Albury and the Catholic Apostolic Church

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Introduction

For many, the interest of the story arises from knowing the building and is setting as part of the local landscape but knowing so little about it, and about the beliefs which led to its being built and then closed. I have been interested in the church for about twenty years, I studied it as part of my Ph.D., I have friends who were brought up in it, and I am now writing a book on it (as well as another on the man who was its John the Baptist, Edward Irving).

This evening, I wish to focus on the Albury congregation and the role it played in the development of the Catholic Apostolic Church as a whole; space does not allow anything like a comprehensive introduction to the movement's history and beliefs. Neither is there room to survey the many sermons which were preached at Albury and subsequently printed for wider circulation.

At this point, let me introduce the main sources which I have used, because I am sometimes asked where I manage to find my material:

- 'Annals: the Lord's Work in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries'. This is a unique document, compiled by the movement's librarian, H.B. Copinger (1880-1951) and based on manuscripts held at the movement's headquarters in London's Gordon Square.
- Lambeth Palace Library holds a collection of materials which were apparently previously held by Philip Gray, Rector of Albury 1930-44; there are also many

references in the papers of various archbishops of Canterbury, for reasons which I shall explain shortly.

- I have also found manuscripts referring to the Albury congregation at the Surrey Record Office.
- On the building, the National Monuments Register has proved a valuable source of illustrative material.
- As for printed materials, there are good collections at the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and the British Orthodox Church (in South-East London).

Henry Drummond, Edward Irving & the Albury Conferences

The Catholic Apostolic Church owed as much to Henry Drummond (1786-1860) as it did to any other person. Drummond was a partner in the family bank who had experienced an evangelical conversion and thereafter involved himself with a variety of religious causes. Most of them were at the radical end of the evangelical spectrum: there was a group of seceders from the Church of England, the 'Western Schism', under whose auspices he was baptised by immersion at Taunton about 1816; there was the seceding Scottish preacher Robert Haldane (1764-1842), whose work Drummond built on in Geneva from 1817; there was the Continental Society, founded to spread evangelical Christianity in mainland Europe, and which Drummond substantially bankrolled; and there was the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews. So this high Tory MP, country squire, and patron of the living of Albury was at the same time something of an unsettled religious radical.

I am not going to outline the main features of the 1820s social and political context; you will be aware of most of them anyway. Suffice to say that it is easy to understand why conservative-minded churchmen were convinced that the whole fabric of society was teetering on the edge of the abyss. It is also worth pointing out that the study of the prophetic parts of the Bible was a respected mainstream intellectual pursuit, and (curiously) that one notable writer on such subjects was none other than Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), who had been Rector of Albury from 1774-80 and went on to enjoy a distinguished career as a bishop.

In 1819, Drummond had purchased the Albury Park estate from Charles Baring Wall. [2] It was Lewis Way, secretary of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews, who suggested that Drummond convene residential gatherings to study the prophetic parts of the Bible. Each year from 1826-30, therefore, several dozen Evangelical clergy and laity from England and Scotland met for several days at Albury Park. The meetings were presided over by Hugh M'Neile (1795-1879), Rector of Albury since 1822, but the main theological input came from Edward Irving (1792-1834), minister of the National Scotch Church in London's Regent Square. The discussions of the first three conferences were published in the form of three volumes of *Dialogues on Prophecy*. For these men, as for many other Evangelicals, the great need of the hour was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church, to unite its various factions and empower it to meet contemporary challenges.

In 1829 the 'Albury Circle', as they became known, acquired an ailing paper, *The Morning Watch*, and turned it into a quarterly journal disseminating their views on such subjects as prophecy and (later) the person of Christ, and claims to the restoration of supernatural gifts such as healing, tongues, and prophecy. However, in 1833 it closed (although circulation was, if anything, increasing); its editor, John Tudor, explained that pressure of church work meant that he could no longer devote time to it. He was to be one of the 12 Apostles of the Catholic Apostolic Church.

The heightened sense of spiritual anticipation which was evident among the Albury circle predisposed them to take seriously reports early in 1830 that the Holy Spirit had indeed been poured out on Christians in the Gareloch area of Western Scotland, and that and that supernatural manifestations such as healing, speaking in tongues, and prophecy, were occurring as evidence of this. At the final Albury conference that July, M'Neile as chairman exhorted participants to investigate the reports. A number of pilgrims went to investigate the claims for themselves. Some were convinced; others remained sceptical; and a number became strongly opposed. M'Neile, in spite

of his initial openness, was one of the last group. Drummond, as we shall see, took a different view.

In November 1831, Drummond employed a missionary named Smith (who became tutor to Drummond's sons and was replaced by William Caird the following April) to work among the villagers, with a fair amount of success, and in September he set up two prayer meetings, at Albury and Guildford; these were to pray that God's judgment would be averted (especially the cholera, then expected imminently), and that the gifts of the Spirit would be restored to the church. Drummond had hoped that M'Neile would preside, but he expressed his disapproval of such meetings, refusing to allow any layman to pray in his presence. Rich and poor refused to meet in the same place, so Drummond had to divide the Albury meeting; M'Neile leaned on the lady hosting the meeting for the rich to discontinue it; and his disapproval meant that few would attend the Guildford meeting. He also began to preach openly against the new ideas. By 1832, therefore, relations between M'Neile and Drummond deteriorated to the point where Drummond, returning from London for the summer, withdrew from the parish church. He, his family, and about 20 others from the locality began to meet apart each Sunday.[3] Their developing sense of good order led them to confess their sin in meeting apart from the clergyman of the parish, who was believed to be God's ordained pastor; they confessed the sin of generations of Christians, and prayed for M'Neile and all clergy that they might come to accept what was happening.[4]

Initially almost all Anglicans, the group received a few Methodists, and then some who had no previous church connection. After some months, one of their number began to speak in tongues and prophesy, and they prayed that through this means a pastor might be appointed for them. On 20 October 1832, a prophet in London named Drummond himself as the pastor. But they were not agreed as to whether prophetic nomination was sufficient, or whether he also needed to be ordained in some visible manner, and so they continued to wait. Drummond acted as pastor, but was not yet permitted to administer the sacraments. On 26 December, Drummond was ordained by the recently-called Apostle J.B. Cardale (1802-77) as the first Angel of the Albury church. (The term 'Angel' was taken from Revelation 2-3, the letters to the Seven Churches, each of which was addressed to the church's Angel. Angels in this sense were like bishops, but with jurisdiction over one congregation rather than a diocese.)

At first the group had met in Drummond's house, but by the end of 1832 they had grown to about 45. The stable and coach house were therefore altered by a local joiner, Anthony Browne, to form a place of worship for the new congregation.[5] Among those 'speaking in the Spirit' was Drummond: on one occasion, Browne as an unsympathetic eye-witness recorded that Drummond 'began to speak in the unknown tongue Began with a loud hissing noise then a jabbering noise and then some words repeating every 3 or 4 words about 4 or 5 sentences. Then he began "Oh tis love tis love" repeating it the same every 3 or 4 words so we could understand.'[6] Browne also claimed that 'common people', to use his phrase, were not allowed to do so. One woman 'trying it on one evening was told to be quiet'.[7] Whether or not his interpretation of events was accurate, it should be noted (i) that possession of charismatic gifts was not seen by the movement as a whole as overriding existing social distinctions, and (ii) that lack of social standing was not seen as a bar to possession of charismatic gifts.

Thereafter, several other ministers were appointed for the Albury church, being called to their tasks by words of prophecy; congregational numbers continued to increase. By 1834, M'Neile reported that the congregation had grown to 200, mostly from Shere, Guildford, and Godalming.[8] A baptismal register was kept from March 1833, [9] and from the number of baptisms it would appear that the congregation was becoming quite sizeable. As some of the parents were illiterate, I suspect that Drummond, like a typical squire, expected his servants and estate workers to go to the same church as he did, and that they made up a proportion of the congregation. It would be interesting to know what impact this had on attendance at the parish church.[10] On 25 September 1833 at Albury, Drummond was called as an Apostle, the second of the twelve.[11]

Attitudes towards existing churches were quite negative; as Drummond put it, 'the knell of the Church of England tolled when, on the 26th of December, by the

ordination of the angel of the church of Christ at Albury, her priesthood was set aside'.[12] Parallel to the setting up of a new church at Albury there had been an attempted transformation of an old one in London: however, in May 1832 Irving was locked out because of his approval of the manifestations and forced to set up his own congregation in Newman Street. He was deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland for heresy in March 1833 because of his teaching concerning the person of Christ, which was deemed contrary to orthodox theology. Drummond, Irving and those associated with the new movement concluded that God was rejecting the old ecclesiastical order, and that his purpose was to set up a new one. They became convinced, guided by words of prophecy, that God's purpose was not merely to bestow supernatural gifts but to restore the church to its original perfection, in preparation for the imminent return of Christ. Such a restoration was not merely a matter of inward spiritual attitudes, but extended to the church's structure, leadership, and pattern of worship. The structure, they believed, was prefigured by the minute instructions given concerning the building of the Tabernacle of Moses. The leadership was seen as headed up by 12 Apostles, counterparts at the end of the age to the first 12 at its beginning. Only men with such a ministry could succeed in reuniting the church and preparing it for its presentation to Christ as a spotless bride at his Second Coming. The worship was likewise seen as prefigured by Old Testament ritual, but it drew upon sources in Eastern and Western Christianity to produce a rich Liturgy.

Irving died in December 1834, and his role in the Catholic Apostolic Church has often been likened to that of John the Baptist - a forerunner, who was content to decrease in significance in order that God's work might unfold.[13] He was never an Apostle, though he was appointed an Angel of the congregation in London which represented the majority of his Presbyterian flock. For this reason, and because of their dislike of being named after one human being, Catholic Apostolics have always rejected the name 'Irvingites'.

Albury and the developing movement

Headquarters and liturgical laboratory

Two places assumed key significance in the movement's developing structure - London and Albury. In London, Seven Churches were set up, corresponding to the Seven Churches in Revelation. These were intended to serve as a microcosm or demonstration model of the Christian Church as a whole. Albury, however, was the base for the Apostles. From here they governed and set in order the churches under their care, and in the church they introduced new liturgies and rites which were then taken up by congregations elsewhere.

Prophecy had designated Albury as the chief seat of the Apostles, and after their 'Separation' on 14 July 1835 (i.e. their formal setting apart to devote themselves to exercising this role) they retired to Drummond's house for a year, laying down their local responsibilities, along with seven prophets for the Universal Church, to study the Bible. From this period came three 'Testimonies'; these were surveys of the religious and political condition of Christendom and appeals, in the face of impending divine judgement, to accept the work of God through the restored Apostles. Two were addressed to the Bishops of the Church of England, and to the King and the Privy Council, and these were delivered early in 1836; another, known as the 'Great Testimony', was addressed to the heads of church and state in Christendom as a whole, and delivered in 1838.[14]

From Albury, the Apostles set out in 1837-8 to deliver the Testimony and to 'gather gold' from the various sections of Christendom, studying their worship and theology and obtaining a clearer picture of the needs which existed. They returned at Christmas 1838, set up the fourfold ministry of elders, prophets, evangelists and pastors as far as they could, and then most returned to their field of labour (each had been designated by prophecy as responsible for a particular area of Christendom, known as a 'tribe'), this time to begin spreading their message. In 1840, Cardale recalled them to deal with a crisis which had arisen concerning the relationship between Apostles and other ministers. The situation was resolved, but at the cost of the withdrawal of one of the Apostles, Mackenzie.[15] A temporary ban on prophecy was imposed, lasting from 1840-2.[16] More significantly, in 1842 a liturgy and

vestments were introduced - at Albury first, and a year later elsewhere. From the beginning, weekly communion was apparently observed at Albury, other churches doing so from 1836; hitherto it had been observed monthly.[17] The motive may have been in part to secure a greater degree of cohesion and uniformity of observance among the movement as a whole,[18] though the movement has usually preferred to see this as conforming worship to the divinely-prescribed pattern by restoring the Eucharist to a central position. However, the requirements introduced by the assignment of each part of the liturgy to a particular type of minister meant that it became more difficult for smaller congregations to perform the services, and some closed down for a few years from 1843.

At the end of 1845, the four Apostles who had remained at Albury recalled the others, in order to deal with opposition to apostolic authority which was now manifesting itself in opposition to liturgical change.[19] Unity was effectively restored through the introduction of the rite of 'sealing' in 1847. This was to be administered by Apostles to all members on reaching the age of 20, and it was believed that by the imposition of the Apostle's hand a gift of the Holy Spirit was conferred which was intended (i) to make up the 144,000 of Revelation 7, who would escape the Great Tribulation which was imminently expected, and (ii) to fit the candidates for service in the church.

In the movement's history, there had been two occasions when the Apostles and Prophets assembled at Albury. During the first (1835-6), they studied the Tabernacle, the type of the church on earth, while during the second (1859-63), they looked at the restoration of the Temple, the type of the church in its future state in heaven.[20] However, around this time, a schism occurred which led to the formation of the New Apostolic Church, the precipitating issue being whether or not new apostles could be called to replace those who died (the first such loss had been in 1855). This body now has a worldwide membership of several million, and is strong in the German-speaking world, and in parts of the British Commonwealth.

From around 1860, the Apostles cut down on their journeys in order to give priority to carrying on at Albury the work of intercession for the worldwide church, with the aim of seeing it perfected in preparation for Christ's return. Each year, around Pentecost and Christmas, the Apostles would hold conferences at Albury with other ministers of the Universal Church.[21] Lithographed minutes for many of these meetings have survived, although I have not yet been able to consult all of them. After the death of the last Apostle, Francis V. Woodhouse, in 1901, these continued under the chairmanship of other ministers until 1914.[22]

The movement's spread

The name 'Catholic Apostolic Church' was first adopted as a designation in January 1849, on instructions from the Apostle Cardale.[23] However, they did not wish it to be taken as implying either that they were the whole church (so they did not use the definite article on their notice-boards), or that they were superior to other Christians. They were catholic and apostolic, only in the sense that any local Christian congregation was.[24] A number of the returns in the 1851 Religious Census make this point, in almost identical wording (which leads me to believe that local ministers made this protest on instructions from Albury): 'We protest against being classed under any sectarian name, or being classed among Dissenters from the Church of England, and in giving answers to the first and third questions we make no claim to the exclusive use of those titles.'

The movement spread rapidly; by 1836, it appears to have established a presence in over 60 locations in Britain and Ireland. This declined slightly, probably as a result of the closure of churches following the introduction of a liturgy, to about 56 in 1851. Renewed expansion followed from 1865 as a vigorous programme of outreach was embarked on, with over 110 congregations in 1901.

Worldwide, between 1863 and 1901, the number of congregations worldwide is estimated to have increased tenfold. The 1901 total of locations was 938; not all would have been independent congregations or had regular services, and many would simply have been localities where members lived who received occasional visits from a minister. Of those,

- 315 were in England (including the Seven Churches in London, 5 Metropolitan churches - Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, and Southampton, and about 40 Angel's seats), the tribe of Judah (Cardale)
- 28 in Scotland (Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee were Metropolitans' seats) and 41 in Switzerland, mostly of the tribe of Benjamin (Drummond)
- 6 in Ireland, the tribe of Zebulun (Armstrong)
- 305 in North Germany, the tribe of Simeon (Carlyle)
- 43 in South Germany and 8 in Austria and Hungary, the tribe of Reuben (Woodhouse)
- 59 in Denmark, 17 in Holland, 3 in Belgium, the tribe of Issachar (King-Church)
- 18 in Russia, Finland and Poland, Russia and Finland of the tribe of Dan (Dow) and Poland the tribe of Ephraim (Tudor)
- 15 in Sweden and 10 in Norway, the tribe of Gad (Mackenzie)
- 7 in France, with RC Switzerland the tribe of Asher (Dalton)
- 2 in Italy, the tribe of Manasseh (Perceval)
- none in Spain and Portugal, the tribe of Naphtali (Sitwell)
- 29 in the USA, 12 in Canada, 15 in Australia, and 5 in New Zealand (these were called the 'suburbs' of Christendom because they were not within its historic bounds).[25]

There were, of course, isolated members living in other parts of the world as well.

The Catholic Apostolic Church has usually been seen by scholars as essentially a British movement, because the Apostles were British, but these figures show that it was almost as much a German movement. This aspect has been neglected by most English-language writers, and I want to remedy that in my forthcoming book by portraying it as what we might call 'Anglo-German'. Some of the movement's best theological writing came from the German-speaking world; many of the ministers of the Universal Church came from Germany; the German churches have generally chosen to remain open. It is true that the movement's headquarters was Albury, but I would argue that its centre of gravity increasingly was North Germany. Interestingly, prophecy within the movement during the early 20th century indicated that this would become the case.[26]

The 'Time of Silence'

The last Apostle to die was Woodhouse, at Cooke's Place, on 3 February 1901 (curiously, I defended my doctoral thesis, half of which concerned the Catholic Apostolic Church, on the 96th anniversary of this!). Thereafter, no further ordinations could take place; no more members could be sealed, and it was decided only to admit new members in special circumstances. The movement turned inward to focus on its own spiritual purification and renewal, and ceased to bear witness to its distinctive beliefs to outsiders. So began what members call the 'Time of Silence', which is the primary factor accounting for the extreme and still-increasing reserve shown towards outside inquirers: members believe that just as God raised up the work, so too he is now taking it down, and their part is to submit to what he is doing.

It was now led by the two surviving Coadjutors, Isaac Capadose (1834-1920) and Edward Heath (1845-1929). Heath was the last to die, in 1929. Within a few years, all other ministers of the Universal Church had died, and the congregations became an informal network of local churches. Albury now ceased to have any role in the wider movement, except as a place of pilgrimage. As churches closed, members returned to their religious roots; for English-speakers, that often meant the Church of England; in Holland, too, many Dutch members gravitated to Anglican chaplaincies from the 1940s, which caused some problems in ecumenical relations. In Britain, conversations with the Church of England took place over a period of time from the 1920s until the late 1940s; the initiative came from the Anglican side, and those involved included successive Archbishops of Canterbury and Bishops of Guildford.

The intent was to find some way in which pastoral provision could be made for remaining members, perhaps even receiving them *en bloc* or consecrating a bishop to minister to them. It has also to be said that some of the Anglicans appear to have had at least half an eye on the movement's considerable property and funds! However, discussion foundered on the Catholic Apostolics' lack of ministers with any kind of wider jurisdiction (who could take decisions for members as a body) and their unshaken belief that the dismantling of their movement was a divine work which they should not hinder by well-meant attempts at unity.

Numerically speaking, decline was initially slow but accelerated as the ranks of ministers thinned drastically.[27] The last Angel died in Germany in 1960, the last Priest in 1971 (Dr W.M. Davson of Paddington, who had celebrated the final Catholic Apostolic eucharist on 25 December 1970), and the last Deacon in 1972 (in Sydney). Since then, only Underdeacons and Lay Assistants have remained. By 1982, only one church in Britain remained open, at Paddington, where each Sunday a shortened version of the Forenoon Service and Litany are said and a homily by one of the movement's ministers read. In a few other places, members gather privately for prayer. However, a number of congregations remain in North Germany, and there are others in the Netherlands. Whereas English-speaking churches have closed because they do not have ministers, churches in non-English-speaking areas have often remained open because they do have a congregation. The fact that British congregations were encouraged to settle in the Established Churches, whereas German ones have continued to meet separately, is a pointer to the difference of outlook, which is longstanding and may have something to do with the way that Catholic Apostolic congregations had a much more difficult time in mid-19th-century Germany (in terms of opposition from the state churches) than they did in Britain. But in each case, individuals continue to bear witness to their hope of Christ's Second Coming: they are not to speak of their movement's distinctive beliefs, but they are able to affirm a doctrine which forms part of the historic creeds of the Christian Church.

As for the buildings, with the death of the last of the ministers responsible for the movement's finances and property, the Angels of the Seven Churches in London, in 1948 the Trustees took over these responsibilities, and retain them today.[28] Those in England have often been taken over by the Anglicans, although a number have gone to groups as diverse as the Greek Orthodox, the Pentecostals and the Plymouth Brethren. I occasionally worshipped in what had been the Edinburgh church as a student at the end of the 1970s, and was told that the condition for handing over the building had been that the proposed occupants must be able to assent to the Nicene Creed.

Albury as a local congregation

Fairly soon after its founding, the nature and function of the worship at Albury began to change from being primarily that of a local congregation, the first example of the new 'spiritual' type of congregation which God was bringing into being, to summing up that of the Universal Church. Accordingly, the congregation's leadership began to change, with the Angel becoming an Angel-in-charge. His duties changed, too: Addington had celebrated the Eucharist himself; Burne led only the shorter morning and evening services on Sundays until 1873, when the Apostles took over these as well as the Sunday Eucharist (Woodhouse being the normal celebrant for this until 1891). Thereafter he only took certain weekday services (including a Wednesday Eucharist), preached a sermon on Sundays, held meetings for the exercise of the gifts of tongues and prophecy, and presided over Elders' meetings and so on, as well as having the pastoral care of the flock.[29]

According to one writer, the congregation appears to have consisted mainly of the Apostles, the ministers attached to them, and their families.[30] Ministers who were attached to the apostles, rather than having a local commission, generally resided at Albury. A number can be detected in census returns. However, it is probable that, throughout the congregation's existence, workers on the estate and their families continued to attend. In the 1851 Religious Census, the morning congregation was estimated at 60-70; the registrar, who filled in the return on 13 September, noted 'The

attendants at this church are of the same denomination as those attending Newman Street Chapel, London.'[31]

Socially, the Irvingites soon came to dominate the village. Of the 21 gentry listed as resident at Albury in the *Post Office Directory of Surrey* for 1851, 15 are known to have been members; they include 7 of the apostles (Armstrong, Carlyle, King-Church, Drummond, Sitwell, Tudor and Woodhouse[32]). By contrast, I recognised none of the 19 traders listed as belonging to the church.

After M'Neile's departure, relationships with the Anglican rectors were often close, aided perhaps by the fact that Drummond was patron of the living until his death. M'Neile's successor John Hooper (1834-57) was sealed in 1847.[33] Likewise, George Portal (1857-71), who was related to Drummond, was a believer in the work. One source claimed that T.N. Skene (1921-30) had close relationships with those at the head of the church,[34] but another commented that his 'muscular Christianity' meant that he was not well received by them in the way that his successor was.[35] Philip Gray (1930-44) built a close relationship with the dying congregation, extending eucharistic hospitality to members and generally keeping a pastoral eye on them. He did much to assist the conversations between Anglicans and Catholic Apostolics, providing source materials for a perceptive analysis of the movement by the clergyman Reginald Somerset Ward, 'The Death of a Church and the Problems arising therefrom', a copy of which is held in Lambeth Palace Library.

After 1901, as the number of Universal Church ministers at Albury began to decline and those who remained became more frail, the Angel-in-Charge from 1909, George Velden, took over an increasing number of the remaining services.[36] The last Sunday Eucharist was celebrated on 21 July 1929; thereafter, it took place on one Wednesday a month. After Heath died, Velden asked the Seven Deacons of the Universal Church for permission for his flock to continue using the Apostles' Chapel as guests.[37]

It has been estimated that as late as 1930, 10% of the village population belonged to the congregation, though I would not put the figure quite so high;[38] writing of that period, Gavin Maxwell describes how 'around the Apostles' Chapel at Albury, on the estate owned by my uncle Alan Northumberland, there had grown up a veritable colony of the sect, of whom the greater number in Albury were spinsters'.[39] We can therefore understand why, following Velden's death, the priest H.G. Rees apparently opposed the church's closure;[40] he took over as Priest-in-charge until his death in 1953. In 1935, it was claimed that there were as many as 150 in the congregation, from Albury, Gomshall, and Shere; many were descendants of ministers whom Drummond had provided with houses; other were employees on the Duke of Northumberland's estate.[41]

The Anglican authorities treated Rees as a *de facto* intermediary between them and the Catholic Apostolic leadership in London, and Gray as his Anglican counterpart played an equally prominent role. It was hoped that Catholic Apostolic congregations might follow a lead given by the Albury congregation, and so return to the Church of England. However, Rees told Gray that he would give the congregation at the Apostles' Chapel no direction; indeed, he thought that it could be God's will to deprive them of the eucharist.[42] By 1941, the end was in sight; as Rees was unable to celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays, the Archbishop of Canterbury had encouraged the Rector to allow members to communicate at the parish church, and many had done so.[43] The last weekday Eucharist was celebrated on 26 July 1944, after which Rees became too ill to carry out his duties. For a short period after his death in 1953, services were conducted by a Deacon, but ceased altogether in 1954.[44]

The building

The church itself (sometimes referred to by members as their 'cathedral') is generally thought to have been designed by William McIntosh Brookes; however, he appears to have worked under the direction of William Wilkins until the latter's death in 1839.[45] Many of the materials were locally sourced, and much of the work was carried out by local craftsmen. For instance, Anthony Browne recorded the details of the

work he was commissioned by Drummond to undertake. The building was consecrated on 4 September 1840, although work continued on the tower for another year.[46] The Rose window at the east end is said to have been designed by Pugin. Three vestries were added at the east end in 1896-7.[47] The church is untypical of Catholic Apostolic buildings, as befits its unique status: it was not so much the home of a local congregation as the centre of the movement as a whole - a building for the Universal Church rather than the Local Church. Hence it is known as the 'Apostles' Chapel'; prophecy also indicated that it should be known as the 'Chapel of the Great King'.[48] Everything about the church's interior arrangement was symbolic; as Drummond explained, 'Every church building should pourtray by material things, the progress of a christian's life.'[49] The dimensions of the floor plan are proportionate to those of the Tabernacle of Moses described in the book of Exodus, with the addition of two small recesses for a vestry and the organ. The altar is made of three stone slabs, two uprights and one on top, which Drummond may have intended to symbolise the belief that it should be both an altar and a table. After about 1848, there was no designated seat for the Angel: the explanation for this was that the Angel of a Particular Church represented Christ, its head; but Albury represented the Universal Church, of which Christ was the Angel, and he had no earthly representative.[50]

The Chapter House appears to have been completed a couple of years before the church itself,[51] which may say something about what Drummond saw as the priority. Inside, the dominant feature is the octagonal table with a space in the middle. At the Council meetings held here (downgraded to Conferences after 1901), the Apostles sat round the table in order of call; scribes sat inside it, there being a lift-up flap; other ministers sat round the edge of the room. Such meetings ceased with the death of the last Coadjutor in 1929.[52] Behind the head of the table is a bookcase containing editions of the church's Liturgy and volumes of a publication entitled *Angels' Records*. This appears to have been published from 1869-1928, and contained records of prophecies spoken in various churches which were deemed to be doctrinally faithful and worthy of wider circulation.[53]

I visited the church on 20 May 1992, and was shown round. What I learned then has also been reported in the *Surrey Advertiser*: The church is being maintained for the Second Advent; electricity was installed in 1991, and a new heating system shortly before. The whole building was kept spotless. The refit, ordered by the Trustees, had cost £100,000, and had been precipitated by a leaking roof.[54] Given their belief that it may be required at Christ's return, it is not allowed to be used for secular events.

Other buildings in the village were also used by the church, notably:

Cooke's Place (also known as 'The Grange') was given by Drummond for the use of the Angel-in-charge; it was occupied by W.L. Addington, then by Cardale, Woodhouse, Capadose, Edward Heath, and then his son Herbert who was Angel of the Bishopsgate church in London.[55]

Weston Dene, in the middle of the village, was the guest house used, apparently from about 1865, for visiting Angels, who would come, two or three at a time, for a few weeks' instruction in the movement's beliefs and order of worship and to assist in the daily round of services in the Apostles' Chapel.[56] This was the nearest the movement came to instituting a pattern of theological training, apart from a short-lived programme of evening classes in London around 1850.

The new parish church, paid for by Drummond and built according to a design which he had suggested, was consecrated on 19 October 1842. Its interest for this story lies in the number of Catholic Apostolic ministers who are buried there (including all the Apostles except Perceval and Mackenzie), many in one part of the graveyard, which acquired the nickname 'Resurrection Corner' as a result.[57]

Conclusion: Albury's role in the Catholic Apostolic Church

So how can we sum up the role played by Albury in the movement?

Clearly, it was in a sense the headquarters, because it was the base for the Apostles and many of their ministers. From Albury issued a constant flow of communications

designed to ensure homogeneity in the movement's theological belief, social ethics, and liturgical practice.

It was a focus for the spirituality of members. Those living in places far distant from Albury would be taken on 'virtual visits' by means of talks delivered by ministers, describing the buildings and the worship which went on there. A good example is a talk given at Dundee in 1895 by Newdigate Burne, who was at that time Angel-in-Charge of Albury. Two ministers described their spell at Albury in verse, and I will quote the beginning:

> Coming to the sacred valley,
>
> Where the altar of the Lord,
>
> With its worship, rightly ordered
>
> By Apostles, is restored:
>
> Where His servants stand and serve Him;
>
> Whence His Spirit has gone forth,
>
> Ministering joy and gladness,
>
> East and West, and South and North …[58]

You get the feel of how members viewed it - it has been described as the movement's Jerusalem.

It was not, however, a model, except insofar as visiting ministers learned at Albury how to conduct the services. Its ministerial structure and interior arrangement were intended to be unique. A model for church life was provided by the Seven Churches in London.

Today, therefore, its main function is as a visible memorial to 'the Lord's Work by Apostles', a place of pilgrimage to recall the past and a stimulus to expectation regarding the future.

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[1] Thanks are due to a member of the Catholic Apostolic church who offered detailed comment and helped me to correct several errors and misinterpretations.

[2] Johann Albrecht Schröter, *Bilder zur Geschichte der Katholisch-apostolischen Gemeinden / Images of the History of the Catholic Apostolic Church* (Jena: Glaux, 2001), 13.

[3] Drummond, *Narrative of Circumstances which led to the setting up of the Church of Christ at Albury* (typescript, n.d.; originally published 1834), 4-6; L.A. H[ewett]., *The Story of the Lord's Work* (8th ed., Glasgow: Harry Hobbs, 1933), 37-9. In 1834, Drummond issued a defence of his conduct, the *Narrative*, which M'Neile condemned as misrepresenting the facts (H. M'Neile, *Letters to a Friend, who has felt it his duty to secede from the Church of England, and who imagines that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost are revived among the seceders* (London: J. Hatchard, 1834), 132n).

[4] H[ewitt]., 40.

[5] [Anthony Browne?], Notebook on the history of Albury parish and village, 1662-1891, Surrey Record Office, Zg/16, entry dated 1829; cf. N.H.K. Burne, 'Address by Mr. Newdigate Burne, (Angel-in-Charge of the congregation in Albury)' (typescript, n.d.[original delivered at the Dundee church on 19 August 1895]), 6-7 (where this is dated to 68 years previously in the typescript, i.e. 1827; I think it possible that the typist misread '63' as '68'; if '63' is correct, it would give a date of 1832); Drummond, *Narrative*, 7.

[6] [Browne?], Notebook, entries dated 1829-30.

[7] This is admittedly untypical, since the early prophets were frequently drawn from lower ranks of society; however, I am slow to discount this evidence because Anthony Browne appears on other occasions to have been quite a thoughtful observer. The criterion applied to determine whether someone should be allowed to prophesy or speak in tongues was whether they were deemed to be speaking 'in the power', i.e. under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. At this time, one way of testing that was to see whether they affirmed the understanding of the person and work of Christ taught by Edward Irving, which was that Christ took fallen human nature. (Leaders appealed to 1 John 4.1 for a precedent from the early church.) Browne may have failed to grasp this (though I would have thought that such things would be explained by the congregation's ministers). Alternatively, there

may have been some kind of unconscious class distinction at work in the minds of those responsible; during the movement's early years, spiritual gifts were on occasion handled or manifested in ways which would not later meet with approval.

[8] M'Neile, *Letters to a Friend*, 110.

[9] The register was surrendered to the government in 1840, as were many non-Anglican registers, and a microfilm is held by the Public Record Office (RG4/3099).

[10] H[ewitt]., 42-3; E. Miller, *The History and Doctrines of Irvingism* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1878) 1.113-14; for an eye-witness account of Drummond's ordination, see Robert Herbert Story, *Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Robert Story* (London: Macmillan, 1862), Appendix IV (also in Drummond, *Narrative*, 8-9).

[11] H[ewitt]., 110-12.

[12] Drummond, *Narrative*, 10.

[13] This was given visible expression in a stained-glass window in Glasgow Cathedral, installed in 1861, which depicted Irving as John the Baptist.

[14] Ludwig Albrecht, *The Work by Apostles at the End of the Dispensation* ([Dundee: Paul & Mathew], 1955), 13-14.

[15] Albrecht, 14-15, 19-20.

[16] K. Born, 'The Lord's Work under Apostles', tr. H.B. Evans (typescript, n.d.), 61.

[17] Drummond, *Narrative*, 9.

[18] Albrecht, 22-3. The liturgy was largely Cardale's work. A handwritten order of service with some written prayers had been prepared for use at Albury as early as 1838, though this was not a full liturgy.

[19] Born, 65.

[20] [W.M. Davson], *Sermons and Homilies on the Third Stage of the Lord's Work* (Loughborough: n.p., 1966), 37-8 (Berne, 20 August 1961). Davson ministered at Paddington as the movement's last remaining priest, firmly convinced that the congregations should maintain their separate existence even when no ministers remained to lead them; cf. S Newman-Norton, *The Time of Silence* (Leicester: Albury Society, 1974), passim. His book was the fruit of considered mediation of the records of prophetic utterances, the *Angels' Records*, which were printed for ministerial use between 1869 and 1928. A set of these survives in the West Yorkshire Archives Service, Bradford (ref. 53D95/1).

[21] Albrecht, 32-3; Schröter, 15.

[22] Schröter, 53. From 1859, Coadjutors were called (one for each Apostle) to act on their behalf, with authority to perform all apostolic acts. However, this authority lapsed on the death of the last Apostle.

[23] Copinger, 'Annals', 87. The claim that the name originated as a clerk's decision during the 1851 Religious Census may therefore be discounted.

[24] Albrecht, 16-17.

[25] Born, 159; Schröter, 25, 29, 31. Born estimates the number of members as 200,000, 60,000 of them in North Germany, but I think this is a massive over-estimate. It appears to be based on a nominal figure of 200 per listed location, but not all would have hosted their own congregations, and of those that did, many (perhaps most) were much smaller than this.

[26] [Davson], *Third Stage*, 92 (Address, 3 June 1962) sees the centre as located in Germany, Holland and Denmark after 1901.

[27] In Britain, there were 101 locations in 1928, 82 in 1947 and 24 in 1962.

[28] Born, 216; Schröter, 29.

[29] Burne, 5, 8; H.B. Copinger, 'Annals: The Lord's Work in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' (typescript, [1951]), 163. The loss of several ministers in 1864 was seen as providentially preparing the congregation for these developments.

[30] Miller, 1.234-5.

[31] Public Record Office HO129/39, No. 315.

[32] The missing apostles were John Bate Cardale (who may have continued to live in London), Henry Dalton (who had returned to Anglican ministry), William Dow (who may have been living in Edinburgh, where he died in 1855), Duncan Mackenzie (who laid down his ministry in 1840), and Spencer Perceval (who also lived in London).

[33] Schröter, 11.

[34] S. Royle Shore to J.A. Douglas, 21 April 1932 (typescript copy, Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 1468, f. 223)

[35] Desmond Morse-Boycott to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 9 June 131, Lang papers vol. 105, f. 102.

[36] Seraphim Newman-Norton, *The Time of Silence: A History of the Catholic Apostolic Church 1901-1971* (London: Metrop[o]litical Press, 1974), 15-16 (following Copinger, *Annals*).

[37] Copinger, 'Annals', 215; Newman-Norton, 22 (following G. Velden, 'Letter to the Congregation in Albury', 6 December 1929).

[38] Schröter, 15. From checking the 1851 and 1901 census records for Catholic Apostolic households, I would suggest a figure of 6-8%, which is still considerable. Almost all heads of such households were ministers with the Apostles, their widows or daughters.

[39] Gavin Maxwell, *The House of Elrig* (London: Longmans, 1965), 166.

[40] R.S. Ward, 'The Death of a Church and the Problems arising therefrom' (typescript, n.d.; Lambeth Palace Library, MS. 2689), fos. 102-3.

[41] Bishop of Guildford to A.C. Don, 25 May 1935, Lang Papers vol. 109, f.141 (Lambeth Palace Library). On 22 July 1931 Gray apparently told the Archbishop of Canterbury that half his parish were Catholic Apostolics (C.C., 'Catholic and Apostolic Church', memorandum, Lang Papers, vol. 105, f.107); I wonder whether there was some kind of a misunderstanding here.

[42] Ward, fos. 104-5.

[43] 'Bishops' Meetings' IX (1939-44), 20-21 January 1941, f. 115 (Lambeth Palace Library). The Archbishop's decision was an application of the principle of economy (i.e. an exception to the rule but within its spirit), based on a resolution of the Lambeth Conferences that baptised but unconfirmed communicants could be admitted to communion when cut off from their own ministrations. In fact, this had being going on for some years, the initial suggestion apparently coming from the Archdeacon of Dorking, with the Archbishop's knowledge (Bishop of Guildford to Don, 25 May 1935, f. 140). Further back still, in 1931 Rees had unexpectedly asked Gray if his flock could worship at the parish church while their own building was being renovated; Gray intended to welcome them to communion. some on the Anglican side appear to have seen this as an opportunity to bring them back to the Anglican fold, although Gray did not believe that they would ever come over as a body (Philip Gray to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 27 June 1931, Lang Papers, vol. 105, f. 109; 'Catholic and Apostolic Church', memorandum of a meeting with Gray, 22 July 1931, Lang Papers, vol. 100, f. 107; Ward, fos. 103-4).

[44] Schröter, 15.

[45] Christopher Stell, *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-Houses in Eastern England* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2001), 315.

[46] Brown, Notebook; Stell, 316.

[47] John Baker, 'Albury Park is 'heaven on earth'', *Surrey Advertiser*, [date?]; Stell, 316.

[48] Albrecht, 25.

[49] H. Drummond, 'The Apostles' Chapel, Albury. Description of the building for the use of visitors' (typescript, original published 1851), 1. All the same, he acknowledged that it was not perfect, going so far as to describe the architecture as 'a bad kind of Perpendicular Gothic' (Ibid., 2).

[50] Burne, 4-6. The Apostles functioned as Elders at Albury.

[51] Anon., 'The Chapter House at Albury', typescript, n.d. (Albury Historical Society, Env 41C); Anon., 'Albury' [extract from *De Kapel der Apostelen te Albury en de Zeven Gemeenten te London* (typescript, n.d.; Dutch original published 1931), 2; Miller, 1.168; Schröter, 13; Stell, 316.

[52] Burne, 9.

[53] A set of these is held by the West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford (53D95/), and a dozen odd issues by Birmingham University Library.

[54] Cf. 'Albury chapel is prepared for Second Coming', *Surrey Advertiser*, 31 August 1990, 7.

[55] S. Newman-Norton, 'The Catholic Apostolic Church', notes of a talk given to Albury Historical Society, 26 November 1975, f.4 (AHS, Box 41B); Schröter, 83; Ward, f. 100.

[56] Burne, 1.

[57] Born, 94; Schröter, 13, 15.

[58] [W.F. Pitcairn & G.C. Boase], *Recollections of a Fortnight's Residence at Albury, From 15th September to 1st October 1866, by invitation of the Apostles*, n.pl: n.p., [1866].

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