

Disputes in the Irish college, Douai (1594–1614)

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By the late sixteenth century, Irish demand for seminary places was sufficient to warrant the establishment of a dedicated Irish college in Lisbon (1590). This was followed by foundations in Salamanca (1592), Douai (1594) and elsewhere. The great majority were administered by the Society of Jesus, whose Irish members were generally Old English, a term denoting descendants of the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman settlers. Old English Jesuit domination of Irish colleges occasioned accusations of discrimination against students of Gaelic family backgrounds, with the students seeking redress from the secular authorities. The Irish college in Douai was not formally administered by the Jesuits, but its founder, Christopher Cusack, collaborated closely with the Society. Accusations against him of anti-Gaelic bias emerged in the 1600s, coincidental with the arrival of large numbers of Gaelic Irish refugees in Flanders at the end of the Nine Years War (1594–1603). Ethnic tensions and financial difficulties all but put paid to the college in the 1620s.

Keywords: University, overseas seminary network, Irish students, Jesuit influence, regional and ethnic tensions

Introduction

The emergence of the early modern Irish Catholic clergy¹ is often associated with the establishment of a network of colleges on the Continent in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.²

¹ Alois Hahn, *Die Rezeption des tridentinischen Pfarrerrideals im westrierrischen Pfarrkleurs des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Luxembourg: Imprimerie de la cour P. Linden, 1974); Luise Schorn-Schütte, 'Priest, Preacher, Pastor: Research on Clerical Office in Early Modern Europe', *Central European History* 33:1 (2000), 1–39; Javier Burrieza Sánchez, 'Escuelas de sacerdotes y mártires: los colegios del exilio católico', in Enrique García Hernán et al. eds. *Irlanda y la monarquía hispánica: Kinsale 1601–2001: Guerra, política, exilio y religión* (Madrid: Universidad de Alcalá/Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002), 39–73.

² Thomas O'Connor, 'The Domestic and International Roles of Irish Overseas Colleges, 1590–1800', in Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor, eds. *College Communities Abroad: Education, Migration and Catholicism in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 90–114.

Whilst none of these institutions were active before the 1590s, they played a significant role in Irish clerical education. When they were finally established, most Irish colleges were run by Jesuits, the overwhelming majority of whose Irish members were of Old English stock.³ They were natives of the ten or so Irish dioceses to which English/Old English men were traditionally appointed as bishops, the Church *inter Anglicos*.⁴ These dioceses were mostly located in the provinces of Munster and Leinster (including Meath).⁵ For a number of reasons, college administrations tended to discriminate against students from the dioceses normally ruled by Gaelic bishops, the Church *inter Hibernicos*.⁶ College administrations' preference for students of Old English background had its roots deep in the colonial history of the country.⁷ The Tudor reforms did little to alter this situation, but they did recalibrate the traditionally close educational links between clerics of the Church *inter Anglicos* and the continent.⁸ In many ways the Old English experience mirrored that of English, Dutch and Scottish Catholics, with Irish career clerics, who lacked a domestic university, opting for continental universities, notably those in the Low Countries, over traditional English and Scottish alternatives.⁹ Typical were the

³ Vera Moynes, ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission: A Calendar of Correspondence, 1566–1752* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2017), xxxi.

⁴ The *Ecclesia inter Anglicos* was the Old English-dominated Church of the ports, Pale and their hinterlands, in contrast to the *Ecclesia inter Hibernicos* dominant in Gaelic parts of the country. For use of these terms, see Henry A. Jeffries, *Priests and Prelates in Armagh in the Age of Reformation, 1518–1558* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), 15–56.

⁵ See Moynes, ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 575–92.

⁶ Student lists for the period from Douai, Lisbon and Salamanca feature Old English names in the main, suggesting that college populations were largely Old English or Hiberno-English, with few Gaelic students or staff. For Douai, see James Carey, *Serenissimis et potentissimis principibus Alberto et Isabellae . . .* (Antwerp: Typis G. Wolsschatii & H. Aertsii, 1614); for Lisbon, see 'Alunos do colégio de São Patricio' (Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Lusitania 44), ff. 347–48; for Salamanca, see Hugh Fenning, 'Students of the Irish College at Salamanca, 1592–1638', *Archivum Hibernicum* 62 (2009): 7–36.

⁷ Patrick Corish, *The Irish Catholic Experience: A Historical Survey* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985), 30–62.

⁸ The best introductions are Helga Hammerstein, 'Aspects of the Continental Education of Irish Students in the Reign of Elizabeth I', *Historical Studies* 8 (Dublin, 1971): 137–153; T.J. Walsh, *The Irish Continental College Movement: The Colleges at Bordeaux, Toulouse and Lille* (Dublin: Golden Eagle Books, 1973); John Silke, 'The Irish Abroad, 1534–1691', in T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and Francis J. Byrne, eds. *A New History of Ireland: III: Early Modern Ireland, 1534–1691* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 587–633; O'Connor, 'Domestic and International Roles', 90–114.

⁹ For England and Wales, see Dominic Aidan Bellenger, ed. *English and Welsh Priests, 1558–1800* (Downside Abbey: The Paradigm Press, 1984); Michael Questier, 'Seminary Colleges, Converts and Religious Change in Post-Reformation England, 1568–1688', in Chambers and O'Connor, eds. *Colleges Communities Abroad*, 142–73; for the Scots, see J.H. Baxter, 'Scottish Students at Louvain University, 1425–1484', *Scottish Historical Review* 25 (1928): 327–34; R.J. Lyall, 'Scottish Students and Masters at the Universities of Cologne and Louvain in the Fifteenth Century', *Imnes Review* 36 (1985): 55–73; Tom McNally, *The Sixth Scottish University: The Scots Colleges Abroad, 1575–1799* (Leiden and Boston, 2012); Adam Marks, 'The Scots Colleges and International Politics, 1600–1750', in Chambers and O'Connor eds. *College Communities Abroad*, 115–41; for the Dutch, Willem Frijhoff, 'Colleges and Their Alternatives in the Educational Strategy of

Meath cleric David Delahide (d.1588) and the Dubliner Leonard Fitzsimons (b.1541),¹⁰ both of whom followed the English academic William Allen to the Low Countries.¹¹ However, prior to Allen's flight, direct traffic from Ireland to European universities had already picked up. The reasons for the shift to continental universities are poorly understood. It was probably an aspect of the quickening interest in education all over Europe, as ports and their hinterlands responded to increased trade and mobility.¹² For the Old English in cities such as Limerick and Waterford, the recent monastic confiscations probably played a part, as they curtailed local educational opportunities.¹³ Among the same Old English communities, dissatisfaction with Tudor rule cannot be ruled out, nor can reservations concerning the orthodoxy of the English universities. On the latter point, Helga Hammerstein has pointed out that some of the most academically gifted of the secular and regular clergy made redundant by the Henrician reforms set up schools in competition with government-supported Anglican establishments.¹⁴ It is reasonable to assume that, having either rejected or been ejected from the new state Church, they were unlikely to encourage Irish attendance at English universities. Also, it should be borne in mind that Old English recusants, like their English, Dutch and Scots confrères, were attracted to Catholic universities by the availability of student bursaries there.¹⁵

These factors help explain why Louvain and Douai in particular emerged as favoured destinations for mid-sixteenth-century Irish students of mostly Old English background.¹⁶ As early as 1549, the Limerick-born Richard Creagh (1523–86) was enrolled in

Early Modern Dutch Catholics', in Chambers and O'Connor, eds. *College Communities Abroad*, 55–89.

¹⁰ See Thomas Francis Knox, ed. *The First and Second Douai Diaries* (London: David Nutt, 1897), 131, 136, 274. He was ordained in 1577 and moved to Paris. A decade later, Fitzsimons was reporting to Rome on Irish affairs. See Alfons Bellesheim, *Geschichte der Katholischen Kirche in Irland*, 3 vols (Mainz: Kirchheim, 1890–91), 3:217, citing Archivio Segreto Vaticano (hereafter ASV), Nunziatura di Francia, vol. 28, 28 Mar. 1588.

¹¹ John Brady, 'Some Irish Scholars of the Sixteenth Century', *Studies* 37 (1948): 226–31.

¹² See Thomas O'Connor, 'Domestic Grammar Schools and Overseas Colleges in the Formation of Irish Catholic Clergy (1560–1620)', in Anja-Silvia Goeing, Glyn Parry and Mordechai Feingold eds. *Early Modern Universities: Networks of Higher Learning* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 206–22.

¹³ Colm Lennon, 'The Dissolution to the Foundation of St Anthony's College Louvain', in Edel Bhreathnach, Joseph MacMahon and John McCafferty, eds. *The Irish Franciscans, 1534–1990* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), 13–15.

¹⁴ Hammerstein, 'Aspects of the Continental Education of Irish Students', 139.

¹⁵ Paul Arblaster, 'The Southern Netherlands Connection: Networks of Support and Patronage', in Benjamin Kaplan et al., eds. *Catholic Communities in Protestant States: Britain and the Netherlands, c.1570–1720* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 123–38 at 123–4.

¹⁶ Joren Nilis, 'Irish Students at Leuven University, 1548–1797', *Archivium Hibernicum* 60 (2006–07): 1–304. He speculates on why Irish students began to frequent Louvain from the late 1540s. See *ibid.*, 2–3.

Louvain;¹⁷ Dermot O’Hurley (c.1530–84) was in the same class, and Peter Lombard of Waterford (c.1554–1625) followed suit in 1573. A decade later, the Westmeath native Francis Lavalinus Nugent (1569–1635)¹⁸ was enrolled there. In Louvain these Irishmen tended to fall under the influence of the academics Michael Baius (1513–89) and Jacobus Jansonius (1547–1625),¹⁹ both key figures in the strengthening of Catholic reform. Later in the sixteenth century, neighbouring universities —including newly founded Rheims, Pont-à-Mousson and Douai — followed Louvain’s example in welcoming Irish students,²⁰ often chivvied along by the Pope. In 1577, for instance, Gregory XIII instructed the Douai chancellor to support Irish scholars.²¹ The papal secretary of state, Ptolomeo Galli, wrote to the chancellor on their behalf.²² In the meantime, Irish numbers grew, with some supported by the Douai Jesuits and others lodging in William Allen’s college, beneficiaries of his generous open-house policy.²³ Thaddaeus Baro [Barry?] and a certain ‘Guilielemus’ were among the first Irish students there.²⁴ In 1584 the papal grant to the Scots college, then in Pont-à-Mousson, was increased, conditional on offering reserved places to Irish students.²⁵ In 1593, when the Scots, with a new endowment, moved back to Douai, the Irish were excluded. This development, along with the return of the English college to the town (1593) and Allen’s death (1594), may have prompted the Irish in Douai to think about setting up a residence of their own.²⁶

Irish student profiles

Most sixteenth-century Irish students in Flanders were of Old English background, hailing from the ports and their hinterlands and from wealthier inland counties. Accordingly, Leinster, Munster and

¹⁷ Colm Lennon, *Archbishop Richard Creagh of Armagh, 1523–86* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

¹⁸ F.X. Martin, *Friar Nugent: A Study of Francis Lavalin Nugent, 1569–1635, Agent of the Counter-Reformation* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1962).

¹⁹ Lucien Ceyssens, ‘Un échange de lettres entre Michel Baius et Henri Gravius (1579), *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 26, fasc. 1/2 (1950), 73, n. 2; Nilis, ‘Irish Students at Leuven University’, 2.

²⁰ D. Lanoye and P. Vandermeersch, ‘The University of Louvain at the End of the Sixteenth Century: Coping with Crisis’, *History of Universities* 20:1 (2005): 81–107.

²¹ Bellesheim, *Geschichte* 3, 216.

²² *Calendar of State Papers, Rome volume 2 1572–1578*, ed. J.M Rigg (London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1926), 296–7.

²³ In 1578, when pro-Orangist *échevins* (municipal officers) were elected in Douai, the English college moved to Rheims, where it remained until 1593. The Douai Scots, including Dr Cheyne, moved to Paris and then, in 1581, to Pont-à-Mousson. They returned to Douai in 1593. See H.J. Chadwick, ‘The Scots’ College, Douai, 1580–1616’, *English Historical Review* (Oct. 1941): 571–85.

²⁴ See *The First and Second Diaries*, 203. Others included a medical student, Alan (1577), Nicholas (?) Eustace (1577).

²⁵ See Chadwick, ‘The Scots’ College, Douai’, 579.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 581, n. 1.

Meath²⁷ families were better represented than their Gaelic contemporaries from Connacht and Ulster.²⁸ Munster families had a particularly strong presence, due in part to the activities in the 1560s of the papal commissary, David Wolfe SJ, a native of Limerick.²⁹ David Kearney (1568–1624), the future archbishop of Cashel, was typical of his generation of clergy.³⁰ His brother Barnabas (1567–1640) and their nephew Walter Wale (1573–1646) both joined the Jesuits in Flanders. This Jesuit link proved significant. Barnabas Kearney entered the Society in Douai, taking an MA in 1588, commencing his novitiate in Tournai in 1589, and subsequently teaching in Antwerp and Lille before departing on the Irish mission in 1603, when his brother was appointed archbishop. In the mid-1590s the Douai Jesuits accepted a substantial donation from a local worthy, Jeanne de Blanc, intended for the support of Irish clerics born in the town of Cashel, County Tipperary.³¹

In 1601 a portion of this foundation was assigned to another Irish priest, Christopher Cusack (c.1557–c.1624).³² The latter's arrival in Douai sometime in the 1590s occasioned the establishment of an Irish college in the town. A native of Meath, he was well connected into a network of Old English-gentry families in the east of Ireland. The son of Robert Cusack (d.1570), 2nd baron of the Irish Exchequer from 1561, and Katherine Nugent,³³ his was a propertied background. Significantly, his grandfather Thomas (c.1490–1571),

²⁷ On Reformation Meath, see Helen Cobourn Walshe, 'Enforcing the Elizabethan Settlement: The Vicissitudes of Hugh Brady, Bishop of Meath 1563–84', *Irish Historical Studies* 26:104 (Nov. 1989): 352–76; Brendan Smith, *Religion and Reformation in the Tudor Diocese of Meath* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006).

²⁸ For south-east Leinster, see Aine Hensey, 'A Comparative Study of the Lives of Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic Clergy in the South-eastern Dioceses of Ireland from 1550 to 1650', PhD Diss. (NUI Maynooth, 2012).

²⁹ Thomas J. Morrissey, 'The Career and Problem of David Wolfe (1528–1589?)', Jesuit and Papal Commissary of Ireland', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* 47 (2007): 21–38; Thomas McCoog and Victor Houliston, 'Life in Tudor Limerick: William Good's "Annual Letter" of 1566', *Archivum Hibernicum* 69 (2016): 7–36; Colm Lennon, 'Education and Religious Identity in Early Modern Ireland', *Paedagogica Historica: International Journal of the History of Education* (supplementary series 5, 1999): 57–75.

³⁰ This birth date taken from John Davis White, 'Some Account of Tradesmen's Tokens Issued in the City of Cashel', *Journal of the Kilkenny and South-east of Ireland Archaeological Society* 4:2 (1863): 404–412 at 407. He was consecrated in 1603 by the bishops of Tournai, Ypres and Saint-Omer. See Moynes, ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 15, 450, 452, 550.

³¹ 'Copie de la quittance en demande par le P. Recteur pour 2000 flo legatex et donnez por les estudiants hirlandois . . .', 17 Dec. 1594, 22D 1, Archives du Département du Nord, Lille (hereafter ADNL). These monies had come in 1592 to Jeanne de Blanc by way of her marriage contract, agreed in Lille in 1574. She had three children: Guillaume, Catherine and Jacqueline. Jeanne de Blanc was the daughter of Jeanne de la Motte and Guillaume le Blanc, lord of Heuchin and great granddaughter of Anne de Montmorency. She died on 24 February 1606 and was interred in the church of Saint Maurice in Lille. Her husband was Charles de Montmorency (d. 1605), knight of Neuville-Witasse, Mercatel, Amougies, Russignies, who died in Douai and was buried in the church at Amougies.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ According to 'Testimony of Thomas MacMoris', 2 Mar. 1614, ' . . . et patrem ipsius fuisse vice regem totius hyberniae nomine Elisabethae reginae . . .' ADNL 22D 1.

Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer (1533), had supported the Henrician Reformation, acquiring the properties of religious communities in Trim, County Meath (Dominicans), Skreen, County Meath (Augustinians), Clonard, County Meath (Augustinians) and Lismullen, County Meath (Augustinian nuns).³⁴ His grandson was no theological high-flyer. He received his basic education in Dublin,³⁵ possibly in the school run by Daniel Farrel, a Louvain graduate (1553).³⁶ It is not known when he was ordained, but it was probably before May 1595, when he was named in a family settlement as successor for life only, the usual designation for a clerical beneficiary.³⁷ In the rather condescending words of Henry Fitzsimon SJ, Christopher was ‘meanly languaged’, a remark that suggests he was already a mature adult when he arrived in Douai.³⁸ Whatever his linguistic poverty, Christopher was not short of money, and his significant personal wealth was applied to the support of Irish students in the town.³⁹ How much was involved is unknown, but a sum of £500⁴⁰ was later mentioned as a portion of the monies he divided among Irish students in Douai and its satellites at Antwerp (1600),⁴¹ Lille (1610)⁴² and Tournai (1616).⁴³ In the early years the Irish college was less a bricks-and-mortar institution than a set of foundations, grants and bursaries held together by Cusack’s social status and networking skills. In fact, it was not until the 1600s that a premises was acquired, in the rue des Bonnes. Prior to that date, Cusack’s students, like other Irish scholars, appear to have lodged around the town.⁴⁴ It would seem, for

³⁴ Hubert Gallwey, ‘The Cusack Family of Counties Meath and Dublin’, *Irish Genealogist* 5 (1978): 591–600 at 592.

³⁵ Testimony of Bernard Cullen, OCist, 2 Mar. 1614, ADNL 22D 1.

³⁶ Nilis, ‘Irish Students at Leuven University’, 34.

³⁷ Gallwey, ‘The Cusack Family’, 599.

³⁸ Henry Fitzsimon, ‘On the Masse’, *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 9 (1872–73): 262–3.

³⁹ ‘Status seminarii Ibernorum Ducai breviter descriptus ad diluendam nonnullorum calumniam contra seminarii praesidem 1614’, ADNL 22D 1.

⁴⁰ James Ware, *The Antiquities of Ireland* (Dublin: E. Jones, 1745), 253.

⁴¹ John Brady, ‘The Irish Pastoral College at Antwerp’, *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 4:27 (1910): 225–31. Antwerp, and later Tournai (1616), generally received raw recruits for grounding in humanities, with their graduates proceeding to Douai for more advanced studies.

⁴² Jason McHugh, ‘Documents Relating to the Irish College at Lille, 1634–c.1647’, *Analecta Hibernica* 45 (2014): 209–30. Lille, backed by Francis Nugent (1569–1635), operated in its early years as a feeder institution for the Capuchins. See Thomas O’Connor, *Irish Jansenists, 1600–70* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), 80; on the Capuchin connection, see F.X. Martin, ‘So manie in the verie prime and spring of their youth, manie of them heirs of lande: The Friars of the Irish Capuchin Mission in Northern France and the Low Countries, 1591–1641’, in Barbara Bayley and Christopher Murray, eds. *Ireland and France, a bountiful Friendship: Literature, History and Ideas; Essays in Honour of Patrick Rafroidi* (Savage, MD: Barnes, 1992), 7–16.

⁴³ John Brady, ‘Regulae observandae ab alumni Seminarii Hibernensis Tornacensis’, *Archivium Hibernicum* 14 (1949): 83–6.

⁴⁴ John Brady, ‘Fr Christopher Cusack and the Irish College of Douai, 1594–1624’, in Sylvester O’Brien, ed. *Measgra i gCuimhne Mhichíl Uí Chléirigh* (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1944), 98–107 at 101.

instance, that a bursary supported about half a dozen Irish in Douai's seminary du Soleil.⁴⁵ In 1607 an Irish cleric, Gelasius Lurcanus [O'Lorcan], was in receipt of royal monies to support Irish clerics in Douai,⁴⁶ and, from 1608, a number of Irish Cistercian students were resident in the town.⁴⁷ However, it was Cusack who amassed the lion's share of available funding as, over time, other bequests came his way. In 1597, for instance, he was named⁴⁸ in the will of the Irish priest Patrick Sedgrave.⁴⁹ Interestingly, these monies and the de Blanc foundation were vested not in the Irish college but in Cusack's own person, as his personal estate. This arrangement later proved problematic

Originally, Cusack's college catered for the sons of the Old English Pale gentry and the mercantile elites of Drogheda and Dublin. A government spy reported in 1600 that it accommodated about sixty students, including 'eldest sons of the principal gentlemen of the Pale as the eldest son of Sir Christopher Plunket, of Sir Patrick Barnewall, of Robert Barnewall of Dunbroe, of Lady Warren by her first husband; the son of Rochfort of Kilbride, who is to be his heir . . . the son of Barnewall of Drumanagh, the Lord of Gormanston's brother and many more, besides many merchants' sons of Dublin and Drogheda'.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ The bursary was set up in 1587. See Louis Trenard, *De Douai à Lille: Une Université et Son Histoire* (Lille: Université de Lille, 1978), 32, citing ADNL 7543, 'Réponse de la municipalité de Douai', 22 Nov. 1790.

⁴⁶ Brady, 'Fr Christopher Cusack', 101, fn 31. This may be Patrick O'Loughran [Ó Luchaireáin], chaplain to the countess of Tyrone in Belgium in 1607. See John J. Silke, 'Bishop Conor O'Devaney OFM, c.1533–1612', *Seanchas Ard Mhaca: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society* 13:1 (1988): 9–32 at 9.

⁴⁷ From about 1608, Bernard Cullenan and his superior Robert Bird, abbot of Newry, oversaw a number of Cistercian students in Douai and, in March 1614, petitioned the archdukes for permission to quest on their behalf. See Brendan Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', *Archivium Hibernicum* 10 (1943): 210; Colmcille Ó Conbhuidhe OCSO, *Studies in Irish Cistercian History*, ed. Finbarr Donovan (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 121–31.

⁴⁸ Moynes, ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 393. Cusack also assured that other debts had been settled, including one due to the estate of a deceased Irish priest called Creagh who had been in litigation with Sedgrave. Provision was made to settle debts owed to an unnamed Irish priest and to an Irish soldier. It is possible that Sedgrave was related to James Sedgrave, who distinguished himself on the government side in the Battle of Clontibret (1595). See Ruth Canning, *The Old English in Early Modern Ireland: The Palesmen and the Nine Years War, 1594–1603* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019), 84–5.

⁴⁹ Brendan Jennings, 'Reports on Irish Colleges in the Low Countries, 1649–1700', *Archivium Hibernicum* 16 (1951): 8–9, citing Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels (hereafter AGR), Comité Jésuitique, box 1977 (May 1597). He left over five hundred florins in all. From Sedgrave's possessions, Cusack bought a chasuble valued at eighteen florins, one altar cloth valued at ten florins and another valued at eight florins. At the request of another Irishman called John Bel, acting on behalf of Sedgrave's heirs, J. van Huffel, a notary, accompanied by two booksellers, Joachim Troguesius and Caspar Bellerius, examined Sedgrave's library and possessions in the local Douai Jesuit college. The books were sold in Brussels for 157 florins and 16 stuferos, 120 of which went to Henry Fitzsimon SJ, leaving the remainder in Cusack's keeping.

⁵⁰ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1598–1601*, 496–7.

As long as Cusack's student community remained geographically and socially homogeneous, his position was undisputed. The situation became more complicated, however, when he accepted funding from other sources. A harbinger of future trouble arrived in 1596–97 when Irish contacts in Rome petitioned the rulers of the Spanish Netherlands, Isabella, the daughter of Philip II, and her husband, the archduke Albert on Cusack's behalf, presenting his Douai college project as part of the international Catholic cause.⁵¹ This understandably fed expectations that his college would admit Irish Catholics of all ethnic backgrounds, not just Old English. In 1596 monies allotted by the Spanish monarchy to the Irish infantry in royal service in the Low Countries included a grant to 'forty-three students at Douai'.⁵² It is not certain if any of the beneficiaries were accommodated in Cusack's house, but they may have expected to be.⁵³ Accordingly, Cusack's college, originally intended for the offspring of Old English gentry and mercantile elites, was faced with the challenge of accommodating students from beyond the Pale.⁵⁴ This demanded adjustments on Cusack's part, all the more so as his lobbying for, and acceptance of, assistance for Irish students from Philip III encouraged the trend. Initially, the royal grant was for two thousand escudos per annum⁵⁵ for two years and was intended for Irishmen in the University of Douai, a portion of the sixty or so reportedly in Flanders at the time.⁵⁶ The grant was not regularly paid.⁵⁷ There were further complicating factors. The securing of the royal grant was at least in part due to the lobbying of the Ulster Gaelic leader Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone. In 1599, for instance, he had petitioned both Philip III and Archduke Albert on Cusack's behalf, commenting that the Meathman was supporting nearly one hundred students.⁵⁸ Cusack stood to benefit from O'Neill's endorsement, but it came with the moral obligation to

⁵¹ Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 164–7.

⁵² Gráinne Henry, *The Irish Military Community in Spanish Flanders, 1586–1621* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992), 185, citing Archivo General Simancas (hereafter AGS), Negoc. de Flandes E. 612/125–6.

⁵³ *Ibid.* See also, Bellesheim, *Geschichte* 3, 223.

⁵⁴ Brian Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland, 1603–41* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 149–58.

⁵⁵ For some idea of how much this represented, in 1614 an Irish student, Thomas McMorris, petitioned the archdukes for the sum of two hundred florins to cover his university expenses at Douai and Louvain for one year. Nilis, 'Irish Students at Leuven University', 45.

⁵⁶ Archduke Albert to Don Hieronmino Capata, Ostend, 1 Aug. 1601, AGR, Secretairie d'Etat et de Guerre, Register des patentes etc, 20, f. 100v. See Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 167.

⁵⁷ In 1606, thanks to a petition by John Roche (c.1576–1636), then prefect of the Douai college, the royal grant was renewed for another two years. See Archduke Albert to Don Francisco Vaca de Benavides, Brussels, 31 July 1606, AGR, Secretairie d'Etat et de Guerre, Register des patentes etc, 23, f. 395v. See also Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 168.

⁵⁸ *Calendar State Papers Ireland, 1599–1600*, 337–8.

accommodate, at least, men of Ulster Gaelic background in his Douai establishment.⁵⁹

Given that the demand for places exceeded available funding, Cusack was obliged to develop a student-selection policy. Matthew Kellison (c.1560–1642), the rector of the English college in Douai, later recalled that, in February 1604, Cusack had convened a chapter of the Irish houses in Belgium with a view to agreeing how college places should be apportioned.⁶⁰ The attendance included Patrick Sedgrave, Thomas Brady, Richard Connell, Issac Brinner, John Roche, William Tirrey, Thomas Skelton [Shelton], Lawrence Sedgrave and James Talbot, a mainly Old English roll call. Another chapter was held in December 1607, when it was agreed — in response, it would seem, to objections of partiality — to reserve a number of places for student applicants from beyond Meath and Leinster.⁶¹ Similar objections may have motivated Cusack's request in 1610 to have the college incorporated into Douai University.⁶² The university agreed but only on condition of a review of the president's role, the introduction of a new admissions policy and a financial audit.⁶³

These difficulties notwithstanding, by 1610 Cusack's Douai enterprise could point to significant achievements. Henceforth, it had a permanent home, in the rue des Bonnes.⁶⁴ A 1606 source reported that it provided twenty funded places and managed to accommodate at least twenty more.⁶⁵ Although it might be an exaggeration to call it a 'seminary' at this stage — in the strict sense of a self-contained priest-training environment — it had many of the relevant characteristics. Kellison reported that Irish pre-theology and lay students were originally allowed to wear secular dress, but that this sartorial lapse had been promptly remedied.⁶⁶ There was a scholarly atmosphere there, too, he said, although tuition was delivered externally, mostly in the Jesuit Collège d'Anchin.⁶⁷ It appears that some Irish was

⁵⁹ At the same time O'Neill's endorsement of Douai made Cusack *persona non grata* in the eyes of the Dublin and London administrations. See Brady, 'Fr Christopher Cusack', 101; for a treatment of O'Neill's politics, see Hiram Morgan, 'Hugh O'Neill and the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland', *Historical Journal* 36:1 (1993): 21–37.

⁶⁰ Ware, *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*, 252.

⁶¹ Micheál Mac Craith, 'Seraphic Sparks: The Irish Franciscan and Capuchin Colleges on the Continent', in Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor, eds. *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1568–1918* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 39–61 at 47.

⁶² Petition of Christopher Cusack to Philip III, 1610, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges as Douai', 170–1.

⁶³ The Faculty of Theology at Douai to the Archdukes, Douai, 4 Oct. 1610, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 172–3.

⁶⁴ Bellesheim, *Geschichte* 2:223. The property was purchased in 1604.

⁶⁵ Flaithrí Ó Maol Chonaire to Philip III, 1 Aug. 1606, AGS, E., NP, 1.2797, cited in Benjamin Hazard, *Faith and Patronage: The Political Career of Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire c.1560–1629* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009), 74.

⁶⁶ Knox, ed. *The First and Second Douai Diaries*, 398–9.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

spoken.⁶⁸ Thanks to favourable visitation reports, such as that submitted in 1611 by the Brussels internuncio, Bentivolgio, Rome saw no reason to interfere.⁶⁹ By 1614 the Douai house and its satellites in Antwerp and Lille had produced nearly 150 priests, including sixty-eight seculars, thirty-three Jesuits, twenty-seven Franciscans and eighteen Capuchins, in addition to having educated about eighty lay students of 'good family'.⁷⁰ The college's crowning glory was the example of the five Douai-educated priests who had suffered incarceration and exile for the faith while subsequently ministering in Ireland.⁷¹

Student admission issues

With the ending of the Irish wars in 1603, soldiers and students from all over the country began to arrive in the Low Countries.⁷² Clergy and laity *inter Anglicos* now had to reckon with their increasingly numerous confrères *inter Hibernicos*.⁷³ The latter was a rather diverse constituency that included Irish Franciscans (who had recently lost their house in Donegal),⁷⁴ secular clergy from Ulster and Connacht, various other religious and unemployed soldiery. Their most vocal advocate was Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire [Florence Conry] OFM, a former student of the Jesuit-run Irish college in Salamanca⁷⁵ and a long-time critic of the Society's influence there.⁷⁶ He was now intent on establishing an Irish Franciscan foothold abroad and a college for the Church *inter Hibernicos*.⁷⁷ With that in mind he approached Spanish and Roman authorities. Initially, the latter envisaged satisfying his request by making extra provision in Cusack's Douai.⁷⁸ In fact, it may have been Ó Maolchonaire's proposal that occasioned the agreement, at one of Cusack's 'chapters', for a quota system to include Ulster and Connacht candidates, along with their Meath colleagues.⁷⁹ If this was so, it failed to satisfy Ó Maolchonaire. In his 1606 petition to the king he rejected that option, reporting that Cusack's Douai college,

⁶⁸ *Calendar State Papers Domestic: Elizabeth, 1598-1601*, ed. Mary Anne Everett Green (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1869), 496-7.

⁶⁹ See *Archivium Hibernicum* 4 (1915), 262-3, 284-6; Bentivoglio to Borghese, Brussels, 5 Oct. 1611, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (hereafter BAV), 6805, ff. 153r-154r.

⁷⁰ Carey, *Serenissimis et potentissimis principibus*.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Henry, *The Irish Military Community in Spanish Flanders*, 74-113.

⁷³ For use of the term, see Jeffries, *Priests and Prelates of Armagh*, 57-82.

⁷⁴ Bernadette Cunningham, 'The Louvain Achievement I: The Annals of the Four Masters', in Breathnach et al., eds. *The Irish Franciscans*, 179.

⁷⁵ Thomas Morrissey, 'The Irish Student Diaspora in the Sixteenth Century and the Early Years of the Irish College at Salamanca', *Recusant History* 14 (1977-78): 242-60; Monica Henchy, 'The Irish College at Salamanca', *Studies* 70 (1981): 220-7.

⁷⁶ O'Connor, *Irish Jansenists*, 96-7.

⁷⁷ Mary Ann Lyons, 'The Role of St Anthony's College, Louvain in Establishing the Irish Franciscan College Network', in Bhreathnach et al. eds. *The Irish Franciscans*, 27-44.

⁷⁸ Arrigone to Lerma, Rome, 15 Oct. 1605, cited by Hazard, *Faith and Patronage*, 74.

⁷⁹ Mac Craith, 'Seraphic Sparks', 47.

with only twenty funded places, was grossly overcrowded, leaving no spare capacity for Franciscans. In any case, he went on, a house of secular clergy was hardly an ideal formation environment for regulars.⁸⁰

Throughout this correspondence Ó Maolchonaire treated Cusack with deference. Other critics were less obsequious. In 1609 Cusack fell foul of an Ulster cleric, Fergus MacFadden [Foduchanus].⁸¹ He had studied humanities in Tournai and wanted to advance to higher studies in Douai.⁸² Cusack turned down his application, probably on financial grounds. MacFadden appealed to the archdukes, who instructed Cusack to admit him. Interventions like this increased student numbers without any extra financial provision. Money worries were exacerbated by Spanish financial retrenchments following the signing of the Twelve Years Truce with the Dutch (1609). Grants to British and Irish institutions in Flanders, including the English and Irish colleges in Douai, were discontinued.⁸³ This forced Cusack to impose even tighter restrictions on the student intake, just as demand for places was rising. The strain began to show. His 1610 petition to Madrid for the renewal of the royal grant included a request to be relieved of his college duties.⁸⁴ He recommended that the Douai theology faculty take charge, but it prevaricated, being concerned about the college's viability.⁸⁵

As financial pressures grew, so, too, did competition for college places. This was by no means unique to Cusack's establishment: there were similar tensions in other Irish colleges under Habsburg patronage, notably those in Salamanca⁸⁶ and Santiago.⁸⁷ The ethnic dimension of the Irish disputes made them reminiscent of those between Welsh and English students in Rome's Venerabile in the final third

⁸⁰ Conry to Philip III, 1 Aug. 1606 (AGS, Estado Negocios de 'Partes', 1 2797), cited in Hazard, *Faith and Patronage*, 74.

⁸¹ 'Foduchanus' may be a scribal rendering of 'Mac Pháidín' (MacFadden), an Ulster surname. It is possible that the named individual spelt his name 'Ferdinando Fudano' in Spanish. On 11 March 1618 a certain 'Fudano' was a chaplain to John O'Neill's infantry in Spanish Flanders. See Brendan Jennings, ed. *Wild Geese in Spanish Flanders* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1964), 7, 156. The author thanks Dr Benjamin Hazard for this suggestion.

⁸² Foduchanus to Archduke, Brussels, 22 Sept. 1609, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 169.

⁸³ AGR Secrétairerie d'Etat et de Guerre, Correspondances des Gouverneurs, reg. 177/167; see Gráinne Henry, 'Ulster Exiles in Europe, 1605–1641', in Brian Mac Cuarta, ed. *Ulster 1641: Aspects of the Rising* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University, 1993), 37–60 at 54.

⁸⁴ Cusack to Philip III and Philip III to Archduke Albert, Aranda, 24 July 1610 (AGR, Papiers d'Etat et de l'Audience, box 1937).

⁸⁵ Faculty of Douai to archdukes, Douai, 4 October 1610, AGR, Papiers d'Etat et de l'Audience, box 1938.

⁸⁶ Morrissey, 'The Irish Student Diaspora in the Sixteenth Century and the Early Years of the Irish College at Salamanca', 256.

⁸⁷ Ciaran O'Sceá, 'The Spanish Court, Ecclesiastical Patronage, and the Irish College of Santiago de Compostela (1611–17)', in Chambers and O'Connor, eds. *Forming Catholic Communities*, 143–68.

of the sixteenth century:⁸⁸ by their overt critique of the Jesuits they were reprising the broils in Allen's Douai college.⁸⁹ The Irish disputes, however, had additional embittering elements. In Douai, Gaelic-Irish grievances over college admissions were laced with accusations that the Meath and Leinster families allegedly favoured by Cusack had been hostile to O'Neill's recent Catholic crusade.⁹⁰ Gelasius O'Lorcan, a priest and leader of a small group of itinerant Irish scholars in search of accommodation,⁹¹ went as far as to accuse Cusack of collusion with the Stuart administration.⁹²

These charges alarmed Rome, where, in 1613, Cardinal Scipione Borghese (1577–1633) ordered the Brussels nuncio, Guido Bentivoglio (1579–1644), to investigate.⁹³ He reported back the following month, exonerating Cusack.⁹⁴ Rome seemed satisfied,⁹⁵ allowing Cusack to remain in situ and facilitating O'Lorcan's move to Rouen.⁹⁶ Efforts were then made to ease ethnic tensions, with the signing by senior Irish clerics (*inter Anglicos* and *inter Hibernicos*) of an attestation in Cusack's favour.⁹⁷ Later in the year Cusack, Archbishop MacMahon of Dublin and Hugh McCaughwell OFM together briefed Bentivoglio on Irish affairs.⁹⁸ A letter from Rome commended the nuncio's handling of the affair.⁹⁹

⁸⁸ J.A. Nice, 'Being British in Rome: The Welsh at the English College, 1578–84', *Catholic Historical Review* 92 (2006): 1–24.

⁸⁹ Thomas Ridgedell, 'The Archpriest Controversy: The Conservative Appellants against the Progressive Jesuits', *British Catholic History* 33:4 (2017): 561–82; Victor Houliston, 'Baffling and Blatant Beast: Robert Person's Anti-appellant Rhetoric, 1601–1602', *Catholic Historical Review* 90:3 (2004): 439–55 at 440–2.

⁹⁰ See Canning, *The Old English in Early Modern Ireland*, 50–83.

⁹¹ O'Lorcan had been with some poor Irish youths in Rouen. See Cardinal Joyeuse to Barberini, 12 Oct. 1609, BAV, Barberini 7949 f. 93r. He was in the Low Countries from 1605, already a priest and serving in the royal army. He was granted twelve escudos a month to permit him to continue his studies in Douai University. In 1607 he was granted a licence to quest in Artois, Lille, Tournai on behalf of three priests and eight students, and in 1608 petitioned for the continuation of a twenty-florin grant from the University wardens. In 1610 he obtained permission to quest to finance a move to Rouen but appears to have been in Douai in March 1614. See Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 200–4.

⁹² ASV, Archivio Particolare, 89. On the small house set up by O'Lorcan, see Jennings, *ibid*. These accusations are contradicted by the fact that in 1607 the earls were received in Douai college, with congratulations for their struggle against 'faithless enemies'. See Henry, 'Ulster Exiles in Europe, 1605–1641', 37–60 at 56.

⁹³ Scipione Borghese (Cardinal Borghese), papal secretary, to Flanders internuncio, Guido Bentivoglio, archbishop of Rhodes, Rome, 26 Jan. 1613, BAV Borghese 914, f. 531rv.

⁹⁴ Bentivoglio to Borghese, Brussels, 16 Feb. 1613, BAV, Borghese 6808, ff 73r–75r. On Shelton, see Edwin B. Knowles, 'Thomas Shelton, Translator of Don Quixote', *Studies in the Renaissance* 5 (1958): 160–75.

⁹⁵ Borghese to Bentivoglio, Rome, 9 Mar. 1613, BAV Borghese 914, f. 547rv.

⁹⁶ See Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 204, and Walsh, *The Irish Continental College Movement*, 71–2. Three years later he was described in an O'Neill petition as rector of an Irish college there. See O'Connor, *Irish Jansenists*, 110, fn 28.

⁹⁷ Bentivoglio to Borghese, Brussels, 15 Feb. 1613, BAV Borghese, 8626, f. 11r.

⁹⁸ Bentivoglio to Borghese, Brussels, 14 Sept. 1613, BAV Borghese 6809, f. 93r.

⁹⁹ Bentivoglio to Borghese, Frascati, 5 Oct. 1613, BAV Borghese 914, f. 630rv.

This was not, however, the end of the matter. Cusack's critics now decided to take their quarrel over college places not to Rome, where Bentivoglio's pro-Cusack opinion carried weight, but to the archdukes in Brussels, where the Ulster and Connacht Irish may have expected a more favourable hearing. In 1614 Fergus MacFadden re-entered the fray with a broadside against Cusack addressed to the Brussels court.¹⁰⁰ Contextual factors probably raised the stakes. His remonstrance coincided with a sitting of the Irish parliament in Dublin, during which the Act of Attainder against O'Neill was passed, a measure approved by Old English Members of Parliament.¹⁰¹ MacFadden's principal complaint concerned Cusack's alleged partiality towards natives of his own province (Leinster), a prejudice that operated, he insisted, to the detriment of Ulster and Connacht Gaelic applicants. MacFadden supported his case with statistical evidence. Of the thirteen students then in Douai and the eighteen in Antwerp, none was from Ulster or Connacht. To reinforce his point MacFadden listed the forty priests and students from Ulster and the twenty-four from Connacht living in exile in the Low Countries: none of them were supported by Cusack.¹⁰² These included Hugh Cynanus and one Thomas Doyre,¹⁰³ who, MacFadden claimed, had died of hunger following his exclusion from Douai. He also mentioned the protomartyr Patrick O'Loughran [Lucarano]. MacFadden alleged that, on being refused admission by Cusack, O'Loughran had had to return to Ireland, where, along with Conor O'Devany OFM (c. 1532–1612), he had been executed.¹⁰⁴ Because of Cusack's partiality, he continued, many students from the north and west of Ireland were reduced to living in rented accommodation in Antwerp.¹⁰⁵ Among these priests and students were Hugh O'Brien, Eugene MacCaul,¹⁰⁶ Eugene Treanor,¹⁰⁷ Bernard O'Hui,¹⁰⁸ James Treanor, John O'Cozeran,¹⁰⁹ Daniel

¹⁰⁰ Latin memorial of Fergusius Fu[a]dachanus to the archdukes, 1614, ADNL 22 D 1.

¹⁰¹ O'Connor, *Irish Jansenists*, 111.

¹⁰² Spanish memorial of Fergusius Fudachanus to the archdukes, 1614, ADNL 22D 1.

¹⁰³ Possibly the Thomas Derrye (from Newry) mentioned c.1610 as an Ulster student in Douai. See Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland*, 124.

¹⁰⁴ This was Giolla Phádraig Ó Luchráin, a priest of the erenagh family of Donahgmore in the archdiocese of Armagh. He was the thirty-five-year-old chaplain to Hugh O'Neill and returned to Ireland from Belgium; he was arrested in Cork and charged with treason for alleged participation in the earls' flight to Europe (1607). It would appear that O'Loughran had travelled to Belgium prior to the flight, to study in Douai, probably with Cúchonnacht Óg Maguire. He visited Rome in 1609, where Pius V granted him the rectory of Desertcreight. He returned to Flanders from Rome, before returning to Ireland and his arrest. See Kieran Devlin, 'The Capture of Conor O Devaney Martyr', *Clogher Record* 14:4 (1993): 125–8 at 128.

¹⁰⁵ Memorial concerning students from Ulster and Connacht, ADNL 22 D 1.

¹⁰⁶ Possibly Mac Cathmhaoil (MacCaghwell), an Ulster ecclesiastical family.

¹⁰⁷ Possibly the person of this name who was archdeacon of Clogher at his death in 1622. See Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland*, 126.

¹⁰⁸ Possibly Ó hÁidh, Ó hAodha or O'Hea, of Munster.

¹⁰⁹ Possibly Ó Cogaráin or Cochrane, of Ulster.

Madonegan,¹¹⁰ Edmund MacCaul, William MacCaul, Hugh Mac Cogeiran, Hugh O'Havran,¹¹¹ Hugh MacCaul, Philip McArdle¹¹² and Cormac O'Mulaughlin. As a solution, MacFadden requested that half the royal grant be reserved for Ulster and Connacht students and that this portion should be managed by trusted individuals.¹¹³ With an eye to righting historic wrongs, he concluded with a recommendation that Ulster and Connacht students be awarded financial compensation for Cusack's partiality.

These accusations put Cusack on the defensive. In his rebuttal he underlined his own personal investment in the college.¹¹⁴ When he first came to Douai, he reported, there was no royal grant, and when, in 1602, royal monies became available, payment was irregular. In the intervening twelve years, only eighteen thousand of the twenty-four thousand florins due from Madrid had come to Douai. Little wonder that the college was now in debt to the tune of ten thousand florins, for non-payment of which college creditors were before the courts. As for the charges of partiality, Cusack informed the archdukes that admissions were not a matter of personal whim but subject to an agreed admissions policy in force since 1606,¹¹⁵ with an equal number of admissions (five) from each of the provinces (Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connacht and Meath), totalling twenty-five students.¹¹⁶ During his years as president this arrangement had been respected. As for the 1614 enrolment, the royal grant maintained five Munster students,¹¹⁷ four from Leinster¹¹⁸ and three each from Ulster,¹¹⁹

¹¹⁰ Possibly 'Donatus Donnagan', a student in 1609, archdeacon of Dromore from 1637. See Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland*, 126. At least eight members of the McDonnagan or Dungan family were priests; *ibid.*, 119. In the government's c.1613 report on Catholic personnel, Donogan of the county of Down is cited as with son or sons 'beyond the sea'. See Brian Mac Cuarta, 'Irish Government Lists of Catholic Personnel c.1613', *Archivium Hibernicum* 68 (2015): 92.

¹¹¹ Possibly Ó hEachtighearna (Heffron) from Antrim.

¹¹² The McArdles were a clerical family of Monaghan. See Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of Ireland*, 50.

¹¹³ He recommended Hugh Brown for Ulster and Edmund O'Kelly for Connacht.

¹¹⁴ 'Status seminarii Ibernorum Ducai breviter descriptus ad diluendam nonnullorum calumniam contra seminarii praesidem 1614', ADNL, 22 D 1.

¹¹⁵ According to Ware, a 'capitular' assembly of the Belgian Irish, convened by Cusack, met to agree governance and admissions to the college network in February 1604. Ware, *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*, 252.

¹¹⁶ See Response of Bernard Cullenan OCSO, 2 Mar, 1614, ADNL 22D 1. According to the figures Cusack supplied in 1614, the college, since 1594, had trained over 150 priests. See Carey, *Serenissimis et potentissimis principibus*.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Hanragan (possibly Ó hAnnracháin or O'Hanrahan, of Thomond), Peter Hackett, Patrick Chapelton (possibly Chapelton, a Scottish surname), Gerard Mede (probably Ó Midheach or Meade, of Cork), with Richard Fitzgerald and John Lanallin (possibly Lavallin or Levallin, of Cork), let go due to non-payment of royal grant.

¹¹⁸ Mark Shee (priest) Robert White (student) and John White (student), with Patrick Barnwall having been let go due to non-payment of royal grant.

¹¹⁹ Daniel Crean, Patrick Russell and Bernard Matthew, with Barnaby Morrison (possibly an anglicised version of Ó Muirgheasáin, a Donegal learned family, one of whom served as a state Church schoolteacher in Raphoe): see Mac Cuarta, *Catholic Revival in the North of*

Connacht¹²⁰ and Meath.¹²¹ The grant also supported the college president, three college servants and the prefects of both Douai and Tournai. Eleven other students paid their own fees, receiving nothing from the king.¹²² In the current year, he said, the failure of the royal grant had obliged college authorities to furlough several students. As for alleged presidential bias in favour of his own province, Cusack referred the archdukes to the statistics, pointing out that Meath students were not, in fact, over-represented.

The crux of the matter was the number of Irish provinces. If Cusack was correct in counting Meath as a separate province, then his Old English county men were not over-represented in the college. If Meath was omitted, however, his critics had a point. The geographical niceties of early seventeenth-century Ireland were beyond the ken of the archdukes, who, confronted with conflicting accounts, turned for counsel not to the internuncio, Bentivoglio — who may have seemed too obviously close to Cusack — but to the archbishop of Arras, Hermann van Ortemberg (1611–26), in whose diocese Douai lay.¹²³ He was tasked with preparing a recommendation for the future governance of the college: specifically, whether it should be split between Gaelic northerners and Old English Palesmen, as MacFadden suggested.

Van Ortemberg was unable to interview Cusack,¹²⁴ but he solicited the views of two senior Irish clerics then in the Netherlands, Thomas McMorris and Bernard Cullenan.¹²⁵ The latter was a Cistercian from Raphoe diocese who, while holding Cusack in esteem, was aware of complaints that the college president favoured students from his own province.¹²⁶ Cullenan pointed out that certain students had been denied admission during the previous year, but, confirming Cusack's

Ireland, 48), Walter O'Ninghn (possibly Ó Naoidheanáin or O'Neenan, a Munster name) and Patrick Moore let go due to non-payment of royal grant.

¹²⁰ Patrick Brady, Bernard Hegan and Miler Hanlon, with David de Burgo (listed as a student from Connacht in Douai: see Mac Cuarta, 'Irish Government Lists of Catholic Personnel', 90) and Donald Brodin (possibly a member of the Mac Bruaideadha Gaelic learned family in Munster, many of whom joined the Franciscans) let go due to failure to pay royal grant.

¹²¹ Richard Talbot, Christopher Fleming and Patrick Hamlin (priest), with Alexander Brown, Patrick Plunkett and Peter Bermingham let go due to non-payment of royal grant.

¹²² John Barnwall, Edward Barnwall, Richard Brangan, Nicolas Hore, George Dillon, Christopher Dillon, Richard Lawless, Richard Fitzgerald, N. Linam [Lynam?], Eugene Galchu and Peter Parcy (an English surname or a mistaken version of 'Darcy'?).

¹²³ Archdukes to Archbishop Arras, Brussels, 4 Mar. 1614, ADNL 22D 1.

¹²⁴ Archbishop of Arras to archdukes, np nd, ADNL 22D 1.

¹²⁵ 'An expedit seminarium Hyberniae in Universitate Duacen dividi...', Arras, 6 Mar. 1614, ADNL 22 D 1.

¹²⁶ From about 1608 Bernard Cullenan and his superior Robert Bird, abbot of Newry, oversaw a number of Cistercian students in Douai, and in March 1614 petitioned the archdukes for permission to quest on their behalf. See Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 210; Colmcille Ó Conbhuidhe OCSO, *Studies in Irish Cistercian History*, ed. Finbarr Donovan (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 121–31.

account, added that this was due to the cancellation of the royal grant. He was against dividing the college as it would be difficult to find another head of Cusack's calibre. However, it might be expedient, he suggested, to appoint a third party to ensure that all the provinces had equal access to seminary places. Thomas McMorris, a Connacht native, echoed Cusack's critics: he pointed out that the Meathman's father, Robert, had benefited from the sixteenth-century monastic confiscations and had persecuted Catholics. It was this, he said, that explained northern and western animosity towards him. By McMorris's count, Ulster and Connacht were under-represented in the colleges, with only three accommodated at the time.¹²⁷ Division of the college was not the solution, McMorris concluded, but there should be five places per province and an independent official appointed to supervise the arrangement.

In his own submission to the archdukes, van Ortemberg reported that Cusack had indulged a natural preference for students from his own part of Ireland. This was because they were more like him in manners, being civilised and refined, unlike students from Ulster and Connacht, who were, he said, more roughly hewn. However, the latter had suffered more for the faith during recent wars and deserved better treatment. Reluctantly, van Ortemberg supported a division, recommending that the Meathmen remain in Douai and support themselves, with the Ulster and Connacht students moving to Louvain to enjoy the royal grant. The archbishop's sympathy with MacFadden's recommendation was obvious, though the Irishman might have objected to the prelate's stereotyping of his provincial brethren as more coarse than Cusack's kin. Having listened to van Ortemberg and noted the opposition of the internuncio,¹²⁸ the archdukes compromised. To the satisfaction of Cusack's critics, they ruled that the Douai college was to receive two students from each of the four provinces that they understood Ireland to be divided into.¹²⁹ The college, however, would not be divided and would remain in Douai. Cusack was to remain president.

Aftermath

The archdukes' ruling was cold comfort for Cusack. His authority had survived the investigation but the verdict reduced student numbers dramatically and did nothing to remedy the college's worsening financial

¹²⁷ They were Patrick Brady, Cornelius Kearns and Donald Brodinus.

¹²⁸ Internuncio to the cardinal secretary of state Brussels, 12 Apr. 1614, ASV Borghese, ser. 2, vol. 99, 135, cited in J. Hagan, 'Miscellanea Vaticano-Hibernica, 1420-1631', *Archivium Hibernicum* 4 (1915): 284-86.

¹²⁹ 'De chascune des quatre provinces que nos entendons estre en Irlande . . .' See Archdukes to bishop of Arras, Brussels, 29 July 1614 AGR, Papiers d'Etat et de l'Audience, box 1952, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish College at Douai', 163-210 at 176.

situation. Cusack returned to Ireland to quest.¹³⁰ By 1617 he seems to have been considering a permanent return to the mission, and this was possibly the context for a proposal that the Jesuits take over the running of the college.¹³¹ In 1619 Cusack returned permanently to Ireland to act as vicar general in Meath.¹³² Shortly afterwards, in 1620, a proposal to formally place the college under Jesuit administration was under negotiation, but the Society balked at Cusack's conditions and expressed concerns about the college's idiosyncratic governance structures.¹³³ Cusack's decision to assign responsibility for the college to his relative Laurence Sedgrave only confirmed the Society's disquiet.¹³⁴ In his will Cusack actually bequeathed the college to Sedgrave, granting him complete liberty to administer it as a personal estate.¹³⁵

The new proprietor proved unequal to the task of managing his patrimony and soon resorted to disposing of property to meet debts. This obliged the newly appointed archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Fleming OFM (d. 1651), to intervene. He declared the presidency vacant and recommended Nicholas Aylmer as Sedgrave's replacement. A former tutor of Bernard O'Neill (son of the earl of Tyrone), Nicholas Aylmer was a Douai alumnus and of Meath background; he seemed likely to satisfy all interested parties.¹³⁶ But he, too, proved incapable of steadying the floundering vessel. In 1625 the cardinal protector for Ireland informed the nuncio that the college was due to be sold to meet its debt. Again, the Irish bishops intervened, petitioning for a stay of execution regarding the forced sale. A year later, Propaganda intervened, requesting that Flemish bishops rally behind the stricken institution.¹³⁷ In 1627 three Irish bishops – Rothe of Ossory, Terry of Cork and Fleming of Dublin – petitioned the Holy See for funds to restore the dilapidated college.¹³⁸ The following year Archbishop Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire of Tuam recommended that Douai and Tournai be united under the Irish Franciscans in Louvain.¹³⁹ In the event, neither recommendation was followed, and the best Aylmer could do was to

¹³⁰ Irish Jesuit Annual Letter, 1617. See Vera Moynes, ed., *Irish Jesuit Annual Letters*, 2 vols (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2019), 2:593.

¹³¹ Muzio Vitelleschi to Christopher Holywood, 18 Nov. 1617: Moynes ed., *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 79; same to same, 18 July 1620, *ibid.*, 98.

¹³² 'Information circa controversiam ...' [1623], cited in Brendan Jennings, ed. *Wadding Papers* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1953), 57.

¹³³ Moynes, ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 99.

¹³⁴ Brady, 'Fr Christopher Cusack', 105.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ The Privy Council to the archdukes, 19 July 1624, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 178–90.

¹³⁷ ASV, MSS Lettere della S. Congr. (1626), 65.

¹³⁸ 'umbraculum in cucumerario derelictum.' See Francis Moran, *History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin* (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1864), 303.

¹³⁹ Jennings, *Wadding Papers*, 221–9.

parry college debtors in the courts and rebut charges of financial malpractice. In 1633, for instance, he secured new repayment conditions for the college debt and the postponement of the sale of the college pending a new funding effort in Ireland. On foot of a royal order — motivated, in part, by an Irish Jesuit petition to the king — a university visitation of the college was ordered in 1639. The visitors found nothing but ruin.¹⁴⁰ Only fourteen clerical students remained in residence, with barely enough to live on. The half-dozen priests lived off Mass stipends; a similar number of lay boarders survived on their own resources. It also emerged that, due to financial hardship, ordinations were being brought forward to allow young priests to accept Mass stipends and petty chaplaincies. To add to the college's woes, a legal case was pending between the college and the estate of Laurence Sedgrave for restitution of allegedly misappropriated portions of the royal grant.¹⁴¹ To cap it all, Aylmer's own deputy had attempted to sell college property and had recently made off with the college silver. In their rather dismal report, the university visitors recommended that the house be given over to the management of the Irish Jesuits.¹⁴²

The Jesuits were unenthusiastic. This was in marked contrast to their more vigorous attitude towards Irish colleges in Spain and Portugal, where they pursued aggressive campaigns to retain or obtain control.¹⁴³ However, Cusack's Douai college was already under de facto Jesuit management. Unlike the English college in Douai, which noisily threw off the Society's yoke in 1613, the Irish college administration never questioned Jesuit influence.¹⁴⁴ The Society recruited the cream of the college's best students: during its first twenty years, more than thirty college alumni joined the Society.¹⁴⁵ Most Douai students attended the Jesuit Collège d'Anchin in the town.¹⁴⁶ When they returned to the Irish mission, they were content to act as what Aveling called 'auxiliaries' to the Jesuits.¹⁴⁷ Cusack himself was one

¹⁴⁰ University of Douai to the Privy Council, 13 Jan. 1639, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 188–9.

¹⁴¹ Report of M. Vandenhout to the conseil des finances, Brussels, 8 Sept. 1642, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 199–200.

¹⁴² Report of Professor Boetius on the Irish college, Douai, 20 Dec. 1638, cited in Jennings, 'Documents of the Irish Colleges at Douai', 190–2.

¹⁴³ Burrieza Sánchez, 'Escuelas de sacerdotes', 54–62. The Jesuit takeover of the Irish college of Seville in 1619, less than a decade after its founding as a secular college, seems to have been less controversial. See John Silke, 'The Irish College Seville', *Archivium Hibernicum* 25 (1961): 13–47 at 113–14.

¹⁴⁴ Knox ed. *The First and Second Douai Diaries*, i, 398–9.

¹⁴⁵ Carey, *Serenissimis et potentissimis principibus*.

¹⁴⁶ Brady, 'Fr Christopher Cusack', 103.

¹⁴⁷ J.C.H. Aveling, 'The English Clergy in the 16th and 17th centuries' in Wolfgang Hasse, ed. *Rome and the Anglicans: Historical and Doctrinal Aspects of Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 55–142 at 104.

of their valued collaborators. In 1613 he was in correspondence with Jesuit General Claudio Acquaviva about the optimal deployment of Jesuits John Lombard and Peter Wadding.¹⁴⁸ In internal Jesuit correspondence from 1617, concerns were expressed about Cusack's stepping down as college president.¹⁴⁹ The following year there was talk of formally transferring the college to the Society.¹⁵⁰

There was no Jesuit rescue of the Douai Irish college in 1639, the year of university visitation of the college. From 1641–42, the Confederate Wars at home starved the college of funds and students, in the same way that the civil war in England weakened the English college in Douai.¹⁵¹ It must have seemed that their glory days were behind them. Both, in fact, would survive: William Allen's foundation in Douai retained its pre-eminent place in the network of English overseas colleges,¹⁵² while Cusack's Douai was revived, too, and endured until the French Revolution.¹⁵³ However, it did so as a relatively less important establishment among Irish continental colleges, being overshadowed by larger entities in Paris and Nancy.

¹⁴⁸ Moynes ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 39. Wadding was a Douai Irish college alumnus. See Carey, *Serenissimis et potentissimis principibus*. The Salamanca-educated Lombard was on the mission in 1617. See Moynes, ed. *Irish Jesuit Annual Letters* 1, 936.

¹⁴⁹ Moynes ed. *The Jesuit Irish Mission*, 79.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁵¹ In 1642 Kellison's successor as English college rector found himself in a position similar to Aylmer, straddled with a heavy debt and with scarcely eight ordinands in the whole house. See Aveling, 'The English Clergy', 127.

¹⁵² See P.R. Harris, 'The English College, Douai, 1750–1794', *Recusant History* 10:2 (1969): 79–95.

¹⁵³ There is no history of the Irish College, Douai in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See John Brady, 'The Irish Colleges at Douai and Antwerp', *Archivium Hibernicum* 13 (1947): 45–66; John Brady, 'The Irish Colleges in the Low Countries. Documents from the San Clemente Archives Relating to the Irish College in Flanders, 1744–7', *Archivium Hibernicum* 14 (1949): 86–91; Brendan Jennings, 'Reports on Irish Colleges in the Low Countries, 1649–1700', *Archivium Hibernicum* 16 (1951): 1–39.