve the congregation from official displeasure, and there is no evidence that they suffered even during the rising of 1745/6. From the tone of the official correspondence<sup>66</sup> it is clear that the zeal shown by the mayor, Matthew Ridley, a Whig, succeeded in convincing the government that there was no danger of a repetition of the disaffections of 1715, and it appears that nonjurors shared the fortunes of other Tories, whose Jacobite principles, being known to the authorities, were not generally deemed sufficiently dangerous to warrant persecution. One such figure, Sir John Hynde Cotton of Conington in Huntingdonshire, a Tory M.P. from 1708 to 1752, and incorrigible Jacobite,<sup>67</sup> provides an interesting illustration, both as correspondent and benefactor, of the continuing links between political and ecclesiastical Jacobitism. In 1741, he began payment of an annual benefaction of £40 to twelve nonjuring clergy; the North-East being represented first by Fothergill with £4, then Mawman £3–10s; Smith £3, and Rowe £2–10s.<sup>68</sup>

1741 was also a significant year for the nonjuring cause in that it witnessed the consecration of Robert Gordon as the last bishop of the regular succession by Brett,

Mawman and Smith. As Gordon was brother-in-law to George Smith—both had married daughters of Hilkiah Bedford, the eminent first-generation nonjuror—this consecration illustrated the increasing extent to which the nonjuring cause was becoming confined within the drawing-rooms of a handful of families. In Newcastle, however, there remained a viable congregation, involved in affairs of the moment. In a letter to Brett of August 1743, Smith expressed relief that the nonjuring community had taken no part in the widespread wave of evangelical sympathy which had greeted John Wesley's visits to the town.<sup>69</sup> Along with Thomas Dockwray, the conforming Lecturer of St. Nicholas', whose sermon, "*The Operations of the Holy Spirit Imperceptible*", appeared in print in May 1743, "at the Request of the Magistrates", Smith contributed to the published defences of orthodoxy, with "*Two Letters to Mr. Wesley*", which enjoyed a brief, but widespread, popularity in the Autumn of that year. It is tempting to speculate that the ability to make common cause with conforming clergy may have contributed to the immunity which the nonjuring congregation enjoyed during the Rising of 1745–6. One influential sympathiser may well have been the High Churchman, Dr. Thomas Sharp, Archdeacon of Northumberland since 1723, and son to an Archbishop of York whose recorded favour towards the prayer book of 1549 accorded with the preferences of Usager nonjurors. Another possible feature which may have preserved the North-Eastern nonjurors from the disaster which overtook the Scottish episcopalians after the defeat of 1746 may be due to the rupture which had existed between Smith and the Scottish bishops following an attempt by the former in 1743–4 to exercise his episcopal influence on behalf of a Mr. Fyfe, an episcopalian priest in Dundee, who had fallen under the censure of his superiors for opposing innovations in the liturgy. The issues of this case were not so much the old four Usages, as three further "Ancient" practices—Immersion in Baptism, Chrism in Confirmation, and Anointing the Sick, which had been enshrined since 1734 in the English office compiled for the use of his followers by Thomas Deacon. Smith had claimed a right to intervene as a catholic bishop, but had succeeded only in arousing Scottish territorial resentment.

It may be assumed, however, that Smith continued to provide episcopal oversight, and to administer confirmation, in Newcastle, until his death at the age of 64 in November 1756. Like other nonjurors, he was buried in the Established Church, and a monumental inscription at the East end of the South aisle of St. Oswald's Church in Durham pays tribute to his scholarly qualities, both as theologian and as antiquary. However, by the survival of Christian, his widow, who continued to live at Burnhall until her death in 1781, the national nonjuring remnant preserved a focal point in the North-East. Through her, it was provided with the crucial family link between her brother-in-law, Bishop Gordon, in London, and her son-in-law, Rowland Burdon, who had succeeded his father of the same name at Castle Eden in 1750. Through the Burdons came another vital link, by their friendship with the Bowdlers (of later "Family Shakespeare" fame), whose last nonjuring chaplain at Bath survived until 1798.<sup>70</sup> It may be noted in passing that nonjuring principles did not over-ride proprietorial instinct, when the Church at Castle-Eden came to be rebuilt in 1764, with Burdon as benefactor as well as patron. It may not, however, be without significance

that the first incumbent of the new edifice was a graduate of St. John's College, and that the second, who succeeded him in 1786, had been brought up in the parish of the flamboyant High Church eccentric, William Hanbury, of Langton in Leicestershire.

After the death of Smith, episcopal ministry continued to be supplied in Newcastle by Robert Gordon, on the occasion of visits to his sister-in-law at Burnhall. By this time it is clear that the Newcastle congregation, always remarkable, was now, as a public assembly, probably unique outside London, for the congregation which survived in Manchester until the end of the century had refused the concordat, was irregularly constituted, and was no longer in communion with the regular nonjuring remnant. Timothy Mawman survived at Stockton until 1763, but it would seem likely that his later years were spent in virtual isolation, since Griffin, more than thirty years before, had commented on there being there "a very poor people". In Newcastle, however, the death of William Fothergill in 1759 was not yet the signal for oblivion. Buried publicly as a "nonjuring minister" in St. Nicholas,<sup>71</sup> and eulogized (albeit for his schoolmastering) by the *Newcastle Courant*,<sup>72</sup> his position clearly had been one of some residual eminence. It is unfortunate that attempts to trace names of nonjuring laity in Newcastle have failed, for their influence must have been considerable in procuring a replacement, resident, clergyman at this late stage.

The letters of Orders of John Mansfield, Newcastle's last nonjuring clergyman, have failed to survive, leaving his origins a matter for speculation. It seems very likely, however, that he came not from Scotland, but from London, where a small group of nonjuring clergy continued to worship with Bishop Gordon. Although liturgical performance had ceased to be a critical issue, a note on Gordon's own manner of celebrating is of interest in that it gives a likely indication of the manner favoured by Mansfield at the time of his coming to Newcastle: "... in the Consecration-Prayer he made a long pause, after the words 'Hear us, O merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee', to introduce *mentally* the Invocation ... then, after the Consecration, before the Distribution, he took in the Collect that stands in the established Liturgy as the 2d. post-communion collect ... [i.e. Oblation] ... I found the Mixture had been used, & made in the Vestry too, in a Way that few could be ignorant of ...".<sup>73</sup> A later note by Mansfield, however, makes it clear that at least one of these uses was not calculated to gain the sympathy of the Newcastle congregation, and that he had been forced to abandon an explicit prayer of oblation, finding that it "gave Disgust".<sup>74</sup> The attitude of the congregation at this point would seem to indicate that earlier divisions had been concluded with a resounding triumph for the principles of Bishop Smith.

By the early years of the reign of George III the position of the nonjuring cause appeared truly desperate. Several letters survive, written to Bishop Alexander in Scotland by William Smith, chaplain to the Bowdlers at Bath, and later minister in London, which speak of a church "irretrievably lost ... many that have been all their days nourished in her bosom, now basely turn their backs upon her, the rising generation despise her, her clergy are dropping off without Successors, her learned men are dying ...".<sup>75</sup> In Newcastle, however, the decline was less catastrophic, a fact owing, in part at least, to the availability of Scottish episcopal assistance. On 11th July 1764, one of the first duties of the newly-consecrated Bishop Robert Forbes, of Ross and



Caitness, was, as he records in his *Journal*, performed in England: "At Newcastle upon Tyne I confirmed 20 persons at the desire of Bishop Gordon of London, according to a holograph list subscribed by the Rev. Mr. John Mansfield, their pastor".<sup>76</sup> On 24th September of the same year, Forbes halted overnight at Newcastle, and spent the evening with Mansfield, while on a journey to London to make Gordon's personal acquaintance.<sup>77</sup> The following day found the party at Burnhall, whence Forbes was taken to Durham to see the Cathedral, where he commented on the "rich vestments" still in use, and called on an un-named "nonjurant clergyman"—presumably Burdon—but found him not at home.<sup>78</sup> The friendship subsequently established between Gordon and Forbes was renewed during August 1769, when they contrived a meeting at Moffat—Gordon riding up from Burnhall where he was spending the summer with his sister-in-law. During this visit, Gordon was certainly in Newcastle,<sup>79</sup> and it is likely that he was so again during a later visit to Burnhall from August to October 1773, but whether he confirmed on these occasions is not known. He remained on terms of regular correspondence with Forbes until the latter's death in 1775, and in one of the last letters that they exchanged, the nature of Newcastle as a nonjuring outpost is once again conveyed in the course of an account of the movements of the dowager Countess of Galloway, whose nonjuring sympathy appears to have owed more to female idiosyncrasy than to historic scruple: "Yesterday, after dinner, the Countess set out from Edinburgh to Bath, intending, *Deo volente*, to be against Sunday with Mr. Mansfield of Newcastle, and at Bath before Easter . . .".<sup>80</sup> A note from Gordon, written the following month, also provides a North-Eastern dimension to a difficulty which must have been general among nonjurors by this stage, mentioning that ". . . Tommy Bowdler's friend, and our nephew, Rowley Burdon, is in town from Oxford to keep the festival, as he did at Christmass . . .".<sup>81</sup>

By the death of Robert Gordon in 1779, the English nonjurors of the regular succession were deprived of their last Bishop. Notwithstanding careful provision for the welfare of the "faithful remnant" in the form of Gordon's bequests to the clergy—including £20 p.a. to John Mansfield<sup>82</sup>—and agreement by the Scottish bishops to provide pastoral protection, the end was now imminent. Most importantly for the North East, Gordon's death marked the virtual end of the family ties which had descended from George Smith. In December 1782 the death of William Smith, the last member of Gordon's London congregation in priest's orders, precipitated a final crisis, leaving a congregation which had been accustomed to muster over two dozen communicants a week, under not insignificant lay patronage, without a regular ministry. Throughout 1783, and into 1784, the vacancy persisted, with the anticipated Scottish succession failing to materialize. As the last priest in regular English nonjuring orders, Mansfield in Newcastle was subject to considerable pressure, as the Scottish Church, now coming under the guidance of Bishop Skinner, began to display an increasing reluctance to allow historic attachment to principle to jeopardize the practical prospect of seeking relief from its own penal laws. Moreover, the Jacobitism of the London congregation was unyielding, and aroused the sympathy of a small section only of the Church North of the Border. Instead, efforts were made to procure an English supply, by urging Mansfield to seek reunion with the irregular nonjurors of

Deacon's line in Manchester, who were at this time under the direction of Bishops Price and Cartwright. However, because neither of these could claim canonical consecration, and because the necessary concessions to the Manchester liturgy would be unacceptable to the congregations both in Newcastle and in London, Mansfield rejected the proposal outright.<sup>83</sup> Early in 1784, Mansfield visited London "... to give ye faithful Remnant an opportunity of receiving ye holy Communion, w<sup>ch</sup> they have been so long deprived of, and to prevent y<sup>e</sup> Chapel from being given up ...".<sup>84</sup> On his return, he wrote to Bishop Petrie, clearly still in hope that a Scottish priest would soon be provided, and expressing a desire that "... ye Clergyman y<sup>t</sup> came sd. take Newcastle in his way, yt. I might give him some instructions, as he may be (new) to ye affairs of our Church: he might go hence by Sea to London". A note of foreboding is, however, evident, and Mansfield noted the displeasure current in London at rumours that the Scottish Church, through "ye shameful conduct of Bp. Skinner", was contemplating reconciliation with the "public" Church in England.<sup>85</sup>

By the end of the year all ambiguity had been removed, and it seems that the forsaken position in which the nonjuring remnant found itself was directly owing to the negotiations between the Scottish Church and the Church of England which bore fruit when Samuel Seabury received consecration for his pioneer service in the American Church at the hands of Scottish bishops on 14th November 1784. This practical expression of belief in the validity of Scottish episcopacy revived prospects for the removal of legal disabilities at a near date, and associations with the English nonjuring cause were dropped accordingly. Faced with the prospect of inevitable and imminent extinction for one or other of the two congregations now left to his sole charge, Mansfield concluded that he had no choice but to minister in London, whence he removed, and continued to officiate until at least 1789, forsaken entirely by the American<sup>86</sup> and Scottish<sup>87</sup> heirs to the nonjuring tradition. His eventual fate is not recorded.

With Mansfield's departure, late in 1784, the nonjuring cause in Newcastle came to a virtual end. The Iron Market chapel was closed, and its furnishings disposed of. The plate, consisting of "... a sizeable Paten, a large Chalice and a Bason ..." was offered by Mansfield to the Scottish Church, and appears to have passed initially to the episcopalian congregation at Stirling, under Rev. Hugh James Cheyne, a known sympathiser with the English nonjurors, and then, on his death, into the care of John Allen of Kynford's Close. Of their later whereabouts, and possible survival today, enquiry has yielded no clue, nor is it recorded whether Mansfield's offer was taken up of "... an Altar-Piece and rails about the Communion-Table, which may be sent by sea to Aberdeen, if any Chapel sd. want them".<sup>88</sup> Without a minister, continuation was impossible, and by the time Brand's *History* was published in 1789, it was recorded that "... the Sect is said to be nearly extinct, at present, in Newcastle".<sup>89</sup> The "nearly" is intriguing—it may refer to residual Burdon interest in London, or, more likely, to practices such as those attested elsewhere: attendance on the public church with a prayer-book printed before the Revolution, or the ostentatious slamming of the book during reading of State Prayers—but this is speculation.

The end may be thought timely. For Newcastle, as for elsewhere, the final defeat of

the nonjuring cause was marked on 30th January 1788, by the death in Rome of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the last viable representative of his family's claims. In May 1789 the Scottish Church began to acknowledge King George in its public liturgy, and it is likely that many of the English remnant did likewise at the same time, while others who did not took their principles in obscurity to the grave. In various stages, however, the cause of indefeasible hereditary succession as a vital tenet of a true Church of England had been championed in Newcastle for a century. Its advocates deserve commemoration, although their position was obscure, and even bizarre, since they epitomized one aspect of that distinctive loyalty which gives the city its motto. It is, after all, fitting that *Fortiter defendit triumphans* should also be, in some sense, *semper fidelis*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Kettlewell* (Cited in Memorials of Alderman Ambrose Barnes, S.S. vol. 50, p. 433).

<sup>2</sup> Overton, J. H., *History of the Nonjurors* (1902), Appendix (pp. 467-96).

<sup>3</sup> Patten, *A History of the Late Rebellion ...* (1717), pp. 32-3.

<sup>4</sup> Diary of Rev. John Thomlinson (S.S. vol. 118, p. 146). For the testimony to Blackett's trustworthiness cf. Cal. S.P. (Domestic), Geo. I (35) 74/41.

<sup>5</sup> Cotesworth mss. cited in Hughes, E., *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century* (1952).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Welford, R., *Men of Mark ...* (vol. iii, sub "March").

<sup>8</sup> E.g. the Rectory of Rose Ash, Devon. Lewis Southcombe, senior, continued undisturbed in possession until his death in 1732, although recanting from his original subscription to the Oath of Allegiance, and declining to use any specific names in the State Prayers. (Letter of Lewis Southcombe, junior, to Thomas Brett, 1740; Bodl. ms. Eng. Th. c. 35, ff. 56-60.)

<sup>9</sup> Speech of William Paul, cited in *A True Copy of the Papers delivered to the Sheriffs of London by William Paul, a Clergyman, and John Hall, Esq., late Justice of Peace in Northumberland* (1716).

<sup>10</sup> For ritual survivals cf. Bourne: *History of Newcastle* (1736): e.g. the sanctuary-arrangements at All Saints' in 1736, including (most unusually at that time) a credence-table (pp. 90-91).

From Bourne's account it is also clear that Newcastle preserved an exceptionally high sacramental consciousness: the four churches administering a *weekly* sacrament by agreed monthly

rotation; this at a time when the average frequency of celebration was not above four or five times *per year*. (*Ibid.*, p. 28—St. John's; p. 47—St. Andrew's; p. 77—St. Nicholas'; p. 108—All Saints'.)

<sup>11</sup> List of nonjuring "recantations" in Bodl. ms. Eng. Th. c. 33, f. 153.

<sup>12</sup> Cal. S.P. (Domestic), George I 35/8/112.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 119 (21st April 1717).

<sup>14</sup> Broxap, H., *The Later Nonjurors* (Manchester 1924), p. 109.

<sup>15</sup> Bodl. ms. Eng. Th. c. 31, f. 83 (Hanby to Brett, Newcastle, 16th October 1730).

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Sir John Hynde Cotton.

<sup>17</sup> Brand, J., *History of Newcastle* (1789), vol. I, pp. 235-6 n. Mackenzie, E., *Descriptive and Historical Account of Newcastle* (1827) (p. 175, p. 408 n.)

<sup>18</sup> Letter of Thomas Wagstaffe to Thomas Brett, 23rd May 1728 (Bodl. ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, f. 196).

<sup>19</sup> Mawman to Brett, Norton, 12th May 1727 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, f. 5).

<sup>20</sup> Noted by Broxap, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>21</sup> Mawman to Brett, Newcastle, 24th September 1728 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, f. 247).

<sup>22</sup> These documents are reproduced by Thomas Lathbury in his *History of the Nonjurors* (1845) pp. 351-3.

<sup>23</sup> Griffin to Brett, Sarsden, 9th January 1727/8 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, f. 127).

<sup>24</sup> Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47-9.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>28</sup> Mawman to Brett, 16th October 1728 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, f. 261).

- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> Griffin to Brett, Sarsden, 11th October 1728 (*ibid.*, ff. 253–4).
- <sup>31</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 23rd November 1728 (*ibid.*, ff. 291–2).
- <sup>32</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 27th January 1728/9 (*ibid.*, f. 315).
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 8th March 1728/9 (*ibid.*, ff. 327–8).
- <sup>35</sup> List of nonjuring ordinations in Bodl. ms. Rawlinson D. 835 (f. 7).
- <sup>36</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 5th July 1729 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 30, ff. 359–60).
- <sup>37</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 3rd September 1729 (*ibid.*, ff. 379–81).
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> Cf. Smith to Brett, Burnhall, 21st October 1729 (*ibid.*, f. 413).
- <sup>40</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 17th October 1729 (*ibid.*, f. 409).
- <sup>41</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 4th November 1729 (*ibid.*, f. 429).
- <sup>42</sup> Griffin to Brett, Newcastle, 24th January 1730 (*ibid.*, f. 479).
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 480.
- <sup>44</sup> Griffin to George Brown, Sarsden, 14th September 1730 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 31, f. 81).
- <sup>45</sup> See, for example, Roger Laurence to Brett, 5th January 1730/1 (*ibid.*, f. 123) and Archibald Campbell to Brett, 13th March 1730/1 (*ibid.*, f. 151).
- <sup>46</sup> George Bullman to Roger Laurence, Newcastle, n.d. (Nov./Dec. 1730) *ibid.*, f. 117.
- <sup>47</sup> Griffin to Brown, Sarsden, 14th September 1730 (*ibid.*, f. 82).
- <sup>48</sup> Bullman to Laurence (*ibid.*, f. 118).
- <sup>49</sup> As Fothergill complains. Fothergill to Brett, Newcastle, 8th January 1730/1 (*ibid.*, f. 131).
- <sup>50</sup> Smith to Brett, Burnhall, 31st January 1730/1 (*ibid.*, f. 137).
- <sup>51</sup> As Griffin does not deny, e.g. in his letter to George Brown, *supra* (*ibid.*, f. 81).
- <sup>52</sup> Griffin to Brett, Sarsden, 30th June 1731 (*ibid.*, f. 197).
- <sup>53</sup> Griffin to Brown, Sarsden, 19th June 1731 (*ibid.*, f. 301).
- <sup>54</sup> Griffin to Brett, Sarsden, 18th June 1731 (*ibid.*, f. 199).
- <sup>55</sup> Hearne to Rawlinson, 22nd July 1731, in *Collections* O.H.S. LXVII p. 439.
- <sup>56</sup> Bodl. ms. Rawlinson D. 835 (f. 15). The seal depicts a standing Cross, with the text “ὁ ἔμμος ἐρωσ ἐσταυρωται”.
- <sup>57</sup> Smith to Brett, Burnhall, 9th September 1731 (ms. Eng. Th. c. 31, f. 251).
- <sup>58</sup> Smith to Brett, 15th October 1732 (*ibid.*, c. 32, f. 92).
- <sup>59</sup> E.g. Smith to Brett, 20th April 1732 (*ibid.*, ff. 21–2).
- <sup>60</sup> Smith to Brett, 16th June 1733 (*ibid.*, f. 221).
- <sup>61</sup> Bodl. ms. Rawlinson D. 835 (f. 7).
- <sup>62</sup> *Register of the Administration of the Charitable Contributions for the Indigent Episcopal Clergy and their Widows* (National Library of Scotland, Advocates’ MSS. 16.2.1).
- <sup>63</sup> John Creyke to Bishop of Edinburgh, 27th September 1734 (Scottish Episcopal Church Theological College, Edinburgh, Bishops’ Chest, items nos. 373–7); also Smith to Brett (Bodl. ms. Eng. Th. c. 32, f. 241).
- <sup>64</sup> Warrant issued by Holles, Duke of Newcastle, 23rd December 1736.
- <sup>65</sup> Copy in the Northumberland County Record Office (NRO 860).
- <sup>66</sup> Cf. Cal. S.P. (Domestic) George II, 36, vols. 68, 69, 70 *passim*.
- <sup>67</sup> For further on Cotton, cf. D. N. B. and Jones, G. H., *The Main Stream of Jacobitism* (1954), *passim*.
- <sup>68</sup> Robert Gordon to Brett, London, 8th September 1741 (Ms. Eng. Th. c. 35, f. 173).
- <sup>69</sup> Smith to Brett, 19th August 1743 (*ibid.*, f. 289).
- <sup>70</sup> C.f. *Gentleman’s Magazine* 1798, p. 728. “3rd August died the Rev. Mr. Redford, many years a dissenting minister at Bath”.
- <sup>71</sup> St. Nicholas’, Newcastle, Register of Burials (NRO: EP 86/5). 24th August 1759: “William Fotheringall (sic) Nonjuring Minister”.
- <sup>72</sup> *Newcastle Courant*: Saturday 25th August 1759 “The same Day ... (i.e. Wednesday 22nd August) ... died, in an advanced Age, Mr. William Fothergill: he has resided here many Years, & taught the Latin tongue with great Reputation; was universally respected, and was the sincere Friend and honest Man ...”.
- <sup>73</sup> Episcopal Theological College, Edinburgh: Correspondence of Bishop Petrie (P. 476). H. J. Cheyne, Stirling, to Petrie, 24th June 1783.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* (P. 502). Mansfield to James Browne of Montrose (vehemently Jacobite Scots Episcopalian priest) citing letter of 12th December 1783.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* Papers of Bishop Alexander (A. 1296). William Smith, Bath, to Alexander, 21st February 1764.

<sup>76</sup> *Journal of Bishop Robert Forbes* (ed. Craven, J.B.) 2nd edn., London 1923.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Lyon in Mourning* (S.H.S. 1st Series, 1895, iii, p. 246-7). Gordon to Forbes, Burnhall, 15th August 1769.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355. Forbes to Gordon, 21st March 1775.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, Gordon to Forbes, 18th April 1775.

<sup>82</sup> In Broxap (*op. cit.*), p. 279: Will of Bishop Gordon, dated 14th July 1779.

<sup>83</sup> Petrie mss. (P. 502). Brown to Petrie, 13th April 1784.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* (P. 484). Mansfield to Petrie, Newcastle, 9th February 1784.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* (P. 624). Mansfield to Petrie, Theobald's Road, London, 7th April 1786. A bitter attack of Seabury, who "... did not communicate with our

small Remnant ... but makes his Court to y<sup>e</sup> Publick Church ...".

<sup>87</sup> For a total disavowal of Mansfield and Redford by the Scottish synod cf. Archibald, J., *The Historic Episcopate in the Columban Church and in the Diocese of Moray* [Edinburgh, 1893] p. 226:

Letter, 1st October 1789, of Bishop Skinner, then Primus, to Revd. Mr. Jolly, Fraserburgh:

"... I can no more look upon Mansfield and Redford with their few adherents as the Church of England, then I do upon Bishop Rose and Mr. Brown with their part as the Church of Scotland ...".

(A Scottish Synod at Aberdeen had resolved to give allegiance to the Hanoverian line on 24th August 1788, and to intimate the same to Mansfield and Redford.)

<sup>88</sup> Petrie mss. (P. 539). Mansfield to Petrie, Newcastle, 27th September 1784.

<sup>89</sup> Brand, pp. 235-6 n.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Cal. S.P.—Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers.

Bodl.—Bodleian Library.

N.R.O.—Northumberland County Record Office.

O.H.S.—Oxford Historical Society publications.

S.S.—Surtees Society publications.

S.H.S.—Scottish Historical Society publications.

