

St. Mary's Cathedral

A Personal Approach

(A talk given in the Cathedral May 23rd, 1971)

By Margaret M. Phelan

IN the printed and written reports that I have read about our cathedral, I have nothing about the preliminaries, nothing about the decision to build it, or the site or the possibility of raising money. Nothing about the taking down of Burrell's Hall which had occupied the site and which had been the first home of St. Kieran's College. I start with the bold announcement found in Carrigan (Vol. III, page 128) that "after 8.00 o'clock Mass on 18th August, 1843 the foundation stone of the new cathedral of St. Mary's, Kilkenny was laid by Right Rev. William Kinsella, Bishop of Ossory assisted by Rev. Robert O'Shea (Adm.), Rev. William Lynch and Rev. John Delahunty.

The first church of St. Mary in Kilkenny, the earliest, was founded about 1222, its truncated structure is now St. Mary's Hall and is situated at back of Tholsel. In the far off days in which it was built it might have been considered the church of the merchants as St. Canice's cathedral was perhaps the church of the landed proprietors, the lords.

The second chapel of St. Mary's was built about 1700, it was humble and inconspicuous and when in 1771 the Penal Laws began to be relaxed, Father Patrick Molloy sought friends amongst the people of Kilkenny, be they Protestant or Catholic for the foundation and building of a new church. He got the necessary support and the lists of those who helped him make very interesting reading (Carrigan, Vol. III, pages 125 and on) Fr. Patrick Molloy himself a man of great vigour and courage was three times recommended by all the bishops in Ireland (save one) for the Sees of Ossory, Limerick and Kildare. Yet he never made the grade. Some of our members should do the story of his stormy life. Owing to his care the starting of what came to be known as the old cathedral seems much more fully documented than the present one with which we are really dealing (see Carrigan Vol. III, page 126).

The "old cathedral" built outside St. James' Gate at end of what used to be the bishop's town house was in full use from 1774 when it was finished till 1857 when the new building we stand in was consecrated. The model of our cathedral was Gloucester cathedral, the architect was a Mr. Butler of Dublin (he had been architect of St. Kieran's College), the material was our own splendid limestone taken, we think, from the Black

Quarry and the bishop who had the courage and foresight to start building was Rev. William Kinsella, a Carlow not Kilkenny man. It was intended to make it one "bay" longer and it is not quite clear why this was not done. Some say it was not possible to buy the ground to hold it; this extra ground was in unfriendly hands. Some say the money was not just available. Rev. William Kinsella's name besides being on the plate in the foundation stone is also on a white marble plaque at left of main doorway.

In 1845 Dr. Kinsella died when the walls were only seven feet high and he had been the guiding spirit and enthusiastic mover in the plan for a new cathedral. He was not yet 50, his death after a brief illness must have been a crushing blow. Besides being a great theologian and controversialist he was a great builder — St. Kieran's College and the Cathedral are his worthy monuments — as well as the many fine limestone churches of the diocese.

Fortunately for Kilkenny Dr. Kinsella was succeeded by a bishop holding the same ideals and enthusiasms. In Dr. Edmond Walsh, a Walsh both on his mother's as well as his father's side (from Luffany, Mooncoin) Ossory was blessed with a scholarly and very distinguished bishop, and from our point of view, one who was dedicated to finishing the cathedral. When he came into office in 1845, Ireland was in one of her rare periods of hope and optimism and he must have started at his task confidently and with high hope. But almost immediately there was the Young Ireland movement splitting the ranks of O'Connell, there was the failure of the Repeal movement, the death of O'Connell, the rise of the revolutionary Young Irelanders, and worst and most devastating of all, there was the famine. How on earth could the building have been continued? And how were the funds raised? In everything I have ever read of the cathedral there is one insistence and that is that the funds were the gift of the sons of Ossory, at home and abroad.

In 1959 I copied from a book lent me by Fr. Kirwan some data on this fund raising. Apparently from 1848 on there was what we would call a house to house collection in which a pair of parishioners undertook to collect a certain district weekly. They were called "Honorary Collectors for St. Mary's Cathedral Building Fund" and there were no women! Thus we have Thomas Hewitson and Thomas Pembroke doing John's Bridge to Rose Inn Street, James Tidmarsh and William Leahy doing Rose Inn Street to the Tholsel, Thomas Rafter and Patrick Birch doing the Tholsel to the Shambles, Joseph Hackett and Kenny Laprelle, King St., etc. etc. I have the copy with me if anyone wishes to see it.

During 1849, Thomas Carlyle, the great Scottish reformer visited Kilkenny and saw the walls of the cathedral going up

from his vantage point in Sullivan's brewery, which had been turned into a soup kitchen.

The funds came somehow for the cathedral, the bishop, Dr. E. Walsh had inherited £6,000 from Dr. Kinsella and the remaining £19,000 came in the manner above described or from the private means of benefactors. It must have seemed desirable all through the famine years to have kept the construction going and give employment, and I believe it did keep going in spite of all trials and tribulations. The Kilkenny Journal of October 12th, 1857 quoted by Carrigan (Vol. III, page 128) says that as it rose tier on tier of solid masonry and began to take form before all eyes, the zeal and enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds. How could this be otherwise? Kilkenny had loved to build her churches and furnish them magnificently at all times. She had been deprived of this joy in her faith ever since the Reformation. She had not been allowed to enter a church, let alone build one, relying on the Mass rock and the shade of the trees for the celebration of Holy Mass. No wonder that notwithstanding hunger and hardship the cathedral building went on.

October 4th, 1857 was the day fixed for the consecration of the cathedral and from September 19th, 1857, the Kilkenny Journal carries notices of the coming great day. September 23rd repeats the notice of the opening of the cathedral and calls it a gem and a masterpiece of art and lists the marble altars with their costly furniture recently brought from the Eternal City. The notice lists the choir, announces that Rev. Dr. Cullen will preach and asks for subscriptions to clear the debt to be sent to Dr. Walsh.

On September 30th a notice appears listing the price of seats in the cathedral for the opening day, £1 single for the first division, 10/- for second division, 5/- for third division (and family tickets too). A list of subscribers who answered the appeal is headed by Mrs. Hyland of Clonmoran. This is a very interesting list of citizens with addresses.

October 3rd has another notice as above and a further list of subscribers headed by Michael Sullivan, M.P., Richard Smithwick and Edward Mulhallen. The Journal tells of a booklet it has printed at 2/- which gives the consecration service in Latin and in English (no Irish!). It is printed in black and red with stiff covers. It also advertises a photographic view of the east front of the new cathedral by D. Heusner (name sounds German) at £1-1-0 and dedicated to Dr. Edward Walsh.

The great day of October 4th, 1857 may be said to have commenced the night before, for on that Saturday evening the Sacred Relics were placed in tents in the cathedral yard ready for consigning to their resting place beneath the altars of the Sanctuary. During the evening and night lights were continually

burning around the relics. Dawn found faithful sentinels still at their vigil. Throughout the night, the Kilkenny Journal says "psalm and prayer broke like the song of angels upon the stillness of the scene." Beautiful cold autumn night and a pale moon witnessed the lamps burning and the watchers at their tasks guarding the relics of Sts. Cosmos and Damien and St. Clement recently brought from the Catacombs of the Eternal City. Sts. Cosmos and Damien were placed under the High Altar, St. Clement under Our Lady's Altar, Our Lady to whom of course the cathedral has been dedicated.

The consecration began at 6.15 a.m. on Sunday morning and concluded about 9.00. Rev. Dr. Walsh, the Bishop officiated, assisted by a large number of clergy. A procession led by the bishops went three times around the building chanting hymns and sprinkling holy water as they went and on passing the front of the cathedral, knocked on the door on the first two occasions, the third time they entered and proceeded half way up the building when they stopped and chanted sacred offices again. Then Dr. Walsh advanced to the Sanctuary, sprinkled the high altar with holy water, signed it with sacred oil and deposited the relics there. He then proceeded to the Lady Chapel and in similar manner blessed the altar there and deposited the relic. Then he blessed the 12 crosses which hung at each pillar along the nave with a candle lighting above them. (Some of these crosses and the candle sconces are still in position). The consecration was now over and Dr. Walsh returned to the Lady Chapel and celebrated Mass there assisted by Rev. Drs. Brennan and Hennessy of St. Kieran's College.

Tremendous crowds attended the consecration ceremony, early as it was in the morning. The railway, not so long in Kilkenny at the time ran special trains and the C.Y.M.S. did the stewarding. In the evening there were solemn pontifical vespers.

The shell of the cathedral was thus consecrated amid scenes of great rejoicing. Amid all the difficulties much had been achieved but the church inside was very different from what we look at today, only three altars were in place, the High altar, Our Lady's and St. Joseph's. The sacristy was beneath the high altar, there was no Chapter house, the pulpit was not the one we look at to-day, and there was no heating. The beautiful statue of Our Lady had been purchased at, I have heard, a cost of £500 and this was put up by the ladies of the parish. The sculptor of this was Benzoni.

In 1862 the railings were built around the church and the steps to the side aisles. In 1866 a new organ and gallery were installed at cost of £1,000 (Rev. T. J. Clohosey centenary booklet, 1947) and in 1866 also Dr. Walsh built the presbytery adjoining. If this was the land sought for in 1843, it was now available

apparently through, possibly the good offices of the Fennessy family dealing with the recalcitrant landlord. There is an engraving on the presbytery, now not easy to read which says "this house was built and the ground attached to it purchased by Right Rev. E. Walsh, Bishop of Ossory for the use of the clergy of St. Mary's parish for the time being on condition of having at their expense a Mass celebrated annually on the day of his death."

To Edward Walsh, Bishop of Ossory the greatest amount of credit must go for the gift of the cathedral to the people of Ossory. True, it was begun before his episcopate but for more than 25 years he had worked at it and for it. To him our real and sincere gratitude. In 1871, when he was 80, he asked for a co-adjutor, and in 1872, Patrick Francis Moran was appointed and our old friend Edward Walsh died, having been longer on the episcopal throne than any bishop of Ossory since the Reformation. His seal in beautifully carved white marble is over the entrance door and that is the fitting position for it. In almost every way it is his cathedral.

The new bishop, Dr. Moran was a great scholar and cleric but he does not seem to have connected himself very greatly with the cathedral. He was much concerned with education and many convents and especially St. Kieran's College where the Moran addition and wing were completed in 1877, witness his generosity and enthusiasm.

He was a very fine ecclesiastical historian, in the way of his two great predecessors, David Rothe and Thomas de Burgo and founder of Ossory Archaeological Society. After governing Ossory for 12 years he was appointed Archbishop of Sydney in 1884 and Cardinal in 1885.

In spite of not finding any gift of Dr. Moran to the cathedral there were a lot of gifts made to it during his episcopate and these I will list when I finish the history and speak about the furnishings.

In 1884 Abraham Brownrigg, a native of Clonegal, Carlow, educated in Wexford was made bishop and consecrated in St. Mary's cathedral. Before going to talk of his episcopate, I must mention the visit of the members of the British Association to Kilkenny in August, 1878 and their going to St. Mary's. They were brought to see all the sites (and many more) that we would show V.I.P.s today, but Fr. Edward Callanan, himself a Kilkennyman (of the Victoria Hotel) and very deeply proud of his cathedral, brought them to the cathedral and spoke to them from the pulpit. He drew their attention to the stained glass window of the Assumption, the sculpture of the Blessed Virgin, the relics of St. Victoria. Fr. Callanan was one of the great administrators of the cathedral who founded the confraternity of the Holy Family

and who brought back the banner of the Holy Family from Rome in 1875.

Abraham Brownrigg became Bishop of Ossory in 1884 and from the moment he came to Kilkenny he must have felt impelled to work on St. Mary's. In 1893 a printed report was issued and this lists what had been done in the six previous years and what still remained to be done. This report was the work of Fr. Tobias Walsh, Adm. of St. Mary's and a splendid and informative document it is.

A meeting was called in the new Chapter house over the Sacristy at which there was a most representative group of clergy present and the leading citizens of the town (again no women!). The Bishop was voted into the Chair, he hoped that all the proceedings would be harmonious and called on Fr. Tobias Walsh to read his report. Fr. Walsh told of the work completed which included the erection of the new Sacristy (you remember earlier one had been in the crypt beneath the High Altar), the erection of the two inner porches at the aisles, the remodelling of the centre porch and organ gallery, the erection of boilers and apparatus for heating church and sacristy, the lengthening of the marble altar rails to meet each side wall, the erection of new marble altar of Sacred Heart, the purchase of statues in white marble of the Sacred Heart, St. Joseph and Divine Child, the effecting of an insurance policy on the whole building and the procuring of a stain glass window for the south transept.

The first of these improvements, the sacristy, had its foundation stone laid in 1887 by Dr. Patrick Ryan, Archbishop of Philadelphia, who had been visiting Kilkenny then. The architect was William Hague, 50 Dawson Street, Dublin, the builder William Cleere of Kilkenny who had given every satisfaction. Mr. Stephen Lalor, our fellow citizen had built the two side porches and remodelled the centre one in a splendid way. Messrs. T. Power & Son had carried out the heating from designs by Mr. Hague in such a way as to be very unobtrusive but very effective and made the cathedral supremely comfortable. Messrs. James Pearse, Marble Works, Dublin had completed the altar rails and built the altar of the Sacred Heart. It is a matter of great pride for us in Kilkenny that the father of Pdraig and Willie Pearse had a telling part in the furnishing of our cathedral.

About seven years before the report, i.e. about 1876, a very severe storm had driven in the south window and smashed it to pieces and it had now been replaced by Mayer & Co., Munich, well known stain glass artists. To prevent the recurrence of this breakage, on each window on the outside another window of thick plain glass had to be placed. This was very troublesome and costly work but had been skilfully carried out by Messrs. Campion Bros. of Patrick Street.

Fr. Walsh produced all the bills for this work done and

pointed out that as far as possible the work was done by Kilkenny firms, our fellow citizens. Apart from the firms mentioned i.e. Messrs. Cleere, Stephen Lalor, Power & Son, Mr. Catlin of Kilkenny Gasworks, Edmond Molloy, hardware merchant and Powers the painters were also involved in the scheme. I am not going to give you all the bills but the total was nearly £8,000 of which £900 was for the heating apparatus and boilers and the marble tops that concealed most of the ugly gratings. Everything almost had been paid, just £365 outstanding, but still more was envisaged and the question before the meeting was whether to go ahead or stop and take a breather before embarking on further expenditure. The meeting wanted to know what was envisaged and heard from Fr. Walsh :

1. Overhauling of the roof.
2. Furnishing of sanctuary.
3. Painting and cleaning church.
4. Altar of St. Joseph.
5. Baptismal font or Baptistry.
6. Laying out cathedral grounds.
7. A new pulpit.
8. New seats to better design for aisles.

The meeting approved of all and said "go ahead" and we will work might and main to get the money. The citizens were as good as their word and on April 9th, 1899 the reconstructed and refurnished cathedral was opened before a very distinguished congregation. High Mass at noon and present were Cardinal Logue, Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Walsh, Dr. Donnelly, Bishop of Canea was celebrant of the Mass and the preacher was Dr. Healy, Bishop of Clonfert. Excursion trains had been run from Waterford and Maryboro, as it then was — now Portlaoise. Cardinal Logue came by train, was met by the Bishop, stayed at Drakelands and was recipient of many addresses among which was one from St. Vincent de Paul Society, one from Gaelic League and one from C.Y.M.S.

The reedos to the High Altar, the pulpit and the baptismal font were supplied by M/s Ryan, Great Denmark St., Dublin; railings and brass work by Kane & Gunning; mosaic floor (four emblems of the evangelists) by M/s Bourke, London; murals by Westlake, London. The baptistry itself was built by Mr. P. Nolan of Monaghan who was later to build St. Patrick's church and St. John's and who was instrumental in bringing to Kilkenny, as his first lieutenant, the late Mr. T. Cullen who gave two priests to the diocese of Ossory and whose grand-daughter, Dorcas Birthistle is an esteemed committee member of K.A.S.

In 1909 Abraham Brownrigg was 25 years a bishop and the statue of St. Patrick in the cathedral grounds made by Smith of Dublin, was erected to commemorate the event. The inscription reads "This statue of St. Patrick was erected by the parishioners

of the four city churches to commemorate the episcopal silver jubilee of the Most Rev. Abraham Brownrigg, D.D., Lord Bishop of Ossory and to mark their recognition of his Lordship's arduous labours for the welfare of the church in this diocese and his unflinching attention to the spiritual and temporal needs of his people. 14th December, 1909."

The people who responded so magnificently in 1893 and in the years between then and 1900 could never have thought that less than 30 years later another full scale investigation and restoration would be required, but such indeed was the case. The turrets outside had to be taken down and rebuilt, the roof was leaking and all of it had to be overhauled. Inside mosaic work was carried out on the sanctuary and side altars, pitch pine seats put in aisles and transepts. Dr. Collier who had been appointed bishop in 1928 found himself requiring £28,000 to do the necessary repairs and additions. The whole diocese responded magnificently to the appeal for funds and besides the really needed renovation, the beautiful altar of the Little Flower was put up (instead of a pieta which is now in St. Kieran's), the organ was renovated at a cost of £2,500 and the choir stalls installed. These are of Austrian oak and are the most recent addition. Dr. Patrick Collier died in 1964 is buried at the right hand side of the cathedral outside under an inscribed slab. He had served the diocese well during his long bishopric of 36 years, and especially the cathedral of St. Mary. Dr. Downey had preceded him as coadjutor to Abraham Brownrigg, but he as well as Drs. Walsh, Kinsella and Marum rest in the cathedral vault. Dr. Brownrigg is buried before the High altar in St. Patrick's church.

I intend to say a little of the monuments and slabs in the church and the families they commemorate. Starting at top left hand corner at the Sacred Heart altar there is a fine black marble slab covering vault of the Potter family, tastefully surrounded by tiles in red, black and cream. It has this inscription — on top the word "Potter" and then "Aileen Mary beloved child of Frances Potter died 8th June, 1874 age 7 yrs. and 11 mths. Frances, wife of John Potter died 11th day of February, 1917, Kathleen, daughter of John and Frances Potter died 8th November, 1917. On whose souls sweet Jesus have mercy" "Frances, daughter of John and Frances Potter, died 17th day of Aug. 1930."

The Potter family and the Cullen family and the Fenessys, all of High Street are the only Kilkenny families that have or had right of burial in the cathedral, and this they gained, I believe, because of their great help financially and otherwise in the 1880's and onwards to the cathedral. Many people will remember the name and family of the last Potters very well — Michael L. and Mary Angela (the last to bear the name) both

buried in Foulkstown. It is understood that Mrs. M. A. Potter (because she was not a Potter at birth) could not come here to be interred so her husband, Michael L. chose to be with her in Foulkstown. The last Potter to be buried here was Fanny in 1930. She gave the candelabra at the Little Flower altar and helped financially with the altar itself. For 200 years in every way in this town the Potters were a very strong and leading Catholic family. They were business men of all kinds, drapers, grocers, wine merchants, hatters, clockmakers, Jesuits, doctors, dentists. They lived in Wellington Square, in 23 James' St., in 46 & 7 High Street, in 8 William St., Drakelands and Castleview. They were mayors, high sheriffs, justices of the peace. We all must view with some sadness the disappearance from amongst us of this family, the demolition of their High St. premises, the taking down of the name from the Kilkenny scene.

The Cullen vault is at the opposite side in front of the Little Flower altar and underneath the great window of the Assumption which Daniel Cullen gave in 1873. It is inscribed thus "Sacred to the memory of Daniel Cullen, Esq. J.P., of High St., Kilkenny, Vice President of the Vincent de Paul Society who departed this life 8th May, 1874, aged 70 and to that of his wife, Anastatia Cullen who departed this life 29th May, 1875 aged 72 fortified by the Sacraments of the church. This slab is dedicated to their memory as a lasting tribute of affection by their sorrowful children, Mary Agnes and Anastatia Cullen." Daniel Cullen was a very wealthy Catholic merchant in Kilkenny from 1850 onwards. At the time the cathedral was being built and furnished he gave generously to the project. Mayor and High Sheriff of Kilkenny, he was the first Catholic to wear the robes of office in public since the Battle of the Boyne. His place of business was in High Street, where the G.P.O. is now and he held much other property. His daughter Mary Agnes, married David Bolger and her daughter, Mrs. Anne Cantwell was grandmother of our esteemed member, Jimmy Delaney, now working in Germany, and the repository of the tales of the family and much too of the old Kilkenny history. Daniel Cullen was one of the honorary collectors of the Restoration fund before referred to and in a system of pew holding that followed the consecration of 1857 he had seat No. 1, John Fennessy had seat No. 2 and Mr. Hudson No. 4. This pew holding was probably to bring in money and appears to have continued for 1857, 58, 59 and then stopped. Pew holding was never countenanced generally by the church.

The Hylands of Clonmoran are commemorated on the wall plaque at the top of the left hand side aisle. It says "Of your charity pray for the repose of Mr. Laurence Hyland of Castleblunden who departed this life November 13th, 1845 and of his sons, Richard who departed this life June 8th, 1854 and William August 8th, 1855 and his wife, Eleanor who departed this life

on the octave of Corpus Christi, June 3rd, 1869 to whose memory this tablet has been erected. It is a holy and wholesome thought etc. R.I.P." There is a brass addition under the white marble plaque which says "Solemn office and requiem Mass are celebrated annually in this church on 15th November on which day the prayers of the faithful are requested for the above mentioned and particularly for Mrs. Eleanor Hyland by whom this commemoration was established." The monument was put up by A. Colles, Kilkenny Marble Works.

The Hyland family are fortunately still with us. Mrs. Eleanor Hyland commemorated above was Eleanor Walsh from Mullinavat where she was a landed proprietor in her own right, later the land was given to the nuns there. She and Laurence were parents of John Patrick Hyland who in 1853 owned and rebuilt the old theatre, the Athaneum on the Parade which was the show house for more than 50 years after J. P. Hyland's restoration for theatre, variety and concert in Kilkenny. The letters J. P. H. and date 1853 were discernible in the stucco during late restoration of the building now Inland Revenue Office.

The next monument in this aisle is one unique in Kilkenny it is a black mural monument almost in renaissance style with flamboyant tracery with an inscribed shield in white marble an altarlike projection below. Then an inscription "In your mercy pray for the repose of Mr. Michael Desmonde, a great benefactor to this church and the poor of the city of Kilkenny. He died 6th May, 1851 aged 36" R.I.P. One word about this estimable young man I have not been able to find, not in any books relating to the church or in any of the Kilkenny directories, or in Dr. Birch's account of St. Kieran's College. If anyone could give me information I would be really grateful. His monument is an impressive one.

The floor slab at the left hand aisle door is quite plain, no tiles surround it. It says "In your charity pray for the eternal repose of Mr. John Fennessy who departed this life 26th April, 1874 and Mrs. Eliza Fennessy, his wife, the donor of the marble railing in this church and generous benefactor of the poor of Kilkenny who departed this life February 13th, 1875."

The Fennessys were nurserymen in Kilkenny all during the last century having come here from Waterford where their business was established in 1712, and besides being nurserymen also were landed proprietors and millers. Fennessy's mill on the Canal is known to most of us. They sold their land (nursery gardens) in New Street to Kieran's College in 1873 — £550 was paid to John Fennessy in that year (Peter Birch — "St. Kieran's College"). The last two Fennessys remembered in Kilkenny were Edward and Richard, their business premises were in High Street and their residence was Maiden Hill then called Ardscradawn.

They had land too at Enisnag (and a residence where Sheehans are now) on both sides of the King's River. An iron cage on pulleys enabled them to get from one side of the river to the other — a kind of cable car. The last two Fenessys were bachelors and it is rumoured woman haters; one had been to Texas.

Mrs. Anne Cody gave the Stations in 1873 and we are requested to pray for her. I know nothing about her and though I tried my best could find nothing. The Stations are very fine indeed and in perfect keeping with the cathedral.

The plaque commemorating the Hudsons states they were munificent benefactors of this church and it could hardly say less, and the same munificence was extended to the Black Abbey (where Mrs. Anastatia Hudson is buried), to St. Patrick's church, to St. Kieran's College and to every Catholic activity in the last half of the 19th century. They were very wealthy victuallers and had been in business in Rose Inn Street for more than 100 years. They lived in one of the Georgian houses on the Parade — No. 8 and they occupied this from 1871-1891.

The two angels ho'ding the fonts at the entrance to the chancel were given one in remembrance of John Callinan and the other in remembrance of Mrs. Buckley. John Callinan was proprietor of Victoria Hotel and Callinan's Livery yard at 35 Patrick Street and was probably the father of Rev. E. Callinan who was administrator of St. Mary's and also related to Reeds of the mill on the Canal. The white angels were carved by the son of Hogan, the famous sculptor who was a pupil of Benzoni.

THE STAIN GLASS

In the apse over the high altar are six single lights with figures of the prophets, these were the gift of Most Rev. Dr. Walsh who spent so much time and money on the cathedral. They were made by Early & Powell of Upper Camden Street, Dublin who at the time were the only firm of its kind in the country. Their advertisement in Bassett's Guide gives the information about Dr. Walsh's generosity and states that they also erected two flight windows in the side chapels, probably at the expense of church funds, but the glass in St. Joseph's chapel was given by Mrs. Dunne nee Buggy. She was sister of John Buggy of Cantwell's Court and last surviving member of the family of Kieran Thomas Buggy, patriot and poet.

The stain glass window on the left hand aisle near Sacred Heart altar was the second to be placed in that position. You remember the first one, given by the Bryans of Jenkinstown had blown in in a storm. This surviving window is in honour of the Sacred Heart and seems to include all who were devoted to this devotion through the ages, St. Catherine of Alexandria,

St. Gertrude, as well as the more familiar St. Margaret Mary. The window cost the parish £300 sometime after 1877, made by Mayer, Munich. I have no information on the glass over the organ, but I suspect it comes right from the beginning and to have been in place in 1857.

The stain glass window on the right hand aisle was the gift of the Cullen family and it commemorates the Assumption of Our Lady and was designed in Rome for Fr. Cavanagh who was chaplain to the High Sheriff, Daniel Cullen. The maker of the glass was Early & Powell.

The benches and much of the church furniture were made by the D'Arcy family, John's Bridge though I have not seen this written anywhere. My brother, Peter Duggan, gives the information. Old Mr. D'Arcy himself told Peter that it took his firm a week to make one bench alone so well and carefully was it done. This, I feel was for 1899 restoration but nowhere have I seen anything about the furniture at any time.

St. Victoria, virgin and martyr, died 250 A.D. Entire relics are preserved in the shrine but are covered with life like wax; the phial was found with the relics and contained the blood of the martyr.

Tribute must be made to Rev. Cornelius Sherin, Director of Sacred Music in the cathedral for many years and grand-son of John P. Sherin of 7 High Street who had been an enthusiastic helper and fund raiser in 1893-1899.

Speaking at 11 o'clock Mass at St. Mary's on Sunday, 11th June, 1911, Rev. James Doyle, Adm., said that a most valuable presentation had been made to the cathedral, the donor being the Countess Von Musil-Mollenbruch now residing at Baden in Austria. The Countess is a native of Ossory, her maiden name being Julia Molloy. Previous to her marriage she resided with her parents at Galmoy, Co. Kilkenny. The presentation included a magnificent chalice, ciborium and monstrance, and a beautiful oil painting of the Madonna — a copy of Raphael's masterpiece which she purchased in Florence. (From the Kilkenny Journal, 17th June, 1911. This picture hangs in the Sacristy.

The Bishops of Ossory as I have listed them who had to do with the founding, building and furnishing of the cathedral were Bishops Kinsella, Walsh, Moran, Brownrigg and Collier; all contributed many gifts of time, energy and thoughtfulness besides material objects. Dr. Birch coming in 1962 and very in tune with modern liturgy had an altar placed in the crossing and Mass celebrated facing the congregation, thereby bringing all the celebrations much more within view of the congregation. The Blessed Sacrament is still kept in the High Altar which is really a long way back from the table of the Sacrifice. This was the first church in Ossory, I think, in which Mass was said

facing the people, as this cathedral was, I think, the first cathedral in Ireland to be built after the Penal Days.

What of the administrators, the priests who through the years had to bear much of the fund raising, arranging and re-organisation? Let us pay them the tribute of recognising their worth in the upkeep of this magnificent building. I am not sure who worked hardest at it, but must mention the Rev. Robert O'Shea who was administrator (1840-1847) during the foundation, the Rev. William Hayden (1851-1857) who was administrator during the years immediately before the consecration, the Rev. Edward Callinan (1878-1879), we have already mentioned who founded the Holy Family confraternity, the Rev. Tobias Walsh (1885-1894) who prepared the report we have read and was present during the years of the Bishop Brownrigg restoration and the Rev. James Walsh who from 1927 to 1937 saw through the last great furnishing and restoration. To all these fine priests our sincere gratitude for the great care they have taken of our cathedral. There have of course been many more than I have mentioned. I just picked out those whose names are connected with some activity of the cathedral, or building, or restoration.

Finally, there is none amongst us who does not realise how completely the physical presence of the cathedral dominates the old city. From whatever means you approach Kilkenny, by road or main road, field or river or cross country, the beautiful tower of the building is your first sight of Kilkenny and this has been so since 1857 when the men of old built with joy and pride their wonderful cathedral. If it could fill our spiritual life and living with its great moral worth then perhaps we would be a happier and more christian community.

The inscribed plate in the cathedral consists of the following :

- (1) Chalice — Pray for Walter Archer, son of Richard, 1606.
- (2) Ciborium — This is the gift of E. B. to St. Mary's Parish — Butler crest.
- (3) Chalice — Tall Pray for soul of John Langton who had me made — Base cusped six times — Noted in Carrigan, 1711.
- (4) Chalice — Plain — Pray for the soul of Anne Evelin alias Staines — Noted in Carrigan (Anne's daughter Anne married John Bryan of Jenkinstown c. 1665).
- (5) Chalice and Monstrance matching — Monstrance inscribed — Presented by Thomas Peart to the R.C. Chapel of St. James April 15, 1853 — Noted in Carrigan.
- (6) Chalice and Monstrance matching — Gift of Richard Duggan in memory of his friend Rev. Andrew O'Keeffe, Administrator of this cathedral 1912-27.

The gift of Julia Molloy is unscribed but is identifiable by the Viennese address inside the cases.

Acknowledgements to Miss Nan Bergin, Mrs. R. de Loughry, Mr. Joe O'Carroll, Mr. Leo McAdams, of course, to Rev Fr. Holohan and Noel Lanigan and all who helped in any way Proprietors of Journal .

Sources :

- (1) Old numbers of Kilkenny Journal.
- (2) History & Antiquities of Diocese of Ossory (William Canon Carrigan).
- (3) Carlyle's Irish Journey.
- (4) Large book in possession of St. Mary's Presbytery dealing with the years 1853-54 and up to the consecration.
- (5) Visit of the British Association in August, 1878 — booklet printed by Kilkenny Journal.
- (6) Report of meeting in St. Mary's on October 22nd, 1893 — probably printed by Kilkenny Journal.
- (7) St. Mary's Souvenir Booklet, 1847, printed by Kilkenny People.
- (8) St. Kieran's College by Rev. Peter Birch.

K. A. S. CHRISTMAS PARTY

Metropole Hotel, 12th December 1970

Three Little Poems	Master J. Bradley
Talk : Recollections	Mr. Peter Duggan
Song	Mr. George Wilde
Talk : I.N.T.O. Congress	Miss Maureen Hegarty
Songs with Guitar	Miss Patricia and A. O'Keefe
Talk : "A Tiepolo Ceiling"	Miss Nora O'Sullivan
Song	Dr. T. McKeogh
Talk : "A Glass Factory in Gurteen" Co. Kilkenny ...	Mr G. Tyler
Talk : A Ghost Story	The Rev. Sean O'Doherty
Violin Solo	Mrs. George Butler, Mrs. Lambert at Piano
Talk : "The Tower"	Mr. E. W. Hughes
Song : "Negro Spiritual"	Mr. Tom Coyle
Talk : "Social Services"	Mr. Tom Lyng
Songs with Harp	Miss E. Dunne
Talk : "The Burchaell Letters"	Mr. P. Smithwick
Song	Mrs. Kilbride
Talk : "1908 and all that"	Mr. L. McAdams
Song	Mr. W. Holmes

Carols : Silent Night, Adeste Fidelis with Miss Dunne with Harp at the Piano, Miss Mary O'Carroll

Programme arranged and conducted by Joseph O'Carroll