

Chapter 1
The Sixty Years of Foundation, 1615-1676

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English Benedictine community life in Paris began in 1615. In that year a group of six English monks from the monastery of St Laurence at Dieulouard in Lorraine arrived in Paris to erect a Benedictine house of studies under the earthly patronage of Princess Marie de Lorraine, Abbess of the ancient Royal Abbey of Chelles.¹ The six monks to form the community were Clement Reyner, Nicholas Curre, George Gaire, Alban Roe and Placid Gascoigne and Dunstan Pettinger.² Their first superior was Augustine Bradshaw, the man who had established St Gregory's in Douai (now Downside) and St Laurence's in Dieulouard (now Ampleforth).³ He was installed on 25 June 1615, perhaps significantly the feast of St Adelbert, one of the Anglo-Saxon monks included in the Roman martyrology. This date can be taken as the foundation of the community. It was to take another sixty years for the community to obtain suitable buildings and anything like a secure financial basis. As Dom Stephen Marron wrote (with dates inserted by the present author):

It was a very long time before they were securely established [1632], ten years before they were able to purchase any property of their own in Paris [1642], nearly another ten years before they obtained royal letters of establishment [1650] and full recognition from ecclesiastical authorities as a monastery [1656], and still another twenty years after that before they were able to lay the foundations of their church and monastery [1674].⁴

The first community (1615)

In 1600 John Bradshaw was the first Englishman to make his profession as a Benedictine monk of the Spanish congregation, in the monastery of St Martin in Compostella. He took the monastic name Augustine, after Augustine of Canterbury, the head of the little group of monks who had landed in Kent in 597 to bring Christianity to the English. Bradshaw had studied at the English College in Valladolid but had left because of the disturbances there between factions opposing and supporting the Jesuit governors of the college, and he joined the Benedictines.⁵ His example was followed by many more students in the English Colleges in Spain. A problem with this was that as students of the English Colleges the young men had

sworn to go on the English Mission if sent, while the Spanish Benedictines had a special vow of perpetual enclosure, in accordance with the sixteenth-century reforms of monastic life towards a stricter interpretation of the Benedictine vow of stability. To overcome this problem, the Spanish congregation in 1602 obtained faculties for the English Mission from Rome. Augustine Bradshaw became head of the Anglo-Spanish Benedictine Mission as vicar general over the English Benedictines of the Spanish congregation.

As early as 1588 English students in Rome had begun to enter Italian monasteries, and in 1602 they too were granted faculties for the Mission, under the auspices of the Cassinese congregation. The English Benedictines coming from Spain and Italy added a third force to the English Mission, alongside the secular clergy and the Jesuits, at a critical time of conflict within English Catholicism. The Seminaries and the Society of Jesus were products of the sixteenth century, and Jesuit and Seminary priests were very conscious of their innovative, reformed characteristics. The English Benedictine congregation (EBC) formed at the beginning of the seventeenth century saw itself as the continuation of a much older institutional order, going back to the cathedral priories of the Middle Ages and even to the monastic missionaries that St Gregory the Great had sent to evangelise the English. Despite their Continental seminary training, some English secular priests were beginning to oppose the view, particularly strong among the Jesuits, that there had been a complete break with the past and that England was henceforth simply a mission field. Instead they began to lay claim to continuity with the pre-Reformation diocesan clergy and to reject a missionary church structure, appealing to Rome when reprimanded and demanding that somebody with ordinary episcopal jurisdiction be placed over the English Mission. The claim of the Benedictines to continuity with pre-Reformation England initially placed them on the side of these 'Appellants', but was also to lead to disputes with the secular clergy when a Vicar Apostolic with episcopal powers was finally appointed. He might claim authority over upstart Jesuits, but 'the order of S. Bennet gave the first Bishop and first English Bishop unto our nation before ever it had any [...] and for many ages after, scarce had England any bishop, that was not a Benedictin'.⁶

The unique status of Benedictine continuity was emphasised by the coming into existence of a third group of English Benedictines, when the head of the Cassinese Mission in England had some of his monks "aggregated" to the pre-Reformation English Benedictine congregation by the aged Sigebert Buckley (died 1610). This gave an emotional, and arguably legal, claim to continuity not only with the monasticism of pre-Reformation

England, but with the very beginnings of English Christianity: Buckley had been a monk of Westminster Abbey, a foundation already over three hundred years old even when Edward the Confessor had rebuilt its church. Although all the monasteries had been suppressed by Henry VIII, Westminster had been refounded by Queen Mary, with as its abbot John Feckenham, originally a monk of Evesham (founded by St Egwin in the eighth century).⁷ A few of the monks of refounded Westminster were Italians of the Cassinese congregation, brought to England by Cardinal Pole to help re-establish monastic life.⁸ Elizabeth had again disbanded the community after her accession, and for refusing to subscribe to her Act of Supremacy John Feckenham spent the rest of his life either in prison or under house arrest, dying in Wisbech Castle in 1585. Sigebert Buckley himself spent forty years in prison, was released at the accession of James I, and was then reincarcerated as part of the general clamp-down on Catholicism after the Gunpowder Plot. It was in the Gatehouse prison, on 21 November 1607, that he imparted to two newly professed monks of the Cassinese congregation whatever rights and privileges he could command as a survivor of the Abbey of Westminster suppressed almost fifty years before. In 1612 Pope Paul V ratified the revival of the old English congregation. When, in 1617, agreement was reached as to how the different groups were to be united as the EBC, this continuity was claimed by the congregation as a whole, and was not to be without its specific importance for the English Benedictine house in Paris.

The appointment of Augustine Bradshaw as superior on 25 June 1615 inaugurated the life of a religious community which continued in Paris until the time of the French Revolution, and which by the accession of James II in 1685 had seen at least ninety monks residing in the monastery for varying lengths of time. The initial impetus to the foundation came from Marie de Lorraine. On the advice of Père Bénard, prior of the College of Cluny, she had in 1611 requested the superior of Dieulouard to send her an English monk to be Head Chaplain at Chelles. The monk sent was Francis Walgrave, and in the course of 1612 he was joined by George Brown (died 1618) and Augustine Bradshaw.⁹ In 1614 the nuns of Chelles, where a white habit had been introduced in 1513, were reclothed in the traditional black of the Benedictines.¹⁰ Not all the English Benedictines were impressed by the development: in 1614 the growing involvement of monks of Dieulouard with the guidance of French nuns led Rudesind Barlow to write to his Spanish superiors from Douai that

It does not seem in accord with our vocation and aim to spend time in serving nuns and singing their masses and suchlike occupations [...] There is no man

of quality of our nation who would run the risk of losing the spiritual advantages of the mission to become a vicar of nuns. [...] if a nun chooses to be impertinent and complain of her abbess or prioress to the Queen and the *parlement* of France, or if she has a mind to be disobedient, she may; for the *parlement* often favours them, since in France the rulers like to have a hand in all things spiritual.¹¹

Despite Barlow's conviction that no man of quality would be a chaplain to nuns, Princess Marie was so impressed with her English chaplains that in 1614 she proposed that Dieulouard send a number of monks to set up a house of studies in Paris which she would maintain. Thus were the six founding members of the monastery despatched to Paris in 1615. For the first three or four years of the community's existence the abbess paid about £60 yearly for the rent of their house and another £100 for the maintenance of their persons.¹² The academic purpose of the initial establishment is shown in its composition. Of the six monks sent, Clement Reyner, Doctor of Divinity, had already been a lecturer at the University of Douai, Dunstan Pettinger was still studying for ordination, and Placid Gascoigne, newly professed and sixteen years old, was to begin his university studies in Paris. Alban Roe had initially studied in Cambridge, where he had become a Catholic while a student, and had been expelled from the English College in Douai as unfit in January 1611, so it is possible there were gaps in his education to be made up.¹³ Of George Gaire and of Nicholas Curre almost nothing is known, but both were presumably intended to study in Paris in preparation for missionary labours. In 1643 the prior wrote that 'from the beginning of our frequenting the schools of this University of Paris, our Religious have gone to the Sorbon'.¹⁴

Their first priority, however, would have been to establish a monastic routine. The Annals record the customs of the house as follows: Matins and Lauds were at four in the morning, Mass for the community was at eleven, followed by dinner and recreation until two o'clock. Eating in the morning was allowed only on Christmas Day, Shrove Monday and Tuesday, and Midlent Sunday, and in recreation weeks (of which there were three in the year, to be designated by the superior). The rest of the time, leave could be granted in the case of some compelling necessity. Presidential visitations in the 1670s did suggest that, by then at least, the prior was indecently lax in his interpretation of this stipulation.¹⁵ After dinner the community sang Vespers, which was followed immediately by a period of meditation until three.¹⁶ According to the custom of the time, the 'little hours' Prime, Terce, Sext and None were not said separately but immediately following on from Lauds, or in the case of None

(which Leander Jones located ‘post prandium’) perhaps together with Vespers.¹⁷ Praying the psalms together, particularly chanting them in choir at the canonical hours, is the distinctive feature of monastic life. Even so, later evidence suggests that while some aspiring monks had gone abroad specifically to live a conventual life, others simply saw the monastery as one path to missionary priesthood, to be chosen above the Seminaries or the Jesuits on criteria of convenience of access or maintenance.¹⁸ As Bennet Weldon put it in the early eighteenth century, not without implicit criticism of alternative attitudes among his contemporaries, the Divine Office is

the peculiar distinctive Mark of the Benedictine Rule, for where as the other Orders of the Church of God have their distinctive characters or Marks which render them venerable, some one thing, some another, our Excellency was always retirement occupied in the Solemnity & Majesty of the daily Worship of God as terrestrial Angels.¹⁹

Accordingly, the Constitutions of the EBC were particularly detailed about how Divine Office was to be said or sung.²⁰ In a house with between four and ten monks of the choir, Matins was said first thing in the morning, Office was to be said in choir and daily Mass was to be ‘cantu Gregoriano’. Once the numbers passed ten, Matins was to be at or after midnight and a more complex set of regulations came into effect concerning what parts of the office were to be sung ‘tono plano’ and what ‘tono vario’. The emphasis was very much on intelligible enunciation: any striving for effect, unnatural protraction of syllables or ‘effeminate levity’ was prohibited and the voice was to be high, sonorous and even. Some musical adornment was permitted at appropriate moments during Mass, at Vespers and for the Antiphon of Our Lady after Compline. The feasts kept with particular solemnity were Christmas Day, the Easter Triduum, Easter Day, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, the Assumption and the feasts of St Benedict, All Saints of the Benedictine Order (13 November), the patron of the house (in Paris to be St Edmund), and the patrons of the congregation: Augustine of Canterbury, Benedict Biscop, Gregory the Great and the Venerable Bede. On these days the whole office was to be sung; ‘on other days lesser portions varying according to the grade of the day’.²¹ Although it was not until 1624 that St Edmund’s had as many as ten professed choir monks in residence, the president wrote to the community on 8 July 1620 instructing that the more formal arrangements be adopted, perhaps thinking that the number of novices made up for the shortage of professed monks.²² He promised that if there were insufficient monks to keep up this full observance, he would send more.

Besides regulating Divine Office, the Constitutions also set times for mental prayer: half an hour immediately before or after Prime, and a quarter of an hour after Matins and Compline. The existing period of meditation after Vespers may have been supplemented or replaced by these periods when the Constitutions came into effect. One of the clues as to how the practice of meditation may have been viewed by at least some of the later monks at St Edmund's lies in a translation of John Fisher's *Treatise of Prayer*, published in 1640, in which mental prayer is extolled above verbal prayer. In the final chapter Fisher summarises his advice to those practising 'prayer of the heart' thus:

first, that they offer themselves in all humilitie to God, then diligently performe their prayers with a true and just attention of mind; and lastly doe their best indeavour to finish their prayers with all attention of heart. They may also beginne their devotions with some vocall prayer, such as they have heeretofore been accustomed to be inflamed with; but then finding themselves thus inflamed, sweetly affected, and drawne by almightie God, in Gods name leaving off their vocall prayer, let them with teares and sighes follow the tract of the holy ghost, whither soever it shal leade them, then begging instantly at the hands of almightie God whatsoever the holy spirit shal inspire them, but cheifely that it would please his divine Majestie not to forsake them, but that he would graciouslie grant them what in his divine knowledge and wisdom, he seeth most necessarie to their soules health. And if they proceede according to this manner, they shal not only grow and become more acceptable to God, but shall also dayly profitt more and more in fervour of charitie, and become like unto those most heavenly and angelicall spiritts, which dayly behold and contemplate the face of God. And why should they not (though heere lying upon earth and covered with this corruptible flesh) be sayd to be like Angells? ²³

Both in Weldon and here, the notion recurs of the life of prayer as that of an earthly angel. It was one of the many commonplaces to be drawn on by writers on the spiritual life, but it seems to have been a key one for some of the monks of St Edmund's. This was the time when Augustine Baker and Gertrude More were developing a particular brand of English Benedictine mysticism, but was the translation of Fisher (with passages which out of context read almost as illuminist) part of this movement's deliberate recovery of earlier models of contemplative prayer, or was it a Recusant survival of sixteenth-century ways? At about the same time Anthony Batt was working on his own book of prayers and meditations, the *Thesaurus absconditus* ("Hidden Treasury", Paris, 1641), providing a systematic set of contemplations of revealed truths composed entirely of phrases from the Bible.²⁴ As a Latin work the *Thesaurus* is perhaps more indicative of expected monastic requirements than is a

vernacular translation dedicated to a laywoman, especially if the translator “R.A.” was Alban Roe, then in the Fleet, rather than Robert Anderton, recently ordained and awaiting faculties for the Mission.

To return to the customs of the community, after meditation there were three hours before supper, at six in the evening. Compline is not mentioned in Camm’s reference to the Annals, but would presumably have been around seven o’clock. The hours between morning office and Mass, and between meditation and supper, provided ample time to attend lectures, study and carry out necessary work. Long walks to purge the humours were a standard medical recommendation for those who led largely sedentary lives, and twice a month there was an expedition ‘into the fields’, the Left Bank suburbs where the community lived still being on the very edge of the countryside. On their return the monks had up to half an hour to recover with a cup of beer or a “demi-septier” of wine.²⁵ For earthly angels regular provision had to be made for tempering the humours and refreshing the vital spirits, as well as for prayer.

This would have been the routine so far as circumstances allowed, but the first decades of the Paris house were full of uncertainty. The monastery was set up at a time of bitter controversies within English Catholicism, and among the English Benedictines themselves, and these have left a much more substantial historical record than could the daily routine of monastic life. Any historian studying the community is in danger of missing its main point entirely in the surviving details of divisions and disputes. The founding members of the community hoped to establish an institution which would make it possible for themselves and other Englishmen to lead lives of prayer and study according to the Rule of St Benedict either as conventual monks or in preparation for missionary activity in England. To do this in a foreign country they were dependent on the good will and the patronage of influential figures for whom the English monks, and the whole of the English mission, were of quite minor importance in the larger picture of religious reform and confessional politics. While the substance of early seventeenth-century English monastic life in Paris has left almost no record, it is possible to recover something of the external vicissitudes of controversy and patronage, and the resulting appearance of instability in the community’s life. There were five different superiors in the first six years, and after spending a month in temporary accommodation in the Collège Montaigu, the community moved house five times in its first twenty-seven years. It was only in 1620, while living in their second house, that the

community was stable enough to start clothing novices and preparing them for the life of monastic missionaries.

In the meantime the population of the house was constantly changing. Francis Gicou, a native of Brittany who had been clothed as a novice of St Malo, spent part of his noviciate at Paris and was professed there for St Malo on 18 October 1617.²⁶ John Mundeford, a monk of St Gregory's who had not yet joined the congregation, was resident in the Paris house in the summer of 1620; by the following year, when he was on the Mission, he appears to have submitted.²⁷ Of the original members of the community, Alban Roe was by February 1616 at the abbey of Remiremont in Lorraine, where the Abbess was Catherine de Lorraine, sister to the Duke.²⁸ Soon afterwards he left for the Mission, where between 1618 and his martyrdom in 1642 he was out of prison for only about two years.²⁹ Dunstan Pettinger, once ordained, likewise returned to England: he was later described as 'a painful labourer and zealous preacher on the Mission during the greatest part of his long life', and was on the Mission by 1621 or earlier.³⁰ By 1621 Nicholas Curre had been sent to St Gregory's in Douai (now Downside), where he became subprior in 1624.³¹ George Gaire was soon living at Chelles, where he made his vows a second time as a member of the Order of Cluny.³² From 1621 to 1629 Clement Reyner was secretary to the congregation and the president, a post that entailed his spending most of his time at Douai. In 1629, Reyner was sent to Germany to take possession of various monastic lands which the congregation of Bursfeld was willing to give to the English Benedictines; in the same year Ferdinand II issued the Edict of Restitution, which ordered the return of all ecclesiastical lands which had been taken over by Lutherans contrary to the sixteenth-century treaties which had established the boundaries of Catholic and Lutheran territories. This gave wider scope to Reyner's activities in Germany, and ultimately led to the foundation of Lamspring Abbey.³³ He died as Abbot of Lamspring in 1651, and was succeeded as abbot by Placid Gascoigne. Dom Placid, who had arrived in Paris at the age of 16, seems to have been the only one of the founding members of the house to have lived in the community for all of its first five years. He too, upon completing his academic education with a doctorate from the University of Paris, was sent elsewhere: first to Germany in 1631-1633, then engaged on congregation business at the General Chapter of 1633, then a missionary in Yorkshire from 1634 to 1649 before returning to the Continent to take up the Presidency of the congregation for 1649-53. He died as Abbot of Lamspring in 1681.³⁴

The creation of the EBC (1615-1621)

Far more striking than the dispersion of the original community over the first five years, is the rapid turnover of superiors. The mobility of the monks may seem unusual today, but before the late nineteenth century the English Benedictines made their vows not to an abbot, but to the president of the congregation, and they could be moved from one house to another, or to the Mission (which was independent of all the houses), as the president saw fit. Besides the three ancient monastic vows of stability, conversion of life and obedience,³⁵ English monks took a vow to go on the Mission whenever sent, and from 1661 also swore not to alienate any of the congregation's property (the congregation, rather than the monastery, embodying the community of goods).³⁶ Even this, however, was a cause of uncertainty in the early years of the Paris house, for in 1615 no final agreement had yet been reached about how the EBC was to be set up and to function. Disagreement about the shape the congregation should take was, indeed, the main reason for the continual changes of superior in 1615-1621. That some sort of congregation was needed nobody seems to have doubted.

Among the more important decrees of the hurriedly concluded final session of the Council of Trent on 3-4 December 1563 were that religious should live in accordance with the rule of their order and should possess no personal property, as well as that all monasteries should receive regular visitations from an external superior, and that those which had no fixed arrangement for visitation by members of their own order were to fall under the jurisdiction of the local archbishop.³⁷ This gave new impetus to the formation of monastic congregations, in which authority was delegated from the individual monasteries to a president and a general chapter. Outside Spain and Italy, the congregation of St Vanne, in Lorraine, took the lead. The House of Lorraine, major landholders in France and rulers of Lorraine and Bar in the Holy Roman Empire, took a leading role in the monastic reform in northern Europe. In the first instance this was through the efforts of the papal legate Cardinal Charles de Lorraine to reform the decayed religious life of the monastery of St Vanne in Verdun, where he installed Dom Didier de la Cour as prior in 1598.³⁸ The congregation of St Vanne, formed in 1604, carried the reform through into other monasteries in Lorraine, and provided the model for both the congregation of St Maur in France (founded 1618, approved 1621), and the congregation of the Presentation in the Habsburg Netherlands (1627).³⁹ The influence of the dynasty was felt by English Benedictines too: it was monks of St Vanne who

had given them a house at Dieulouard in 1608, and Joanne Berkeley, abbess of the English Benedictine monastery in Brussels (1598) was a nun from St Peter's, Rheims, where the abbess was Renata de Lorraine. As has already been mentioned, it was Marie de Lorraine whose invitation to France brought about the founding of an English Benedictine monastery in Paris.

The main difficulty facing most new congregations was that of conservative resistance to reform, but there was no decayed English monastic life to be reformed, at least not in a form that could complain about innovations and appeal to the nuncio, the pope or the secular authorities. The first English Benedictine monks of the seventeenth century had been received in Continental monasteries that already belonged to reformed congregations, although the reforms had been in different spirits. This was one of their main attractions to such patrons as Marie de Lorraine, since in France the Tridentine reforms had been set back by the Wars of Religion and were only systematically implemented in the seventeenth century. Unlike the problems of inertia and resistance that faced Continental contemporaries, the main difficulty for the EBC was that of reconciling different schools of monastic zeal among the Anglo-Spanish and Anglo-Cassinese monks, complicated by the need to create a structure which could contain both a Tridentine understanding of the "stability" of monasticism and the demands of the active life of the English Mission.⁴⁰ Negotiations for the unification of the English Benedictines had begun in 1607, but agreement was long in coming.⁴¹ A set of proposals for union had been drawn up in 1611, but the Spanish president general was unimpressed: it was for his readiness to agree to them that Augustine Bradshaw was dismissed as vicar general, and was free to be sent to Paris as superior of the new community there. A further proposal, drawn up by Anselm Beech of the Cassinese congregation, was approved by Paul V in 1614, but failed to win agreement from all parties. In particular, the superiors at St Malo and at Douai opposed the provisions of this "Anselmian union", so that it was suspended in October 1614.⁴²

The divide between English monks of the Spanish, Italian and 'Old English' congregations was aggravated by the political sensitivity of religious matters in the confessional states of the seventeenth century. Rudesind Barlow wrote that 'in France the rulers like to have a hand in all things spiritual', but France was by no means untypical. Religious orders, through some combination of landed wealth, family connections, reputable scholarship and spiritual authority, could have considerable social influence while also enjoying exemptions from ordinary episcopal and secular jurisdictions. All rulers were

constantly alert to their activities, especially when foreigners were concerned. The precarious position of St Edmund's is not surprising when one considers that the monks were not only Englishmen in France, but from a monastery in Lorraine subject to a Spanish superior. Douai, Dieulouard and Paris are all now in France, but in the early seventeenth century they were in three different countries. The town of Douai was in the Habsburg Netherlands until conquered by Louis XIV in 1668. At the foundation of St Gregory's in Douai in 1607, the Habsburg Netherlands were ruled not by the King of Spain but by his half-sister the Infanta Isabella and by her husband Albert, Archduke of Austria. Lorraine, which claimed to be the successor state of the ninth-century Kingdom of Lotharingia, was an independent Duchy of the Holy Roman Empire, bordered westwards by France, north and south by Luxemburg and the Franche Comté (both among the territories ceded to Albert and Isabella by Philip II), and eastwards by a patchwork of imperial fiefdoms, many of them Lutheran, the most important of which was the prince-bishopric of Strasburg, ruled by Cardinal Charles de Lorraine until 1607, and by bishops of Austrian Habsburg blood from then until 1662.⁴³ The Duke of Lorraine sought to maintain his independence by maintaining an uneasy neutrality between France and the Habsburgs, or by playing them off against one another. Neither Douai nor Dieulouard was in directly "Spanish" territory, but both were far from anything that could be considered "French".

The position of the English monks who arrived in Paris in 1615 was made easier by the brief general quiet of the international situation. June 1615 saw the signing of the Treaty of Asti, which ended the First Mantuan War: for the first time since 1585 England, France, Spain, Italy, the Empire and the Low Countries were all at peace. From 1611 French policy was one of conciliation towards foreign powers, particularly Spain. This policy was sealed by a marriage alliance by which Louis XIII (still a minor) was affianced to the King of Spain's daughter, Anne of Austria, while Anne's brother Philip (from 1621 King Philip IV) was to marry Louis's sister Elizabeth. It was an amity that grew ever cooler until it finally ended in 1629, during the Second Mantuan War.⁴⁴ In 1615, the internal politics of France were less settled than the international affairs of Western Europe. The Estates General of 1614, with its catalogue of almost a thousand grievances, was disbanded in May 1615 by Louis XIII, only recently declared of age. In November he married Anne of Austria despite a rebellion of great nobles attempting to prevent the wedding. The civil war continued until 1617, when Louis had his mother's chief minister shot dead, banished his mother from court and pardoned the rebellious *grandeues*, but was briefly renewed in 1619. Richelieu, the queen

mother's adviser and after 1624 the king's chief minister, mediated the reconciliation which ended this civil war in 1620. Louis's chief minister, the Duke of Luynes (died 1621), immediately launched a new one, lasting until 1622, this time against recalcitrant Huguenots who by the Edict of Nantes (1598) enjoyed not only toleration but military and political guarantees which allowed them to constitute a 'state within the state'.

The French branch of the House of Lorraine, despite being related to the royal family, itself had a difficult relationship with the French crown: while Marie de Lorraine had been nominated abbess of Chelles by King Henry III, her cousin Jeanne de Lorraine was removed from the Abbey of Fontevrault by Henry IV, apparently to prevent her becoming abbess.⁴⁵ Princess Marie's brother, Charles de Lorraine, Duke of Aumale, was by 1597 living in exile outside Brussels, where he had retired rather than surrender to Henry IV at the end of the French Wars of Religion. The early seventeenth century saw the rule of many of the great abbeys of France, including Chelles, pass from the House of Lorraine to the House of Bourbon. That the community in Paris was established under the patronage of Lorraine, and from St Laurence's in Dieulouard, would have made the monks suspect to some French royalists, and prevented any immediate identification with the interests of the French crown. Ultimately a secure foundation was only obtained by placing the community under the patronage of the King of France, but that step was not taken for some time.

The connection with the House of Lorraine, so important in the first founding of the community, was soon broken off. The exact reasons are unclear, but seem to have something to do with the difficulties surrounding the forming of the congregation. After the suspension of the Anselmian union, a formula was agreed for electing nine Definitors by majority vote from among all the English Benedictines (thus giving the Anglo-Spanish majority a clear advantage in the negotiations), and the elections were overseen by Guido Bentivoglio, the papal nuncio in Paris. In June 1617 the nine Definitors met in the Hôtel Saint-André, the house in Paris in which the community that was to become St Edmund's was then residing, and they drew up the terms of a union of the English Benedictines in a "congregatio Angliae ab Hispanica dependens". Spanish dependence was largely titular, but an EBC delegate was to attend Spanish Chapters General, and the Spanish president general had to confirm all EBC appointments. It may have owed something to political sensibilities that this meeting, which can also be considered the first General Chapter of the EBC, was held on French soil and under the auspices of the Paris nuncio (even though this was the youngest English monastery and the Brussels nuncio was responsible for the English Mission). Opposition

from the Anglo-Cassinense monks in Rome delayed ratification of the terms, and a formula was agreed whereby they were treated as confrères by members of the EBC without actually having to join it. Since the Cassinese congregation had had no new English recruits since the aggregation to the Old English congregation, the Anglo-Cassinense gradually disappeared as a body, the last two members dying in 1655. On 23 August 1619 Paul V issued the brief *Ex incumbenti*, confirming the union of the Anglo-Spanish and Old English. The same pope ratified the constitutions of the new congregation in 1621.⁴⁶

Relations between France and Spain were worsening throughout these years, with proxy wars being fought for political influence in Switzerland and northern Italy. In 1617 it had seemed possible to have English monks established in France under Spanish superiors, but very soon the proposition looked less certain. Among the English Benedictines an Anglo-French party came into existence, made up of a few of the English monks in France originally professed in the Spanish congregation who were unwilling to accept the Spanish dependence of the English congregation. These were the very men to whose influence the benefactions of the House of Lorraine were largely due, most notably William Gifford (1554-1629), in religion Gabriel de Sancta Maria. Gifford, the third superior at Paris (1617-1618), was ‘the first superior to have the title and dignity of Prior of the house and was really its founder as an independent monastery’.⁴⁷ His immediate predecessor as superior (1616-1617) was Bernard Berington, who was sent to Fécamp, to help with the reform of a monastery there, and then to England to recover his health, before returning to Paris in 1618 to assist Gifford’s successor.

Gifford had studied in Leuven under Robert Bellarmine, served as chaplain to both William Allen and Charles Borromeo, lectured at the English College in Rheims, held a doctorate in divinity from the university of Pont-à-Mousson in Lorraine, and was Dean of St Peter’s in Lille until expelled from the Habsburg Netherlands for espionage in 1606. He had been clothed as a Benedictine in Dieulouard in 1608 and became prior of St Benedict’s at St Malo in 1611.⁴⁸ His varied experience of ecclesiastical politics gave him something of a reputation as a slippery customer. He was a great preacher, and was often invited to preach in Paris, where he was renowned for his eloquence and became very well connected, even the young Louis XIII attending several of his sermons. During the conspiracies and rebellions of the 1610s Gifford persisted in preaching a number of outspoken sermons on ‘loyalty’ even though ‘some of his friends advised him to be more reserved and cautious upon that subject or otherwise he might come to be pistol’d for his pains’. In the event he one day received a

bag of gold coins from an anonymous benefactor, and, punning on *pistoles*, ‘returning, told his Brethren that he had been pistol’d but then to put them out of pain he presently produced his purse of Gold.’⁴⁹ His connections and frequent visits to Paris, even before he became prior there in 1617, gave him much opportunity to take an active role in the negotiations between the different groups of English Benedictines, and particularly in having the Anselmian union revoked. Although he was one of the nine Definitors who agreed the ultimate terms of union in 1617, he very soon felt less certain of their desirability. Ultimately feeling unable to subscribe to the terms he had helped agree, he resigned as prior in 1618 to be consecrated coadjutor bishop to Princess Marie’s cousin, Louis de Lorraine, Cardinal Guise, Archbishop of Rheims. On 23 September 1618, in the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Gifford was the first Englishman in over sixty years to be ordained a Catholic bishop.⁵⁰ In 1622 he became Archbishop of Rheims.

The Lorraine connection had already cost the house its first superior, Augustine Bradshaw, who had left after only a year to help in the reform of Longueville, where he died in 1618. This priory, near Dieppe, was dependent on the Abbey of Cluny, commendatory abbot general of which was the same Louis de Lorraine. A brief digression may be in order to explain the phenomenon of the commendatory abbot, an institution which provided a means of rewarding loyalty to the crown without burdening the royal treasury. In the Middle Ages the revenues of monastic superiors and of their communities had been accounted for separately, with the crown making particular claims on the revenues of superiors. In France especially, but also elsewhere, it became a common practice in the Early Modern period for a superior to be appointed by the crown *in commendam*, and to enjoy the separate revenues of the superior as a sort of pension or sinecure, while monastic government fell to a provost, a prior or a subprior living as a member of the community. The Council of Trent had decreed that even commendatory abbots had a duty to reform their communities; some, such as Prince Erric de Vaudémont at St Vanne in Lorraine, did so as a matter of conscience, and others might feel that reform would help to clarify or enlarge the revenues due to them.⁵¹ The attachment of major political figures to monastic institutions in this way further complicated issues of patronage and prestige implicated in religious reform. Between 1529 and 1621 all four commendatory abbots of Cluny were of the House of Lorraine, while Cardinal Richelieu was to hold twenty abbeys and many priories *in commendam*, including Cluny, Cîteaux and Prémontré, the mother houses of three of the great orders of France.⁵²

Having himself become one of the great figures in the French Church, Gifford was succeeded as prior by Matthew Sandford, who subscribed to the union only on the understanding that he resign as prior and be allowed to join Dr Gifford in Rheims. It was during Sandford's priorship that the community almost found itself homeless. When they first came to Paris, the monks were lodged a month in the Collège Montaigu before they were able to move into the property which the Abbess of Chelles had arranged to rent for them, the Hôtel Saint-André (the town house of the Saint-André family) in the main street of the Faubourg Saint-Jacques; after much moving, it was to be to this street that the community returned in 1632, and where they resided until after the Revolution.⁵³ The impact of Tridentine Reform in seventeenth-century France is suggested by the fact that in the years 1612-1626 permission was granted for the Ursulines, Capuchins, Benedictine nuns of Val-de-Grâce, Feuillantines (reformed Cistercians) and Visitandines to establish themselves in the same street alone.⁵⁴

In 1618 the owner of the community's first house died, and her heir terminated the rent agreement.⁵⁵ The Concordat of Amiens, agreed between the president of the congregation, Leander Jones, and Francis Walgrave on 17 March 1619, determined what should have happened next. The Paris house was to be a dependency of Chelles, the novices of the two houses were all to be sent to Chelles, and Walgrave, as superior of the house on which the Paris monastery depended, was to appoint a subordinate superior in Paris, uphold the union and ensure that the monks rose at four, and sang Mass at ten, Vespers about two and Compline at seven; the abbess of Chelles was to find the community a suitable house in Paris.⁵⁶ Princess Marie invited the community to move into a house she had bought for them elsewhere in Paris but the monks refused. Jones ordered them to comply, but when informed of the reasons for their refusal he suspended his order. The reasons given were that the house was unsuitable for monastic observance and that the donation lacked security. At this juncture Bishop Gifford intervened to rescue the community: through his offices, and at his expense, the monks were able to move into a house belonging to a M. Clopin, situated in the Rue Vaugirard in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, next to the Palais du Luxembourg. Princess Marie, seeing her patronage spurned, withdrew the pension she had granted to the monks at Paris and transferred it to the monks living at Chelles under Francis Walgrave. The refusal of the Abbess's patronage, and Walgrave's failure to uphold the union, nullified the concordat, and Jones appointed Bernard Berington as prior.

It may well be a coincidence – the result of finding at short notice a suitable house near to the Sorbonne – that the move from the Faubourg Saint-Jacques to the neighbouring Faubourg Saint-Germain was a move from one ecclesiastical jurisdiction to another. As a religious community living in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques the monks had needed the approval of the Bishop of Paris, Henri de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz, to open a church. To establish themselves in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, they needed the approval of the Abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, one of the great monasteries of France. The abbacy of St-Germain was vacant from 1617 to 1623, but had previously been held *in commendam* by Prince François de Bourbon (died 1614), at whose death the usufruct had passed to his widow, Princess Louisa Margareta de Lorraine.⁵⁷ There being no abbot, permission for the English Benedictine establishment was granted by the prior and community. In 1623 a new abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés was enthroned, Henri de Bourbon. It was under him that the Catholic Reform made its full impact in the suburb, with permission being given for the establishment of Augustinians, Recollects of St Clare and Jesuits.⁵⁸ It was also during his abbacy that Saint-Germain became the centre of the Maurist congregation.⁵⁹ The EBC, however, he regarded with disfavour.

The world in which the first monks of St Edmund's moved was one in which finding a powerful patron among the great churchmen of France was essential to the survival of their community. It was the age of St Francis de Sales and St Vincent de Paul, but also of ecclesiastical statesmen such as Cardinal Richelieu and Cardinal Mazarin, and of adventurers such as the later Cardinal de Retz (1613-1679) whom it is hard not to see as the inspiration for the character of Aramis.⁶⁰ In this setting Gifford's combination of active pastoral concern with calculated political manoeuvring was by no means out of place, and as Archbishop of Rheims he was himself a valuable patron to the English Benedictines in France, memorialised as the second founder of the Paris house. There is no surviving copy of either the licence issued by the bishop (who died while attending the siege of Montpellier in 1622) or that issued by the monks of Saint-Germain during the abbatial vacancy. In 1624, however, the queen mother, Marie de Medici, intent on extending the Palais du Luxembourg, bought M. Clopin's house to have it demolished, and the community had to move yet again, at almost no notice.⁶¹ It was then that both earlier licences were attested to by a source above all suspicion, the First Peer of France, Archbishop-Duke of Rheims, Gabriel Gifford.⁶²

In April 1619 the president of the EBC, Leander Jones, wrote to the Paris house telling the prior not to exclude Gifford from the monastery during his visits to Paris, for

‘what credit for us to refuse our chiefest Flower of our Garden’.⁶³ That such an order was necessary with regard to an influential patron who had saved the community shows the strength of feeling about the union on the part of a Hispanophile like Berington. Berington’s militancy was not utterly unreasonable, as both the finances and the legal existence of the community entrusted to him were endangered by the disputes, and the papal ratification of the union was published only in August 1619.

In 1620 Berington became Leander Jones’s vicar in France, giving him precedence over the priors of the English Benedictine houses in Paris and St Malo, and he was replaced as prior in Paris by Thomas Monington, who also served only a year. In 1621, at the second General Chapter of the congregation (the first since papal ratification), the Paris house was declared to be the continuation of the ancient abbey of Bury St Edmunds, and placed under the heavenly patronage of the the ninth-century martyr king St Edmund. The General Chapter elected Sigebert Bagshaw as prior of St Edmund’s. After six changes of superior in as many years, the community had in Bagshaw a superior who was to serve two four-year terms as prior (1621-25 and 1625-29) and under whom the first professions in the monastery were made.

Early growth and the Anglo-Cluniac Rebellion (1621-1633)

In accordance with the constitutions which gained papal approval in 1621, the priors of St Edmund’s, as of the other houses of the congregation, were elected not by the community but by the four-yearly General Chapter, which had between 22 and 30 members. In the congregational system of monastic government which the EBC had adopted (like those of many other monastic congregations of the Tridentine age), all elections of superiors were by the General Chapter. Where the Rule of St Benedict provided for a patriarchal abbot who was bound to frequent and sincere consultation of all the choir monks, the Tridentine age preferred what the Benedictine historian Philibert Schmitz called ‘oligarchic’ monastic government.⁶⁴ The comparatively small body of the General Chapter, meeting every four years, elected the president, his secretary and council, the missionary Provincials of Canterbury and York, and the superiors of the houses and residences. Between General Chapters, the congregation was governed by the “Regimen”: the president and his council of definitors.⁶⁵ At every General Chapter all offices were vacated and elections were held

afresh. Within the house the prior appointed his own council of the older and wiser monks, to whose advice he was bound in any matter of importance; a chapter would be convened only on exceptional occasions.

The overviews of the congregation at each General Chapter give some idea of the development of the monastery of St Edmund, as well as of the congregation as a whole, but these are quadrennial snapshots with little indication of the intermediate situation. The composition of St Edmund's in the 1620s does show that it was largely functioning as a house of studies for the other English Benedictine monasteries: monks, even novices, from Douai, Dieulouard or St Malo would spend a few years in Paris before going on the Mission or returning to the house of their profession. Of the original six monks from Dieulouard only Placid Gascoigne remained in 1621, aged 21 and still studying for the priesthood (he was to be ordained in 1623).⁶⁶ Bernard Berington, who had twice served a year as prior, continued to reside at St Edmund's as the president's vicar in France until his death in 1639, for much of the time in effect the monastery's superior.⁶⁷ Besides these two, there were in 1621 four professed monks from St Gregory's, the priests Thomas Monington, Ildephonsus Cliff and Joseph Latham, and Francis Cape, yet to be ordained; and Felix Thompson from St Benedict's. All of them had left by 1625, although Francis Cape was one day to return.⁶⁸ Felix Thompson had been a seminary priest, and had been imprisoned and exiled for his activities in England, before he became a monk in 1614. He was transferred from St Malo to Paris to act as novice master.⁶⁹ There were five novices at St Edmund's in 1621, but three of these were preparing for profession at St Gregory's (Michael Gascoigne, Gregory Hayward, Thomas Woodhope), and only one, Gabriel Latham, was professed at St Edmund's (31 March 1622).⁷⁰ It was also in 1622 that the regimen gave permission for a secular student, Thomas Bagshaw, to be boarded at St Edmund's while studying in Paris.⁷¹

Bernard Berington, Placid Gascoigne and Gabriel Latham were the three men to live in the community throughout the 1620s, giving continuity to an otherwise continually shifting group of English monks and novices studying in Paris. There was a second profession in the monastery, that of Aemilian Throckmorton, on 8 February 1623. Throckmorton was a relative of Gabriel Gifford's; like Latham, who in religion took Gifford's monastic name as his own, he was to remain in the community for the rest of his life.⁷² By the opening of the General Chapter of 1625 – with Sigebert Bagshaw, then in Rome, about to enter his second term as prior – Berington, Gascoigne, Latham and Throckmorton had been joined by two priests from Dieulouard (Aldhelm Philips and Bede

Taylard), two from Douai (Augustine Kinder and Placid Loader) and one from St Malo (Romanus Grossier), and by two Dieulouard monks studying for ordination (Faustus Sadler and Anselm Williams).⁷³ Of these eight only Bede Taylard remained in 1629, and he was ordained and sent to the Mission the following year.⁷⁴ The other additions to the community by 1629 were three priests from St Gregory's – Placid Hartburn, Francis Cape and Thomas Woodhope (who was reprofessed at Paris, some doubt having been raised about his original profession, but was never considered an Edmundian) – and Gregory Mallet (or Jackson) from St Laurence's.⁷⁵ Although a monk of St Gregory's, Francis Cape spent more of his life at St Edmund's: around 1621 he studied there before ordination, he resided in the house as novice master in 1628-1629 (Dunstan Gibson's noviciate), and after twelve years on the Mission he returned to St Edmund's for the final twenty-seven years of his life, serving as prior for over twenty of them (1641-1653, 1657-1666). He died in the house in 1668, one day after his Laurentian brother Michael Cape, who had also studied at St Edmund's and had succeeded him as prior.⁷⁶ Gregory Mallet was still in the house in 1633, but the other temporary residents – Bede Taylard, Placid Hartburn and Thomas Woodhope – were gone by then and never resided at St Edmund's thereafter.

The years 1623-1625 seemed at the time to be a crucial watershed in the history of the English Mission. Negotiations for a marriage between Prince Charles and the Infanta Maria led to hopes for toleration in England, and rumours throughout 1623 of Charles's impending conversion.⁷⁷ After Prince Charles and the Duke of Buckingham had undertaken a dramatic *incognito* journey to Spain which failed to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion, the negotiations were broken off at the end of 1623, and the following year a marriage treaty between England and France was hurriedly concluded, with promises of toleration for English Catholics which were never fulfilled. In 1625 Charles I came to the throne, like his father in 1603, with undertakings of future toleration which were quickly disappointed. War with Spain began late in 1625, with a disastrous raid on Cadiz without declaration of war, and ended in 1630; war with France began in 1627 with mutual trade embargoes, and ended in 1629 after the failure to raise the siege of La Rochelle. The simultaneous wars with France and Spain were accompanied by a crack-down on Catholics, partly to raise money through fines and confiscations, partly to satisfy the more extreme voices in the Parliaments called to raise the bulk of the costs of war. The renewed persecution and the war-time blockades of traffic perhaps explain in part why there were no professions at St Edmund's in the years 1624-1628.

The delay was soon made good. In 1629 there were two professions, those of Dunstan Gibson and Francis Whitenal. Little is known about either, even a date of death; both were living at St Edmund's at the General Chapter of 1633, and both had died by 1639.⁷⁸ Whitenal, a Kentishman, was sent to St Gregory's and then to St Laurence's, and finally to England to recover his health. Gibson, a Yorkshireman, seems to have spent the rest of his short life at St Edmund's; he was ordained in 1634 and is mentioned in the Council Book on 26 June 1637 as presenting discipline problems.⁷⁹ In 1630 two more novices made their professions, Thomas Anderton (1611-1671) and Wulstan Ingham (died 1638). Ingham, like Gibson, was ordained in 1634 and died prematurely. Anderton, a singularly scrupulous maintainer of the Rule of St Benedict, was to hold numerous offices of the house and of the congregation, as well as spending a short time as a hermit and, before his death, a few months on the Mission.⁸⁰ With Columbanus Phillips (*circa* 1613-1699) professed at Dieulouard for St Edmund's in 1632, by 1633 the number of professed monks at St Edmund's for the first time outnumbered residents from other houses.

This did not mean that monks from elsewhere were no longer sent to Paris. That monks from St Malo would study in Paris is unsurprising, as is that those of Dieulouard would at times prefer the Sorbonne to the much closer university at Pont-à-Mousson, less prestigious and dominated by Jesuits. More unusual, given the close ties between the St Gregory's and the University of Douai, is the presence in Paris of monks from Douai. This was especially remarkable in the year 1621, when the original Laurentian members of the house had been almost entirely replaced with Douai monks. This was perhaps due to the president stocking St Edmund's with monks from St Gregory's to carry the house through the early crises of the union. There were in 1621 still thirteen English monks originally professed in the Spanish congregation who rejected even a titular continuation of Spanish dependence.⁸¹ Most of them were on the Mission, where they continued irrespective of developments on the Continent, but they had an uncompromising and high-profile leader in Francis Walgrave, Head Chaplain at Chelles, the man on whose advice and under whose jurisdiction St Edmund's had first been established. Walgrave had submitted at once to the Anselmian union of 1614 and refused to return to Spanish obedience when it was revoked in January 1615. Accordingly Leander Jones, the English vicar of the Spanish president general, sent John Barnes and Thomas Green to Paris to excommunicate Walgrave. The Abbess of Chelles, however, obtained a nullification of their decree from the Sorbonne, and Barnes and Green themselves soon had to leave Paris under a cloud.⁸² John Barnes in 1622 went over to

Walgrave, as had George Gaire, one of the founding members of St Edmund's. All three at one time or another made themselves subject to the Order of Cluny, and Walgrave obtained the title of Prior of St Pancras (the main Cluniac house in pre-Reformation England, at Lewes) and began to take in novices at Chelles with the aim of extending the Anglo-Cluniac body.

Walgrave and Barnes, concerned to recover St Edmund's from Spanish dependence, in 1622 launched an all-out assault on the EBC's claim to continuity with the pre-Reformation past. Edward Maihew, one of the two monks to be aggregated to the Old English congregation by Sigebert Buckley in 1607, had already begun to set out this claim at length in the first volume of his *Congregationis Anglicanae Ordinis Sanctissimi Patriarchae Benedicti Trophaea* (Rheims, 1619). At Walgrave's instigation, Barnes wrote an *Examen Trophaeorum Congregationis Praetensae Anglicanae Ordinis S. Benedicti* (Rheims, 1622), summarised by David Lunn as arguing that 'the English Benedictine Congregation could not claim to represent the pre-Reformation monasteries or to inherit their rights and property. All these now belonged to Cluny, which the E.B.C. should formally join.'⁸³ The congregation commissioned Clement Reyner, then secretary to the president, to respond to Barnes. This he did in his *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia*, a set of three theses developed at length. The first was that there had been an English Benedictine congregation before the Dissolution, the second that it had never been dependent on Cluny, and the third that the papal re-institution of the congregation in 1619 was entirely legitimate. In the first treatise he admitted that Cluniacs had been brought to England by William de Warenne around 1077, that they had played a great role in the era of Lanfranc and Anselm, and that several English monasteries had been subject to Cluny (Reyner listed thirty-eight, starting with St Pancras, Lewes).⁸⁴ This, however, was negligible when set against the achievements of the monks of the sixth-century St Augustine of Canterbury, the seventh-century St Benedict Biscop and the tenth-century St Dunstan, not to mention the cathedral priories, parliamentary representation, spiritual lordships and extensive monastic lands of the independent English Benedictine congregation of the later Middle Ages.⁸⁵ The whole was dedicated to Cardinal Bentivoglio. As the prelate who had overseen the election of the nine definitors of 1617 this was a way of reminding him that an achievement for which he could take some credit was under threat.

These detailed historical controversies about the rights and property of the medieval monasteries were not merely legalistic elaborations of nostalgia for a lost past. The issue of monastic lands was partly one of moral claims in the event of the conversion of England and,

to a lesser degree, one of showing how intimately monasticism was bound up with the fabric of English society before the dissolution of the monasteries. But more immediately, it could encourage financial support from the many Catholic landowners whose estates included former monastic lands, some of the income from which they might be convinced to commit to its original purpose. The continuity of monastic rights was not the only controversial aspect of English Benedictine finances. Lay support in England was organised through a confraternity of ‘Brothers, friends, and Benefactors’, the members of which could enjoy certain indulgences granted to the Spanish congregation by Pope Gregory XIII in 1580.⁸⁶ Membership of the confraternity came to be so sought after that in 1633 the mission constitutions ordered that it not be granted too easily.⁸⁷ Clement Reyner had in 1623 published a booklet to remove scruples among English Catholics who, surrounded by a barrage of Protestant misrepresentation, might think an indulgence something other than it was: like his historical work, this pastoral work also sought to fend off doubts about financial support for the Mission.⁸⁸ Pensions, donations and bequests from patrons and relatives in England were one source of support. While the EBC maintained the titles to medieval cathedral priories honorifically, they also took an interest in less honourable but more immediately remunerative benefices on the Continent. It was to enable them to hold such benefices for the English Benedictines that the English and Spanish Benedictine Generals had knowingly allowed Barnes to pass into Cluniac obedience in 1621, although it was later claimed that this did not release him from Spanish obedience. Presumably they were both so reluctant to submit to a renewed Spanish dependence because this would endanger all their achievements in France, and their “rebellion” was initially backed by Louis de Lorraine, commendatory abbot general of Cluny, who died in 1622, and his cousin Marie de Lorraine, abbess of Chelles, who repudiated them in 1627. Nonetheless, the Anglo-Cluniac alternative was kept alive for years thereafter by powerful patrons, including Richelieu and Mazarin, with the extent of former Cluniac monastic lands in England never dominant but always present in their minds.

In September 1623, with the new abbot of Cluny unsympathetic to his cause, Barnes changed tack. He accepted that he was still subject to Spanish obedience, but claimed that as the other Anglo-Spanish definitors had joined the invalidly instituted EBC he was the sole remaining legitimate definitor of the Spanish congregation with regard to the English Benedictines.⁸⁹ A few days later Walgrave issued an excommunication of the community of St Edmund as being in rebellion against his authority as its lawful superior, and had it affixed

to the door of their house. The following year, when the queen mother's building projects forced the community out of their house in the Rue Vaugirard, Walgrave tried to prevent their establishment in a house in the Rue d'Enfer, in the Faubourg Saint-Michel near the Charterhouse, by claiming that they had never had permission to open a church. This was the occasion for Gifford's testimonial mentioned above. Although, as the nineteenth-century Benedictine historian Athanasius Allanson wrote, 'The testimony of this great and good man was incontestible', it was unsuccessful in its end.⁹⁰ Neither the new archbishop of Paris nor the new abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés was willing to allow the English Benedictines to open a church against the wishes of the abbess of Chelles, the Anglo-Cluniac interest and the rector of the parish of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs in which the new house was located.⁹¹ It took papal intervention in 1626 even to get the archbishop's permission for a private chapel, and there was no formal recognition of the inhabitants of the house as a religious community.⁹² This unsettled community in an unsuitable house, with many of the residents pursuing studies, was at a presidential visitation in 1631 prohibited, 'as before', 'Tobacco & eating & drinking abroad'.⁹³ Although medical men were coming to agree that smoking had no nutritive effects, a pipe outside the house was as much a breach of proper conventual discipline as a meal. The prohibition was again repeated in 1632.

There is no need here to go into further details of the declarations and counter-declarations of the Anglo-Cluniac party and the EBC, the drawn-out suits in the consistory court of Paris and before the nuncio, or Barnes's long detention in the Roman Inquisition.⁹⁴ Walgrave maintained his own position until his death in 1668, by which time he was the last of the English monks of the Order of Cluny, but with the passage of time he posed ever less of a threat to the EBC's authority over the English monks in Paris, and in a round-about way his "revolt" was ultimately to benefit St Edmund's.

First flourishing and royal favour, 1632-1676

The situation and prospects of the community improved greatly in the early 1630s. In 1632 the community returned to the Rue Saint-Jacques, to a house leased from the Feuillantine nuns, who had recently vacated it upon the completion of the building of their own monastery. In their new house, the archbishop granted permission for them to establish a monastery and open a public chapel. One of the considerations behind his decision was that

the first General Chapter of the EBC had been held in Paris.⁹⁵ At the time of the fifth General Chapter in 1633, the priests inhabiting the new house in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques were Bernard Berington, vicar in France; Placid Gascoigne, the outgoing prior, who had only recently returned from Germany, where he had been since May 1631; Nicholas Curre, one of the founding members of the house, acting prior during Gascoigne's absence in Germany but now about to return to the Mission, where he died in 1649; a nephew of Gabriel Gifford's, Gabriel Brett, a monk from St Malo who only that year had made his submission to the congregation, and was about to be elected prior of St Edmund's; Gabriel Latham, cellarer; another relative of Gifford's, Aemilian Throckmorton; the Laurentian priest Gregory Mallet; and Dunstan Grove (died 1636), originally professed at Chelles by Walgrave and in 1631 reprofessed for St Edmund's after repeating his noviciate at Dieulouard. Besides these there were the five monks, not yet ordained, professed for St Edmund's in the years 1629-1632: Dunstan Gibson and Francis Whitenal, Wolstan Ingham and Thomas Anderton, and Columbanus Phillips. After seventeen years of uncertainty there was something approaching a self-sustaining community of English Benedictine monks in Paris.

The rigorous proceeding against Catholics in England during the simultaneous wars with Spain (1625-1630) and with France (1627-1629) only delayed the benefits of Charles I having taken a Catholic queen. In the 1630s there was a measure of unofficial toleration, with laymen able to compound for their fines and priests generally safe from the noose, although not from imprisonment and banishment. Under the protection of Queen Henrietta Maria there was even a flourishing court Catholicism, contributing to the anti-Catholic paranoia that led to the Civil War. This put the issue of Spanish dependence in an entirely different light from when the King of Spain was the foremost patron of the Mission. In 1630, at the conclusion of peace between England and Spain, the Spanish Crown abandoned its long-standing claim to be the protector of English Catholics.⁹⁶ On 12 July 1633 Urban VIII, to put an end to any doubts caused by Walgrave and Barnes, issued the bull *Plantata in Agro Dominico* confirming Paul V's re-institution of the EBC and confirming it in all rights and privileges enjoyed by the old EBC, the Spanish and Cassinese congregations, the Friars, the Jesuits and the military orders; the wording of the bull enabled a break with titular dependence on the Spanish congregation, although the English congregation only took advantage of this option at its General Chapter of 1661. In 1635, responsibility for the English Mission passed from the papal nuncio in Brussels to the Paris nuncio. The institutional heartland of the English Catholic missions was the Habsburg Netherlands, especially the town of Douai; with the new

importance of French royalty for the English Mission, St Edmund's stood particularly well placed to obtain patronage.

One of the first benefits they obtained from the changed relationship between France and the English Mission was not by the hand of royalty but by the intervention of Cardinal Richelieu in their affairs. Marie de Lorraine expelled Walgrave and his Cluniac companions (in all seven priests, a laybrother and a servant) from Chelles on 31 March 1627, the Wednesday of Holy Week, on three hours notice, having them forcefully evicted by armed bailiffs when they were still in the house after notice had expired. She replaced them with Augustinian chaplains the same day. Walgrave, who considered her treatment of him worse than anything he might have expected from the heretics in England, wrote a detailed account of the matter to Cardinal Richelieu.⁹⁷ In Walgrave's view, Princess Marie was motivated by a childish captivation with Augustinian devotional materials and by jealousy of the spiritual friendship between himself and her young coadjutrice. His expulsion coincided with the breakdown of amicable relations between England and France, with Charles I declaring neutral French shipping to Spain lawful prize of war and openly receiving embassies from the Huguenot rebels of La Rochelle; the two countries were about to go to war with one another for the first time since 1559. This was also shortly after Barnes's writings were condemned in Rome and Barnes himself was intercepted *en route* to England and placed under arrest in the Low Countries to be sent to the Roman Inquisition. The chronological sequence suggests deeper currents of statecraft and ecclesiastical policy than Walgrave allowed for in his own account.

Walgrave and his companions took up residence in the house in Paris which the EBC monks had once refused to move to. Princess Marie died in 1627, and her young coadjutrice Marie-Henriette de Bourbon succeeded her as abbess of Chelles. The new abbess instituted proceedings to have Walgrave put out of the house in Paris, but now on his guard he vigorously defended his position, and the process was held up by Marie-Henriette's untimely death in 1629. Her successor as abbess of Chelles was Madeleine de La Porte, whose cousin, Cardinal Richelieu, became abbot general of Cluny the same year.⁹⁸ With the superiors being on such good terms and the war with England over, matters were quickly brought to a quiet conclusion. Richelieu took an interest in the Anglo-Cluniac party, and confirmed Walgrave's titles of prior of St Pancras and vicar general of the Order of Cluny in England (as did succeeding abbots general of Cluny, Prince Conti and Cardinal Mazarin). He temporarily placed Walgrave and his remaining companions in the College of Marmoutier in Paris,

subject to the Abbey of Marmoutier of which he was commendatory abbot. Then on 29 October 1633 he made over to Walgrave the priory of La Celle-sur-Morin, another dependency of Marmoutier – uninhabited, falling into ruin and subject to a commendatory prior who wanted nothing to do with monks.⁹⁹ Walgrave was to occupy the priory in return for keeping up the rights of the community against the encroachments of the commendatory prior.¹⁰⁰

Exhausted by the indignities he had suffered at Chelles, and continued to suffer by the harassment of the commendatory prior at La Celle, Walgrave opened negotiations to make his peace with the EBC. His procurator at La Celle was soon Gabriel Latham, the first professed monk of St Edmund's, who drowned at the priory on 31 March 1635, according to one account in trying to cross the Morin, according to another in attempting to save a child from drowning in a pit on the property.¹⁰¹ On 22 July 1637 the negotiations were concluded, and Walgrave ceded all his rights in La Celle to Jocelin Elmer, prior of St Laurence's, who immediately transferred them to Gabriel Brett, prior of St Edmund's. Walgrave himself was to be allowed to live his remaining years quietly at St Edmund's without having to submit to the union of 1617. The priory of La Celle brought with it an annual income of 1200 livres (minus a pension of 400 livres to Walgrave throughout his lifetime), and Richelieu granted a further pension of 72 livres annually directly to the community in Paris.¹⁰² By this tortuous route the Cardinal-Duke gained influence with the EBC, a growing force in the English Mission, without ceding any of the claims of Cluny.

La Celle was only fully incorporated with St Edmund's in 1693, before that, although dependent on Paris it had 'carried itself like as if it had been a convent by itself'.¹⁰³ To keep this separate establishment going was at first a drain on manpower, as the house had to be manned by at least four monks from Paris at all times to maintain rudimentary monastic observance and uphold the community's rights.¹⁰⁴ It would, however, no doubt have been a welcome country retreat at a time that the Left Bank suburbs of Paris were becoming increasingly built up, and the community ever larger. It also seems to have become a house where those hankering for even stricter observance than in Paris could live in greater seclusion. The proximity of the hermitage of St Blandin, a mile from La Celle, appears to have sparked an interest in eremetical life among certain English Benedictines, and the congregation took possession of it in 1653.¹⁰⁵ By the middle of the eighteenth century the monks ran a school at La Celle, with a dozen boarding pupils, and the atmosphere of the place must have been quite different.¹⁰⁶

The issue of manpower was a pressing one in 1637 and the immediately following years. By 1639 the apparently thriving community of 1633 had been considerably reduced: the three Laurentians residing in Paris in 1633 were all on the Mission by 1639; five of the eight Edmundians had died; Bernard Berington, the mainstay of the house since 1620, died in the course of the year. In 1640 the prior, Gabriel Brett, resigned on health grounds and returned to England to recuperate in his native air; after a brief spell as prior of St Malo he returned to the Mission and died of the plague in London in 1665.¹⁰⁷ These losses were soon made good, as in 1639 there were three new professions and seven clothings of new novices. The years 1639-1642 were to see fourteen professions in all. It would fully stretch the resources of the community to keep full choir offices going in Paris at the same time as basic observance in La Celle in the years 1637-1640, while also providing for the formation of novices on an unprecedented scale. But this might be thought an embarrassment of riches.

In the 1920s Stephen Marron was to write of the community of the early 1640s as containing 'some of the best men we ever had – men like Fr. Thomas Anderton and his brother Robert, Frs Benedict Nelson and Augustine Latham, builders of the Edmundian community, and it may be added, all from Catholic Lancashire'.¹⁰⁸ Thomas Anderton, already mentioned as a stickler for regular observance, a contemplative and for periods a solitary, was the novice master in 1639-1640, and prior in 1640-1641. Weldon was to write of the novices of 1639 (professed in 1640) that

'tis not so much a wonder that persons so happily disposed, framed by so intelligent a Master in Spirituality as Fa. Thomas should prove such notable men, & well might F Bennet Nelson commend the time in which he began for its great order & the quiet conversation that then reigned in the House¹⁰⁹

As well as training the large intake of 1639-1640 as novice master, Thomas Anderton as prior bought a property on the corner of the Rue Saint-Jacques and the Rue des Marionnettes, so that the community could for the first time live in accommodation that was not rented. To avoid legal complications the transaction was carried out through a friendly merchant, a M. François Le Bossu, who was a burgher of Paris and acquired the property for them in his own name on 15 December 1640.¹¹⁰ There was a year's delay before the house was occupied, but on 14 January 1642 the Archbishop authorised the establishment of a religious community in the premises 'par forme d'hospice' (perhaps because, since 1636, the monastery had not only been lodging secular pupils, but also tutoring them). The community also received licence to open a chapel to celebrate low masses and sing Vespers,

and to hear the confessions of the English, Scottish and Irish in Paris except during the Easter season, when those who could speak French were bound to make their annual confession in the parish in which they resided.¹¹¹ The community moved in as soon as possible afterwards, in March, and in December the Council Book for the first time referred to ‘this our Collegial Convent of Paris’.¹¹²

In the combined monastic and missionary life of the seventeenth-century EBC, the ideal monks were to be ‘perfect Ambidexters, that is to say, perfit as well for action as for contemplation’.¹¹³ While all the EBC houses strove to provide both for monastic and for missionary life, the emphasis at the “colleges” St Gregory’s and St Benedict’s was more on preparation for the mission, and at the “monasteries” St Laurence’s and St Edmund’s more on conventual life.¹¹⁴ Anthony Batt, the Laurentian referred to above, had a longing for monastic observance which led him to spend much time at St Edmund’s and at La Celle.¹¹⁵ It is quite possible that the same motive attracted other residents from other communities. Even so, some of the early Edmundian monks were long-term missionaries, notably Robert Anderton (professed 1635, died 1681), who was almost forty years in the Canterbury Province before fleeing the country at being accused of complicity in the fabricated Oates Plot; and Bede Houghton (or Farnaby, professed 1642), who was over forty years in the York Province before his death at some time between the General Chapters of 1685 and 1689.¹¹⁶ Their memories of conventual life must have been like memories of school or college.

A particularly sensitive aspect of conventual discipline was diet. In 1641 President Elmer, during his visitation of St Edmund’s and La Celle on the eve of the community’s move to the new house, brought it to the prior’s attention that the constitutions of the congregation had envisaged that Dieulouard and Paris, as conventual houses, abstain from flesh meat entirely (whereas the colleges at Douai and St Malo were permitted meat three days a week).¹¹⁷ Taking account of the unsettled state of the house in its early years, the General Chapter of 1621 had issued a relaxation allowing the eating of meat on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, as long as they were not days of abstinence, and this interim measure had apparently continued uninterrupted.¹¹⁸ The matter seems to have rested during the move, but towards the end of 1642 it came up again. The Council Book records that on 15 December 1642 the prior, Francis Cape, called a council and proposed that abstinence from flesh meat be adopted. A line in the Council Book is blotted out, before the record continues that:¹¹⁹

it was agreed and concluded by the more in number of the said Counsell that in this our Collegial Convent of Paris Abstinence according to our holy Rule should be observed Wherefore the whole Convent being assembled on New Yeares day following in the yeare of our Lord 1643 and this resolution of the Counsell proposed in the presence of the V.Rd. Father Presedent Fa: Joselme Elmer to be determined by the free and secret suffreagation of beanes it appeared that the greatest part was consenting, and in the end that is after three severall suffragations it was found that eleaven [*sic*] was affirmative, two only of the contrary opinion, and one neuter desiring not to suffragate at all, whereupon this Religious and Zealous resolution was from thence forewards put in execution, and is joyfully observed by all for the greater glory of God, the honor of our order, the Conversion of our Country and with the applause and approbation of the Regiment of our Congregation. dated the first of January 1643

In 1645 the keen abstainer Bede Foster, a priest at St Malo, petitioned to be allowed to transfer to Paris so that he could keep up complete abstinence from flesh without inconveniencing anybody. The Council at St Edmund's agreed that this was acceptable 'if his Pryor would give his pension or exchange him for another religious especially if it was concluded that abstinence should continue unviolable at La Celle'.¹²⁰ The transfer never went ahead: the community found complete abstinence so inconvenient that they had that very year requested and obtained from General Chapter a renewal of the thrice-weekly mitigation granted in 1621.¹²¹ The following year, abstinence was also relaxed at La Celle.¹²² In 1661 General Chapter allowed a further mitigation, that meat be allowed on a Monday 'when it could not be used on Tuesdays & Thursdays'.¹²³ Given the enthusiasm with which the measure had been adopted in 1643, it is understandable that the scrupulous Thomas Anderton 'could not bring his conscience to allow him the constitutional diet of his Convent after the Chapter of 1645 had again mitigated the rigid Rule' and was permitted to continue in total abstention.¹²⁴

Not everybody found discipline at St Edmund's too lax. In 1645 a scandal resulted from the dietary discontent of Br. Maurus Bennet, who had only been professed in the summer of 1642, and whose novice master had been the emergency appointment Edward Gloster, himself only professed in 1640. On 21 June 1645 the prior, Francis Cape, called a council comprising himself, Thomas Anderton, Aemilian Throckmorton and Augustine Latham (the secretary), at which it was decided that Bennet, 'who both in private & in open chapter had given great testimonies of disobedience', should be imprisoned in the granary.¹²⁵ Within a few hours Br Andrew Simpson (who had shared the noviciate with Bennet) and Fr Peter Gifford had sprung Br Maurus from the granary, breaking down two doors in the

process, and the three had made off to La Celle. They were apprehended and punished by the Official of the Archbishop of Paris, contrary to the decree of the Council of Trent that even a religious causing grave scandal outside the enclosure 'be severely punished by his own Superior, within such time as the bishop shall appoint'. A further council on 9 July deliberated 'whether it were best to stand to the Officials sentence concerning our 3 fugitives or defend our Privileges & twas thought best for many reasons to submitt our selves to his authoritie in this case'. The General Chapter, meeting that summer, decided that the three fugitives were to be pardoned upon acknowledging their error and making their submission to the prior of St Edmund's. Simpson, who while at La Celle had made friendly with the Commendatory Prior and had been offered a living there, refused to do so and petitioned the pope; then he went to live with the Cluniacs at Marmoutier; he finally he offered his submission in 1649, but the prior then refused it and he died in a monastery in Normandy.¹²⁶ Maurus Bennet, the cause of the trouble, did submit at once, and thereafter led a largely edifying life. He was on the Mission, in the South Province, from around 1650 onwards and died in a duel on the morning of Whitsunday 1663.¹²⁷

Throughout the years of total abstention from meat no postulants were taken in at St Edmund's, although the diet of the community may well not have been the main cause since these were also the years of the First Civil War (1642-1646), which straitened monastic finances and gave young men an immediate duty at home. From 1647 there was a steady intake until 1664, some years not seeing any new entrants but some two or even three, totalling twenty-two professions over sixteen years. Several of those professed in these years were notable in some way. The first, Bennet Hankinson (died 1690), was professed a laybrother on 1 January 1648, and gained a reputation as 'a most curious embroiderer'; he was the only Edmundian laybrother to be sent on the Mission.¹²⁸ Among the choir monks, Bernard Warren (died 1650) was an Anglo-Cluniac professed by Walgrave, reprofessed at St Edmund's in 1648.¹²⁹ In 1652 were professed Placid Adelham, who died in prison, and Joseph Shirburne, who in 1681 became the first Edmundian president of the congregation. Francis Muttlebury (1611-1697) was a secular missionary, ordained in 1635 and on the mission by 1642; he was professed as a monk of St Edmund's in 1658 and remained a conventual for about a decade before returning to the Mission on the South Province, where he was active until his death.¹³⁰ The Welshman Charles Pugh, professed in 1660 was a former surgeon and royalist officer, a priest and bard who spent about ten years on the Mission in Monmouthshire; in 1668 he gave £100 to the South Province 'to form a fund for a

Benedictine to reside at St Wenefride's Well during the summer months' (the seculars and Jesuits each already ran an inn there).¹³¹ Richard Yoward, professed in 1663, was a youth of great beauty and charm who went mad around the age of 34 and regained his wits only shortly before he died, in his fiftieth year.¹³² Francis Fenwick, professed in 1664, was a learned man who took a Doctorate in Divinity at the Sorbonne, and as prior 1689-1693 had much to do with James II at the beginning of the king's exile.¹³³ Another Doctor of the Sorbonne was Thomas Hesketh, professed in 1673 at the age of seventeen and dead by the end of 1694.¹³⁴ Of the other fourteen monks professed in the years 1648-1664, some lived outwardly unremarkable lives leaving barely a trace in the records beyond dates of profession and death, while others had busy careers among the office-holders of the congregation in the period dealt with in the following chapter.

The modest flourishing of St Edmund's stood in contrast to decline elsewhere in the 1650s. Until the 1660s the General Chapter customarily met in Douai, but with an outbreak of plague there in 1653, that year's General Chapter was held in Paris; as was the following, in 1657, when Douai was in the front line of the closing phase of the Franco-Spanish War of 1635-1659.¹³⁵ In 1656, while Benedict Nelson was prior of St Edmund's, the community at Dieulouard, which had suffered greatly from the devastation of Lorraine in both the Thirty Years' War and the Franco-Spanish War, proposed selling up and amalgamating with Paris. In the end nothing came of the proposal.¹³⁶ A similar proposal was put into effect with St Malo in the 1660s. Throughout the 1650s the community suffered problems with internal discipline and difficult relations with external authorities, both diocese and *parlement*, and in 1661 negotiations were opened to sell the house to the Maurists. These negotiations were only concluded in 1668, and in the meantime it was mainly Edmundians who kept things going at St Malo and provided the last two priors of the house (Thomas Anderton and Benedict Nelson).¹³⁷

The growth of St Edmund's was, however, far from continual, and in 1653 the population of the house again dropped below the constitutional quorum for full celebration of the Office. In 1649 there were ten choir monks (all priests) and two laybrothers in residence; all of them had been professed for the house except the prior, Francis Cape, and the president's vicar in France, Paul Robinson, who was studying for a doctorate at the Sorbonne. St Edmund's also provided two missionaries to the North Province and a community of four choir monks at La Celle.¹³⁸ Despite the steady intake, a cluster of seven deaths and a ??defection?? in the years around 1650, together with the increased demands of

the Mission (five priests) and the continuing need to maintain a presence at La Celle, meant that by 1653 the resident community was reduced to seven choir monks, four of whom had been professed within the past year, and three laybrothers.¹³⁹ In 1652, as in 1637, the manpower shortage was over almost as soon as it had begun, and the community continued to grow until 1664. Then there was another gap of six years without novices before the slow and steady intake resumed. Throughout the 1660s and 1670s there was a sizeable permanent community, with never fewer than twelve choir monks in residence, and sometimes as many as fifteen or sixteen, besides the laybrothers and novices, and the Edmundian contribution to the Mission.

Charles II's marriage to Catherine of Braganza led to a new flourishing of court Catholicism in the 1660s and 70s, in which Benedictines were prominent. Both after the Battle of Worcester and during his exile on the Continent, Charles had found supporters among them, and in 1661 Robert Robinson, the president of the EBC, prevailed upon him to appoint Benedictines to the Royal Chapel at Somerset House. Three Edmundians among the monks sent to Somerset House were the priests Placid Adelham and Augustine Latham, and the laybrother Bennet Hankinson. At any one time in the later 1640s, two or three professed monks of St Edmund's were serving on the Mission. By the 1650s their numbers had risen to six or seven. Their numbers peaked in 1673, with twelve missionaries who had been professed at St Edmund's, but number were driven down again by the renewal of low-level persecution with the Test Act of 1673, the banishment of the queen's chaplains in 1675, and the executions following on the fabricated "Popish Plot" of 1678. The longest-serving Edmundian at Somerset House, Placid Adelham, was a former Protestant clergyman who had been professed at Paris in 1652. He was sent to the Royal Chapel in 1661 and with the other chaplains was expelled from the realm in 1675, but he returned to the Mission and in 1679 was condemned to death as a Catholic priest; he was reprieved, no doubt because of his royal connections, but died in Newgate gaol.¹⁴⁰

In France too, the English Benedictines enjoyed royal favour, and were graced with visits and gifts. When noting the death of Anne of Austria under the year 1666, Weldon mentioned that

The Convent of St Edmund's at Paris is highly indebted for ever to her charity and piety for that she obtained them such a great grant that the Chancellor of France thinking it too much for strangers, would not seal it; and frequently she did them the honour of visiting their poor chapel.¹⁴¹

The great grant Weldon refers to was that the monastery should be entitled to one copy of every book printed in Paris.¹⁴² The chapel which the queen mother was in the habit of visiting, as a stop-off when returning from trips to her own nearby foundation of Val-de-Grâce, served the community for over thirty years, from 1642 to 1674. It would be interesting to know the date at which the beneficence of Queen Anne began, but on that score the sources are silent. The earliest hint of a possibility comes in 1650.

At his father's death in 1643, Louis XIV was only five years old. His mother, Anne of Austria, governed France as queen regent until 1654, with her chief minister being Richelieu's pupil Cardinal Mazarin. Discontent at the neglect of domestic problems during the on-going war with Spain (1635-1659) led to the Fronde, a large-scale uprising which was to last from the summer of 1648 until 1652, and flared up again for a few months in 1655. It was in the midst of this crisis that the monks wrote to Louis XIV for letters of establishment. This would give legal personality to the community and enable them to acquire ownership of their house, still held for them in Le Bossu's name. The decision to print a petition the king while he was in effect in exile from Paris recalls Gabriel Gifford's audacious sermons on loyalty in the 1610s, although it may well have been motivated by a concern to secure the community's title to the house in uncertain times. At the instance of Henrietta Maria and with the consent of the Queen Regent, Anne of Austria, the underage king issued the letters of establishment at Bordeaux in October 1650. By these the community was permitted to possess a church and conventual buildings and their house was exempted from death duties. The royal grant was made on condition that thenceforth the community annually offer a solemn Mass for the French monarchy on the feast of St Louis. This was a feast particularly dear to the Bourbons: in 1610 Louis XIII had obtained papal permission for its observance to be made obligatory in France.¹⁴³

The transfer of title to the property from Le Bossu to the monastery was completed on 16 January 1651, although the royal grant was not registered by the *Parlement* until three months after that, and then with the insertion of a restriction to the effect that the monks, being foreigners, might not hold benefices or abbeys in France.¹⁴⁴ It took the archdiocese (the archbishop being the exiled conspirator Cardinal de Retz) until 1656 to grant ecclesiastical recognition of the new status of the house as a monastery, rather than a religious hostel. The tax exemptions were not registered by the Chamber of Accounts until 1659. These restrictions and delays were undoubtedly due to the disturbed conjunction of the time at which the community petitioned for letters of establishment.

Legally established at last, and in possession of their own property, the community in 1651 could start to think about building a monastery. Francis Cape, again prior, in 1661 bought a house next to their's on one side, and the following year an adjoining property on the other side.¹⁴⁵ Joseph Shirburne, prior 1668-1677, made the decision to undertake major rebuilding. On 4 April, the Feast of St Joseph, 1674 the demolition of the old chapel and dormitory was begun. On 29 May the first stone of the new church was laid by the twelve year-old Princess Marie Louise, later queen of Spain, daughter of Philip of Orléans and Henrietta of England: her paternal grandfather was Louis XIII, her maternal grandfather Charles I; Louis XIV and Charles II were both among her uncles.¹⁴⁶ The prior obtained the archbishop's leave to beg for alms, and had an appeal to the people of Paris printed; on 5 August 1674, the archbishop himself issued a recommendation to the parish priests of the city and its suburbs to encourage the faithful to give alms towards the costs of the building.¹⁴⁷ The prior printed a petition to the king, addressing him as one who sought to 'surpass all his Predecessors in piety and magnificence, as well as in all the other Royal virtues'. Besides flattery, the petition made the familiar appeal to historical continuity: the Benedictines of the Faubourg Saint-Jacques were monks of a congregation which had lost extensive properties and rights in England, including the shrine of St Thomas Becket at Canterbury, to which Louis VII had granted a considerable pension in 1179 after his pilgrimage to pray for the recovery of his son, Philip Augustus; since Paul V and Urban VIII had confirmed in the EBC all the privileges of the medieval congregation, did the king not feel he ought to do something about it?¹⁴⁸ In September the king granted letters of naturalisation for members of the community, including members of the EBC professed in other houses and living in Paris for their studies, so that they could hold benefices in France. The king also gave 7000 livres to the building fund for the new church and granted annual pensions of 25 pounds to the EBC houses of Paris, Douai, Dieulouard and Cambrai. The letters of naturalisation were enlarged and confirmed on 10 June 1676. By the time of the Revolution, St Edmund's had an income from fourteen priories, two sacristies and a deanery.¹⁴⁹

The new church was consecrated on 28 February 1677 by the Abbé Noailles, a future archbishop of Paris. A detailed description of the monastery was drawn up in 1790 at the demand of Revolutionary officials, according to which the church, built over cellars, was entirely of stone with a slate roof and a turret with a bell.¹⁵⁰ The interior was decorated with Ionic pilasters with rows of arches above them, and with a painting of St Edmund between Corinthian columns above the high altar. The nave was open to the public, and was separated

by a screen from the choir, which had two rows of stalls. At the end of the nave was a gallery for the organ. The monastery itself consisted of two main buildings, one roofed with tiles containing the kitchen, refectory and eighteen rooms, three with fireplaces, the other roofed with slate and containing the common room, a reception room, the sacristy, library and seven rooms, each with a fireplace. Behind the second of these, to which the church adjoined, was a low building with two rooms and a cellar. At the entrance to the courtyard was a porter's lodge with a room and a parlour, and in the courtyard a coach-house, a shed, a stable for one horse and a hen-house. The community also owned two houses beyond the enclosure.

The overview of the congregation at the General Chapter in 1677 shows St Edmund's and La Celle together to have comprised nine priests, seven choir monks not yet ordained (two of them professed that very year) and four laybrothers, all of them Edmundians, while ten missionaries, eight in the South Province and two in the North, had made their profession at St Edmund's. After sixty years, the English Benedictine monks in Paris had built not only a suitable house, but also a sustainable conventual community. This was a community that could continually celebrate the Office in the fullest constitutional manner, and also educate the young, train missionaries and minister to the pastoral needs of British exiles in Paris, among whom was soon to be James II.

- ¹ The abbey had been founded by St Bathilda (died 680), widow of Clovis II (died 656), in her royal villa at Chelles, about 12 miles from Paris. The first abbess was St Bertilla (died 705/6). See *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, vol. XII (Paris, 1953), s.v. 'Chelles'.
- ² Yves Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais réfugiés en France au XVII^e siècle (1611-1669)* (Paris, 1967), p. 86.
- ³ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 86; Athanasius Allanson, *A History of the English Benedictine Congregation*, microfiche edition prepared by Placid Spearritt & Bernard Green (Bicester, 1978), p. 103.
- ⁴ Stephen Marron, 'Annals of Our Monastery in Paris', *Douai Magazine* (March 1929), p. 203.
- ⁵ David Lunn, *The English Benedictines 1540-1688* (London & New York, 1980), pp. 21-26; Athanasius Allanson, *Biography of the English Benedictines*, edited by Anselm Cramer & Sue Goodwill (Saint Laurence Papers IV, 1999), pp. 7-8.
- ⁶ Anthony Batt, *A Heavenly Treasure of Comfortable Meditations and Prayers* [translated from St Augustine] (St Omers, for John Heigham, 1624), pp. 6-7.
- ⁷ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 1-2.
- ⁸ Peter Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees on the Continent 1558-1795* (London, 1914), p. 216.
- ⁹ On Brown see Allanson, *Biography*, p. 11; Allanson, *History*, p. 103.
- ¹⁰ *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, vol. XII (Paris, 1953), s.v. 'Chelles'.
- ¹¹ Quoted in David Lunn, 'Replanting on the Continent', in *Monks of England. The Benedictines in England from Augustine to the Present Day*, edited by Daniel Rees (London, 1997), p. 175.
- ¹² F.C. Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery, Paris. Its Foundation and Means of Subsistence', *Downside Review* 32 (1913), p. 127.
- ¹³ Bede Camm, *Nine Martyr Monks: The Lives of the English Benedictine Martyrs Beatified in 1929* (London, 1931), pp. 293-298.
- ¹⁴ Bennet Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 457.
- ¹⁵ Allanson, *History*, p. 495 note 3.
- ¹⁶ Quoted in Camm, *Nine Martyr Monks*, pp. 302-303.
- ¹⁷ Allanson, *Records* (microfiche 1978), Record XII, 'Fr Leander's Mandate to the Convent at Paris', 8 July 1620 (citing Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 646).
- ¹⁸ Geoffrey Scott, 'A Long Exile', in *Monks of England. The Benedictines in England from Augustine to the Present Day*, edited by Daniel Rees (London, 1997), p. 181.
- ¹⁹ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 450.
- ²⁰ *Constitutiones Congregationis Anglicanae*, cap. IX (Allanson, *Constitutions*, pp. 87bis ff.).
- ²¹ The phrase is Stephen Marron's, from 'The Early Years of St. Edmund's, Paris', *Douai Magazine* (July 1925), p. 262.
- ²² Allanson, *Records*, no. XII (pp. 26 ff), 'Fr Leander's Mandate to the Convent at Paris', 8 July 1620 (citing Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 646).
- ²³ John Fisher, *A Treatise of Prayer, and of the Fruits and Manner of Prayer*, translated by R.A. (Paris, William Baudry, 1640; facsimile reprint as *English Recusant Literature 1558-1640*, vol. 11(2), 1969), pp. 236-239.
- ²⁴ Anthony Batt, *Thesaurus absconditus, in agro dominico inventus* (2nd ed., Paris, 1647). See David Rogers, 'Anthony Batt: A Forgotten Benedictine Translator', in *Studies in Seventeenth-Century English Literature, History and Bibliography. Festschrift for Professor T.A. Birrell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, edited by G.A.M. Janssens & F.G.A.M. Aarts (Amsterdam, 1984), pp. 179-193.
- ²⁵ Camm, *loc. cit.*
- ²⁶ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 49.
- ²⁷ Allanson, *Records*, Record XII; Allanson, *History*, p. 125.
- ²⁸ Stephen Marron, 'The Foundation of St. Edmund's, Paris', *Douai Magazine* (July 1924), p. 104; Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 76.
- ²⁹ Camm, *Nine Martyr Monks*, pp. 303-307.
- ³⁰ Allanson, *History*, p. 125; Allanson, *Biography*, p. 76.
- ³¹ Allanson, *History*, p. 125.
- ³² Allanson, *Biography*, p. 21.
- ³³ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 52-54.
- ³⁴ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 97-99.
- ³⁵ Rule of St Benedict, ch. 58.
- ³⁶ ??

- ³⁷ Session 25, Decree on Regulars and Nuns, chapters 1, 2, 8. See *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, edited and translated by J. Waterworth (London, 1848), scanned by Hanover College students in 1995 <<http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm>>.
- ³⁸ Philibert Schmitz, *Histoire de l'Ordre de Saint-Benoît*, vol. IV (Maredsous, 1948), pp. 20-25.
- ³⁹ Schmitz, *Histoire*, pp. 32-33, 95-97.
- ⁴⁰ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 107.
- ⁴¹ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, pp. 90-108.
- ⁴² Allanson, *Biography*, p. 25; Bennet Weldon, *Chronological Notes Containing the Rise, Growth, and Present State of the English Congregation of the Order of St. Benedict* (London, 1881), p. 97.
- ⁴³ Francis Rapp, 'Strassburg. Hochstift und Freie Reichsstadt', in *Die Territorien des Reichs*, edited by Anton Schindling & Walter Ziegler, vol. V (Münster, 1993), pp. 73, 86-90.
- ⁴⁴ This and the following on the basis of Geoffrey Parker, *Europe in Crisis* (London, 1984), pp. 127-130; Roland Mousnier, 'French Institutions and Society 1610-61', in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. IV, edited by J. P. Cooper (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 481-484.
- ⁴⁵ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, pp. 38-40.
- ⁴⁶ Schmitz, *Histoire*, p. 113; Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 107.
- ⁴⁷ Marron, 'Annals', p. 203.
- ⁴⁸ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, pp. 1-35; Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 70.
- ⁴⁹ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 15.
- ⁵⁰ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 88; Batt, *Heavenly Treasure*, p. 7. Cardinal Allen had been nominated to the see of Mechlin in 1590 but never ordained.
- ⁵¹ Session 25, On Regulars and Nuns, cap. 20 (<<http://history.hanover.edu/early/trent.htm>>); Schmitz, *Histoire*, pp. 20, 59-61.
- ⁵² Schmitz, *Histoire*, pp. 54-59.
- ⁵³ At this period the French 'hôtel' had the same meaning as 'house' in Somerset House, Montague House, etc.
- ⁵⁴ Abbé Lebeuf, *Histoire de la Ville et de tout le diocèse de Paris*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1883), pp. 158-159.
- ⁵⁵ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 88.
- ⁵⁶ Marron, 'Foundation', p. 107.
- ⁵⁷ *Gallia Christiana*, vol. VII (Paris, 1744), col. 469.
- ⁵⁸ *Gallia Christiana*, vol. VII, col. 469.
- ⁵⁹ Schmitz, *Histoire*, pp. 38, 61.
- ⁶⁰ J.H.M. Salmon, *Cardinal de Retz. The Anatomy of a Conspirator* (London, 1969).
- ⁶¹ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 88, n. 26.
- ⁶² Allanson, *Records*, no. XXIII (citing Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 874).
- ⁶³ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 14-15.
- ⁶⁴ Schmitz, *Histoire*, vol. IV, pp. 6-7, 25, 113-115.
- ⁶⁵ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, pp. 112-114.
- ⁶⁶ Dominic Aidan Bellenger (ed.), *English and Welsh Priests 1558-1800. A Working List* (Bath, 1984), s.v.
- ⁶⁷ Marron, 'Annals', p. 203.
- ⁶⁸ Allanson, *History*, p. 126.
- ⁶⁹ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 21.
- ⁷⁰ Allanson, *History*, p. 126.
- ⁷¹ F.D. Ward, 'The Education of Youth at St. Edmund's, Paris', *Douai Magazine* vol. XX, no. 3 (1959), pp. 161-162.
- ⁷² Marron, 'Annals', p. 203.
- ⁷³ Allanson, *History*, p. 171.
- ⁷⁴ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 100.
- ⁷⁵ Allanson, *History*, pp. 192-193; Allanson has Mallet an ordinand in 1629, but Bellenger gives his date of ordination as 1627. See Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests*, p. 85.
- ⁷⁶ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 79-80.
- ⁷⁷ See Henry Ettinghausen, 'Prince Charles and the King of Spain's Sister Ñ What the Papers Said', Inaugural Lecture, Southampton University (1985); Thomas Cogswell, 'England and the Spanish Match', in *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, edited by Richard Cust & Ann Hughes (London & New York, 1989), pp. 111-116.
- ⁷⁸ Henry Norbert Birt, *Obit Book of the English Benedictines from 1600 to 1912* (printed privately, Edinburgh, 1913), pp. 14, 18; Allanson, *History*, pp. 233, 278.

- ⁷⁹ Birt, *Obit Book*, p. 18; Council Book 1620-1646, Archive of Douai Abbey VII.A.1.
- ⁸⁰ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 29, 85-86; Birt, *Obit Book*, pp. 20, 49.
- ⁸¹ Allanson, *History*, p. 127.
- ⁸² Lunn, *English Benedictines*, pp. 103-104.
- ⁸³ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 109.
- ⁸⁴ Clement Reyner, *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia* (Douai, Laurence Kellam, 1626), tract. 1, pp. 158, 208-210.
- ⁸⁵ Reyner, *Apostolatus*, tract. 1, *passim*.
- ⁸⁶ A form letter of confraternity from around 1625 is printed in facsimile at the end of *English Recusant Literature 1558-1640*, vol. 162 (1973).
- ⁸⁷ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 160.
- ⁸⁸ *A Treatise of Indulgences, commonly called the Popes pardons, and of the Churches meaning concerning the same* (St Omers, for John Heigham, 1623; facsimile reprint *English Recusant Literature 1558-1640*, 139(1), 1973).
- ⁸⁹ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 66-67; Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 107.
- ⁹⁰ Allanson, *History*, p. 142.
- ⁹¹ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 108; Marron, 'Early Years', pp. 262-263.
- ⁹² Marron, 'Early Years', p. 263.
- ⁹³ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 451.
- ⁹⁴ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, chapters 4 & 5.
- ⁹⁵ Marron, 'Early Years', p. 264.
- ⁹⁶ Albert J. Loomie, 'Olivares, the English Catholics and the Peace of 1630', *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis*, 47 (1969), pp. 1154-1166.
- ⁹⁷ The whole affair, with the text of Walgrave's letter to Richelieu, is treated fully in Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, pp. 137-141.
- ⁹⁸ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, pp. 140-141.
- ⁹⁹ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, pp. 141-149.
- ¹⁰⁰ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, p. 170.
- ¹⁰¹ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, p. 174; Birt, *Obit Book*, p. 17.
- ¹⁰² Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 150; A.F. Allison, 'Richard Smith's Gallican Backers', *Recusant History* 19:3 (1989), p. 253.
- ¹⁰³ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, p. 234.
- ¹⁰⁴ Marron, 'Annals', p. 205.
- ¹⁰⁵ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, p. 150.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ward, 'Education', pp. 164-165.
- ¹⁰⁷ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 75-76.
- ¹⁰⁸ Marron, 'Annals', p. 204.
- ¹⁰⁹ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 452-453.
- ¹¹⁰ Marron, 'Annals', p. 206.
- ¹¹¹ Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery', p. 129; Ward, 'Education of Youth', pp. 164-165.
- ¹¹² Marron, 'Annals', p. 206.
- ¹¹³ Augustine Baker, quoted in Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 162.
- ¹¹⁴ Marron, 'Early Years', p. 261.
- ¹¹⁵ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, p. 188.
- ¹¹⁶ Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 97, 103.
- ¹¹⁷ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 453; Allanson, *Constitutions*, p. 98 (cap. 11, 'Dieta et Refectorium', stat. 4-6).
- ¹¹⁸ Allanson, *Records*, p. 28, citing Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 648.
- ¹¹⁹ Council Book 1620-1646, Archive of Douai Abbey VII.A.1.
- ¹²⁰ Copy of Council Book 1640-1646, Douai Abbey Archive, VII.A.1.
- ¹²¹ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 85.
- ¹²² Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 456.
- ¹²³ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 458.
- ¹²⁴ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 85.
- ¹²⁵ Council Book 1620-1646, Archive of Douai Abbey VII.A.1.
- ¹²⁶ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 56.

- ¹²⁷ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 70; Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 457.
- ¹²⁸ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 104.
- ¹²⁹ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 51.
- ¹³⁰ Birt, *Obit Book*, p. 65; Allanson, *Biography*, p. 116.
- ¹³¹ Lunn, *English Benedictines*, p. 160; Allanson, *Biography*, p. 90; Allanson, *History*, p. 458 note 3.
- ¹³² Allanson, *Biography*, p. 110.
- ¹³³ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 109.
- ¹³⁴ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 109.
- ¹³⁵ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, pp. 189, 194.
- ¹³⁶ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 394e.
- ¹³⁷ Chaussy, *Les Bénédictins anglais*, chapter 6.
- ¹³⁸ Allanson, *History*, pp. 334-336.
- ¹³⁹ Allanson, *History*, pp. 354-357. The ??defection?? was that of Columbanus Phillips. Born around 1613, he was professed in 1632 and ordained a priest in 1639. Having shown great promise as a conventual he was sent on the Mission in the early 1640s, but in the later 1640s he married and had a child, although he continued to profess himself a Catholic. He served against the Moors at Tangier, which Portugal had ceded to Charles II in 1660, and finally returned to St Edmund's in the 1680s. After a period of reschooling he was allowed to exercise his priestly functions within the community and he gained note as a confessor, although he had to be forbidden from saying Mass because of his defective memory (Allanson, *Biography*, pp. 113-114).
- ¹⁴⁰ Allanson, *Biography*, p. 96.
- ¹⁴¹ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, p. 202.
- ¹⁴² Marron, 'Annals', p. 207.
- ¹⁴³ Norman Ravitch, *The Catholic Church and the French Nation 1589-1989* (London & New York, 1990), p. 3.
- ¹⁴⁴ Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery', pp. 130, 136.
- ¹⁴⁵ Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery', p. 130.
- ¹⁴⁶ Weldon, *Chronological Notes*, pp. 213-214.
- ¹⁴⁷ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 463.
- ¹⁴⁸ Weldon, *Memorials*, II, 459. Weldon presents the undated petition with royal grants dating from 1650, 1674 and 1676, appearing to imply it dates from the 1670s; but the references to violent persecution and recent martyrdoms seem to suggest a date closer to the 1640s.
- ¹⁴⁹ Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery', p. 139.
- ¹⁵⁰ Description following Doyle, 'St. Edmund's Monastery', pp. 131-133.